



INTERFAITH
CENTER OF NEW YORK

January 2015 Interfaith Center of New York E-Announcements

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Message from ICNY Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The final weeks of 2014 have had their challenges when it comes to peace-making in the public square. Like many New Yorkers and others around the country, ICNY staff and religious leaders were concerned and consumed by events relating to racial justice and police community relations since the non-indictments of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. This interest goes back several years when we held [a Rabbi Marshal Meyer Retreat on Police Community Relations](#). In December, we helped bring together diverse religious leaders for two interfaith services at First Corinthian Baptist Church and St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Harlem and participated in a die-in at City Hall.

Less than a week later we found ourselves joining in [Jewish, Christian, and Muslim prayers at the corner of Myrtle and Tomkins St the weekend that Officers Ramos and Lui were tragically shot](#). If there were ever a time for more interfaith work on police-community relations, this is it. Rarely have we needed each other more. ICNY continues to pray, protest, and program on these issues and invite you to follow us on Facebook and twitter for further updates.

In other news, ICNY has recently made a new video, "[Bridging the Gap: Responding to Religious Diversity in Child Welfare](#)." This video describes ICNY's workshops to promote religious and cultural responsiveness in the child welfare sector, as well as workshops to educate Muslim communities about child abuse and foster care.

We are also delighted to announce a grant from the Open Society Institute for a youth program that will allow youth from religiously diverse background to hone their op ed and writing skills and develop their voices in the public square.

Finally, we urge you to make a contribution to the work of ICNY. We need your support

and hope that you will make a gift if you have not already done so. Please consider making a donation to the Interfaith Center of New York so that we can continue to do our part making New York and the world safe for religious diversity.

[Donate Now Online](#)

Best Wishes,



Rev. Chloe Breyer
Executive Director
The Interfaith Center of New York

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by Rev. Chloe Breyer
ICNY Executive Director

Interfaith Dialogue Inspired by Pope Francis



Treading in the footsteps of his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis 1 brought a message of peace to an important part of the Muslim world. Like Saint Francis who in the middle of the devastating Fifth Crusade in 1219, set sail to Egypt to cross battle lines and

met with Sultan al-Kamil—Pope Francis’s most recent pilgrimage to Turkey included an encounter with Islam that was both respectful and open-hearted. While there, the Pope issued statements on Islamophobia and Christian Muslim partnership such as the one below given in Ankara on November 28, 2014:

“As religious leaders, we are obliged to denounce all violations against human dignity and human rights. Human life, a gift of God the Creator, possesses a sacred character. As such, any violence that seeks religious justification warrants the strongest condemnation because the Omnipotent is the God of life and peace. The world expects those who claim to adore God to be men and women of peace who are capable of living as brothers and sisters, regardless of ethnic, religious, cultural or ideological differences

. . .

“We, Muslims and Christians, are the bearers of spiritual treasures of inestimable worth . . . Recognizing and developing our common spiritual heritage - through interreligious dialogue - helps us to promote and to uphold moral values, peace and freedom in society”

Not long after Pope Francis’ return to Rome, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue led by Monsignor Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran hosted the third of a four-part Catholic-Anglican-Sunni-Shia dialogue that began more than a decade ago at the National Cathedral in Washington. The Summit series was inspired by then-President of Iran, Mohammad Khatami and his idea of a dialogue of civilization.

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"A Theology of Caring"

Rev. Maria Lopez



Rev. Maria Lopez is guided by what she has dubbed a “theology of caring.” She will say that she is not a religious person, but believes in Jesus’ mission of caring for the poor and maintaining your humanity. “We live in a self-centered world. I, as a Christian, need to extend myself. But it’s not about religion, it’s about humanity. And I see it in all the

different faith groups.”

