



Let us seek out others and embrace the world as it is, without fear of pain or a sense of inadequacy, because there we will discover all the goodness that God has planted in human hearts.

Fratelli Tutti n 78

Who is my Neighbour?

Pope Francis launched his third encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* on the feast of St Francis of Assisi in 2020. Papal encyclicals traditionally take their title from the first words of the text. As Pope Francis explains, *fratelli tutti* was how St Francis 'addressed his brothers and sisters' during the 13th century about leading Gospel lives. However, keep in mind that St Francis saw himself as deeply related to all women and men, all living creatures and all parts of God's creation.

THE HEART OF FRATELLI TUTTI

Chapter 2, is a wonderful meditation on Luke's parable of the Good Samaritan. (Lk 10:25-37). This is the lens and moral compass through which Pope Francis goes on to view the complexities of international politics, nationalism and populism, global economics and many other issues that oppress the poor and rob people of their dignity.

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

In the final chapter of *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis appeals to all religious believers, regardless of their tradition, to

Pope Francis with Ayatollah al-Sistani in Iraq, March 2021

be agents of reconciliation, recognising the fundamental commitment we all have to promote the common good.

Speaking from the Christian perspective, Pope Francis ties together the importance of the example of Jesus Christ and fraternity as the basis for our universal human vocation to be peacemakers and reconcilers.

We are called to be true 'people of dialogue', to cooperate in building peace

n 284

The Church esteems the ways in which God works in other religions, and "rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for their manner of life and conduct, their precepts and doctrines which... often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men and women". Yet we Christians are very much aware that "if the music of the Gospel ceases to resonate in our very being, we will lose the joy born of compassion, the tender love born of trust, the capacity for reconciliation that has its source in our knowledge that we have been forgiven and sent forth. n 277

Authentic interreligious dialogue is not debate nor is it about conversion. It is about respectful listening and sharing, each from their own faith tradition. *Others drink from other sources. For us the wellspring of human dignity and fraternity is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Fratelli Tutti 277*



Zubaida Alrubi and Rev Dr Patrick McInerney launch *The Sydney Statement*

Launch of *The Sydney Statement*

WHO AUTHORED THE SYDNEY STATEMENT?



YOUTH POWR
PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

Youth PoWR (Parliament of the World's Religions) generated the content of The Sydney Statement, approved its text, and authorised its publication. Youth PoWR is an interfaith initiative of the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations (CCCMR) for young adults. It brings together hundreds of young adults from different religions to meet one another and have a voice and vote in shaping our multicultural, multi-religious society. It is by youth, for youth, and with youth, including youth speakers and youth performers.

A POWERFUL KEYNOTE FROM ALPHA CHENG

Alpha described himself as being part of a multi-faith family. His mother is Catholic, Alpha was baptised at Corpus Christi St Ives his father, Curtis was Buddhist. Curtis was killed by a Muslim extremist in 2015. Just before his father was killed, Alpha received a Holocaust Educator's Scholarship in Israel, and was due to attend when he learned of his father's murder. Rather than cancel the trip however, Alpha chose to travel to Israel. "I was determined not to let terrorism change how I live". It was a decision which would have a profound impact on his decision to speak out against intolerance and be a part of the public discourse.



In Israel, he met Holocaust survivors from different backgrounds. The common thread to all their life stories and to their motivation to share their difficult past was the strong belief that hate and prejudice shall never again lead to genocides. "Seeing how these individuals, who went through continuous trauma, being able to shine a light on issues like intolerance and discrimination, gave me the strength, the

purpose and the vision to do the same myself". Back in Australia, Alpha started his advocacy work. "At the beginning, I was not quite sure of what I was doing and how much of an impact I was making." However, his doubts were put aside when he was nominated for the Young Australian of the Year Award in 2017. His advocacy work continues to focus on the values that keep us together.

WHAT IS THE SYDNEY STATEMENT?

THE SYDNEY STATEMENT IS THE VOICE OF YOUTH

The Sydney Statement: Building Bridges Between Believers from Different Religions is an interfaith charter for Sydney. It is inspired by similar interfaith statements from other cities e.g. The Athens Declaration 2015 and The Beirut Declaration 2017. Although named after the state capital, The Sydney Statement is relevant to NSW, Australia and the world.

The Sydney Statement details how to engage in interfaith relations with others – in daily life, in acting together for the common good, in sharing knowledge about each other's religions, and in exchanging spirituality – and to promote interreligious dialogue within one's own community.

An Invitation

We invite you — our peers, our elders, the members and leaders of our own and other faith traditions, and all people of good will — to 'build bridges between believers from different religions' by **living out the values, principles and commitments of *The Sydney Statement***.

www.thesydneystatement.org.au



Fr Patrick McInerney with some members of Youth PoWR