

DICASTERY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE
MESSAGE FOR THE MONTH OF RAMADAN AND 'ID AI-FITR
1446 H. / 2025 A.D.

Christians and Muslims:
What we Hope to Become Together

Vatican City

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters,

At the beginning of the month of Ramadan, the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue offer you its warmest greetings and friendship. This time of fasting, prayer and sharing is a privileged opportunity to draw closer to God and be renewed in the fundamental values of religion, compassion and solidarity. This year, Ramadan largely coincides with Lent, which for Christians is a period of fasting, supplication and conversion to Christ. This proximity in the spiritual calendar offers us a unique opportunity to walk side-by-side, Christians and Muslims, in a common process of purification, prayer and charity. For us Catholics, it is a joy to share this time with you, for it reminds us that we are all pilgrims on this earth, and that we are all seeking to live better lives. This year, we wish to reflect with you not only on what we can do together to live better lives, but above all on what we want to *become* together, as Christians and Muslims, in a world in search of hope. Do we want to be simple co-workers for a better a world, or genuine brothers and sisters, bearing common witness to God's friendship with all humanity?

More than simply a month of fasting, Ramadan appears to us Catholics as a school of inner transformation. By abstaining from food and drink, Muslims learn to control their desires and turn to what is essential. This time of spiritual discipline is an invitation to cultivate piety, the virtue that brings one closer to God and opens the heart to others. As you know, in the Christian tradition, the holy season of Lent invites us to follow a similar path: through fasting, prayer and almsgiving we seek to purify our hearts and refocus on the One who guides and directs our lives. These spiritual practices, though expressed differently, remind us that faith is not merely about outward expressions, but a path of inner conversion.

In a world marked by injustice, conflict and uncertainty about the future, our common vocation involves much more than similar spiritual practices. Our world is thirsting for fraternity and genuine dialogue. Together, Muslims and Christians can bear witness to this hope, in the conviction that friendship is possible despite the burden of history and ideologies that promote exclusion. Hope is no mere optimism: it is a virtue rooted in faith in God, the Merciful, our Creator. For you, dear Muslim friends, hope is nourished by trust in divine mercy, which forgives and guides. For us Christians, it is grounded in the certainty that God's love is stronger than all trials and obstacles.

We want, then, to become, together, brothers and sisters in humanity who deeply esteem one another. Our trust in God is a treasure that unites us, far beyond our differences. It reminds us that we are all spiritual, incarnate, beloved creatures, called to live in dignity and mutual respect. What is more, we desire to become guardians of this sacred dignity by rejecting all forms of violence, discrimination and exclusion. This year, as our two spiritual traditions converge in celebrating Ramadan and Lent, we have a unique opportunity to show the world that faith transforms people and societies, and that it is a force for unity and reconciliation.

In a world where “the temptation to build a culture of walls, to raise walls, walls in the heart, walls on the land in order to prevent this encounter with other cultures, with other people” is reappearing (Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, 27), our challenge is to build, through dialogue, a common future founded on fraternity. We do not want simply to coexist; we want to live together in sincere and mutual esteem. The values we share, such as justice, compassion and respect for creation, should inspire our actions and relationships, and serve as our compass in constructing bridges rather than walls, defending justice rather than oppression, protecting the environment rather than destroying it. Our faith and its values should help us to be voices that speak out against injustice and indifference and proclaim the beauty of human diversity.

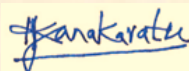
In this season of Ramadan and the approach of ‘Id al-Fitr, we are happy to share this hope with you. May our prayers, our gestures of solidarity and our efforts for peace be tangible signs of our sincere friendship with you. May this feast be an occasion for fraternal encounters between Muslims and Christians, in which we can celebrate God’s goodness. Such simple but profound moments of sharing are seeds of hope that can transform our communities and our world. May our friendship be a refreshing breeze for a world that thirsts for peace and fraternity!

May your fasting and other pious practices during Ramadan and the celebration of ‘Id al-Fitr that concludes it, bring you abundant fruits of peace, hope, brotherhood and joy.

From the Vatican, 06 March 2025



George Jacob Cardinal Koovakad
Prefect



Msgr Indunil Kodithuwakku Janakarathne Kankanamalage
Secretary