Rev. Lopez first became involved with the Interfaith Center after September 11, 2001. Just a few days after the attacks, Rev. Lopez spoke at a press conference hosted by the Latino Commission on AIDS, held at the Interfaith Center, in support of the Muslim community of New York City saying, “Today, I am a Muslim. We are all Muslims now.” For many years, Rev. Lopez worked to educate faith communities about HIV/AIDS, creating youth ministries and training young people to minister to their peers and provide necessary education to their communities. Rev. Lopez attended Interfaith Center events dealing with the AIDS crisis and, later, events having to do with the mass incarceration crisis.

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Sharing the Well: A Resource Guide for Jewish-Muslim Engagement

Dr. Sarah Sayeed, ICNY’s Director of Community Partnerships, contributed two articles about Giving and Social Action to “Sharing the Well: A Resource Guide for Jewish Muslim Engagement,” a new collaborative publication of Jewish Theological Seminary, Islamic Society of North America, and Hartford Seminary. The book offers strategies to deepen Jewish-Muslim interactions at the community level, including a guide to dialogue, articles by Jewish and Muslim leaders on topics such as caring for others, family and heritage, and religious life; questions for discussion; a sampling of 24 successful Jewish-Muslim engagement programs from across America; and a glossary of Jewish and Muslim terms. The book is available in hard copy and as a [free PDF](#).



Special Viewing and Reception for Fratte Francesco: Traces, Words, Images

Date: Tuesday, January 6 and Wednesday, January 7

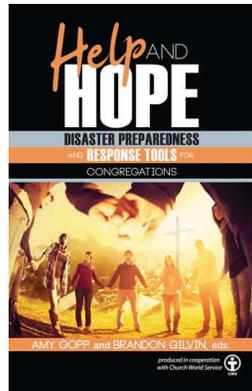
Time: Times Vary

Location: Brooklyn Borough Hall, 209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Brooklyn Borough Hall is excited to announce a historic exhibition of numerous 12th- and 13th-century manuscripts from St. Francis of Assisi, one of the most significant figures in

the history of organized religion. This is the first time these artifacts have left Italy in 700 years, and it is currently the only scheduled opportunity for the public to view these documents in the United States. The exhibition is scheduled to run until Wednesday, January 14th, and it is free to the general public. Special viewing for religious and faith-based leaders are Tuesday, January 6th, 12:00 pm and Wednesday, January 7th, 10:00 am. For more information, click [here](#).

Help and Hope - Disaster Preparedness and Response Tools for Congregations



When disaster strikes, people inevitably turn to local faith communities for help and spiritual care. A new book prepares those communities to respond effectively and with confidence, whether it's following a devastating tornado like Joplin, Mo.; a school shooting like Newtown, Conn.; a superstorm like Katrina or Sandy, or an individual house fire. "Help and Hope" is available wherever books are sold, but special discounts are available when ordering from ChalicePress.com or 1-800-366-3383. The print version is available for \$15.99, with deeper discounts available for orders of 51 copies or more. E-PUB and E-PDF versions are available for \$10.19. For more info, contact, Carol Fouke-Mpoyo, Communications Officer, CWS U.S. Disaster Response Program, cfoukempoyo@cwsglobal.org; 212-870-2728, or click [here](#).

Muslim Community Network *Presents* Strengthening Muslim Families Through Child Welfare Partnerships



Date: Saturday, January 10

Time: 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Location: Judson Memorial Church, 239 Thompson Street, New York, NY 10012

A FREE workshop for Muslim community leaders, imams, teachers, youth workers, day-care providers, and parents. If you missed the Interfaith Center of New York's sessions on this topic, here is your chance to make it up!

The workshop seeks to bridge the gap in culturally responsive child welfare and foster care services for Muslim communities. The workshop will provide information on:

- The definition of child abuse.
 - How Administration for Child Services (ACS) hears about cases and how it investigates & refers families.
 - Preventive services, how families can be better supported & how religious leaders can work with ACS.
 - How the community and religious leaders can support Muslim children and families currently in the child welfare system.
- Information on foster parent recruitment and support.

RSVP requested. For questions or to RSVP, please email Sarah Sayeed at ssayeed@interfaithcenter.org or Christina Tasca at Christina@mcnny.org or call (212) 870-3547.

