

**2020 WORLD DAY OF PEACE CELEBRATION**  
**BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE IN GENEVA**  
*Church of Saint Nicolas de Flüe, Saint John XXIII Parish*  
*Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020*



1. Following the tradition of many years, the Permanent Mission of the Holy See in Geneva and the Diocese of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg invited the diplomatic corps, high officials of the United Nations and other international organizations, Geneva authorities, representatives of Catholic-inspired NGOs and members of different religious communities to an Interreligious Service on the message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of Peace 2020: *“Peace as a journey of hope: dialogue, reconciliation and ecological conversion.”*

This celebration was organized by the Permanent Mission of the Holy See and was held at the Church of Saint Nicolas de Flue on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 18:30. This year, His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, was invited to participate in this event to capitalize on the success of the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, signed by Pope Francis and the Gran Imam of Al-Azhar on 4 February 2019 in Abu Dhabi.

Invitation cards in English (250) and in French (350) were produced in-house (Attachment 1). The attendance of some 400 persons, mainly diplomats, was larger than in previous years, certainly motivated by the presence of His Eminence Cardinal Ayuso Guixot, as well as by the increased participation of this Permanent Mission of the Holy See in interreligious initiatives.



2. The representatives of the religious communities received an invitation on 12 September 2019 and on 13 December 2019 a letter with an advanced copy of the 2020 World Day of Peace Message of His Holiness Pope Francis. Following the order of appearance, the speakers at the 2020 Interreligious Service were:

- His Excellency Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer
- His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Angel Ayuso, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue
- Mr. Michel Benveniste, Liberal Jewish Community of Geneva
- Venerable Dhammika, Director of the International Buddhist Center of Geneva
- Pastor Emmanuel Fuchs, President of the Protestant Church of Geneva
- His Eminence Metropolitan Maxime of Switzerland, Orthodox Archdiocese of Switzerland
- Cheikh Khaled Bentounes, Honorary President of the International Sufi Association Alâwiyya

Some 350 copies of the bilingual (English/French) version of their interventions were prepared and distributed at the event (Attachment 2).



3. The programme of the ceremony is attached (Attachment 3). Following the interventions of the speakers, the Universal Prayers, taken from the Message of the Pope, were read in the six official languages of the United Nations: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.



The Interreligious Service counted with the participation of the Filipino Choir and the African Choir, both from the Saint John XXIII Parish, who contributed to enhance the universality of the Message of Peace of the Holy Father.



4. After the ceremony, a reception was held at the Parish Hall. The catering was done by AMALA, an international association of refugee and migrant women, who provided the aperitif at the request of the Permanent Mission of the Holy See. Volunteers from St. John XXIII Parish and the

Focolare Movement assured the service during and after the reception, as well as members of the Permanent Mission of the Holy See.

5. According to established regulations, a Note Verbale was sent on 13 January 2020 to the Permanent Mission of Switzerland providing information on the 2020 Interreligious Service organized by the Permanent Mission of the Holy See. Thus, members of the diplomatic police were posted outside and inside the Church to assure the security of the participants.
6. The Message of the Holy Father for the 2020 World Day of Peace was sent to all the diplomatic missions and high officials of the United Nations present in Geneva. The Permanent Mission of the Holy See has received several messages of appreciation (Attachment 4).

