

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL PARISH ALBANIAN ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTER



MEDIA ADVISORY

Staten Island Interfaith Stew for the Homeless: Catholic & Muslim Youth Chop Vegetables, Cook Together

***Who*:** Youth from Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Albanian Islamic Cultural Center
***Where*:** Albanian Islamic Cultural Center (AICC), 307 Victory Blvd, Staten Island
***When*:** 2pm-5pm, Sunday December 15, 2013

***What*:** Building on the shared religious teachings of social justice, Catholic and Muslim youth in Staten Island will come together to have their first joint interfaith cooking experience. The youth will be meeting at the AICC and chop pounds of carrots, potatoes, celery, peppers, onions and radishes, which will be cooked with 7 pounds of meat to serve clients at a local soup kitchen run by Project Hospitality. In anticipation of Christmas, youth will also learn and discuss Muslim and Christian teachings about Jesus.

The project emerges from an ongoing partnership between Albanian Islamic Cultural Center and Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC) parish, brokered by the Interfaith Center of New York, and supported by the GHR Family Foundation. It is part of a larger program that promotes joint interfaith social service initiatives by Catholics and Muslims; the Interfaith Center is actively working in Harlem and the Bronx as well as Staten Island to promote these partnerships. Fr. Liam, pastor at OLGC and Imam Tahir of AICC jointly organized Cardinal Dolan's visit to the Center and Miraj Islamic School this past summer. The youth project is a continuation of exchange between the two congregations.

Fr. Liam, the Pastor at OLGC discusses the importance of this partnership: "While acknowledging the very real differences between our two faiths, I believe that it is very important for us as Catholics and Muslims to work together to understand each other's faith and to discover what we have in common. Helping people in need is an important part of both our faith traditions. Today we have the wonderful opportunity to learn and to talk about Jesus - the central figure in Catholicism - and Prophet Isa - as he is known and honored in Islam."

Imam Tahir of AICC also notes, "The Quran teaches us that the best among you is the one who is beneficial to mankind. We do interfaith activities for one reason: to be beneficial to our communities."

If you plan to attend the event, please contact 917.414.8453. All individuals below are available for interviews. There will be an opportunity to videotape the stew preparation.

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