Clinical Pastoral Education: Focus on Prison Ministry



Date: Dates Vary

Times: Times Vary

Location: Park Avenue Christian Church, 1010 Park Avenue @ 85th Street, New York, NY 10028

Park Avenue Christian Church is offering an intensive unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) focusing on individuals and families affected by incarceration. The Program Director is Rev. Maria Lopez, who served for twenty years as a prison chaplain at Riker's Island and Bedford Hills Correctional Facilities. Rev. Lopez is a certified supervisor (Diplomat) for the College of Pastoral Supervision & Psychotherapy. CPE provides an opportunity for those in religious leadership, both clergy and lay, to develop and deepen their skills in listening and healing. The CPE program at The Park will focus on all facets of incarceration: the prisoner, their families and those who are targeted (the poor). Cost: \$600, plus a non-refundable \$30 application fee. For more information and an application form, [click here](#). Contact The Park at office@parkavenuechristian.com or (212) 288-3246 or Rev. Maria Lopez at revmarialopez@yahoo.com or (347) 994-4444

Roots & Branches: Programs for Spiritual Growth

AN INTERFAITH STUDY PROGRAM TO INDONESIA
JUNE 15-23, 2015



Spirituality and Giving in Ramadan is designed to deepen the understanding of Muslim societies through firsthand experiences with the culture, faith, and daily activities of the people. During the program, you will interact with professors, students, locals, politicians and religious leaders of various faith traditions, as well as visit rich historic sites and have time to relax and experience the beauty, food and hospitality of the Indonesian culture and its diverse society. This program is ideal for Christian and Jewish clergy who are involved in interfaith relations and programs with the Muslim communities throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe. For more information and registration for this program, please contact: Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation (CECF) 410-944-6077 or cecf1@aol.com, or see [this flyer](#).

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JANUARY 2015

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| January 1 | NEW YEAR'S DAY The first day of the year in the Gregorian calendar, commonly used for civil dating purposes. |
| January 1 | TEMPLE DAY • Buddhist Many Buddhists of all traditions pay their respects and pray for good fortune for the new year at the temple. |
| January 3 | MAWLID AL-NABI (Also known as MILAD AL-NABI) • Islamic (Sunni) The observance of the birthday of Islam founder Prophet Muhammad which occurs in Rabi' al-awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. Shi'a Muslims celebrate it five days later than Sunni Muslims. |
| January 5 | MAHAYANA NEW YEAR • Buddhist In Mahayana countries the New Year starts on the first full moon day in January. |
| January 6 | EPIPHANY • Christian Known as <i>Theophany</i> in Eastern Christianity, it celebrates the manifestation of Jesus as Christ. In addition, the Western Church associates Epiphany with the journey of the Magi to the infant Jesus, and the Eastern Church with the baptism of Jesus by John. |
| January 6 | CHRISTMAS • Armenian Orthodox Christian Armenian Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus on Epiphany, except for Armenians living in Israel, who celebrate Christmas on January 19th. |
| January 7 | CHRISTMAS • Eastern Christian Most Orthodox churches celebrate Christmas 13 days later than other Christian churches based on their use of the Julian rather than the Gregorian version of the Western calendar. |
| January 8 | MAWLID AL-NABI (Also known as MILAD AL-NABI) • Islamic (Shi'a) Celebrates the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam, five days later than Sunni Muslims. |
| January 14 | MAKAR SANKRANTI • Hindu Seasonal celebration recognizing the increasing length of days. |
| January 18 | WORLD RELIGION DAY • Bahá'í Observance to proclaim the oneness of religion and the belief that world religion will unify the peoples of the earth. |
| January 19 | DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S BIRTHDAY The birthday of civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is celebrated on the third Monday in January. |
| January 27 | UN HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY Annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust coinciding with the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp in 1945. |

The complete ADL Calendar of Observances for 2014 is available [here](#).

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