



Jamat-e-Islami & The Church



Bishop Humphrey with a Muslim religious leader



Bishop Humphrey addressing the Press Conference

Mr. Shabir Ahmad Khan in his statement said that such acts of desecration can jeopardize the world peace, and that the Muslims all over the world feel agitated. "The Muslim world is already suffering because of the wrong American policies". He added.



Bishop Humphrey and the clergymen in a meeting with the Gen Secretary of 'Jamat-e-Islami'

The Rt. Revd. Humphrey S. Peters, Bishop of Peshawar in a joint Press with Shabbir Ahmad Khan, General Secretary, Jamat-e-Islami (the religious/political party of the country), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province strongly condemned the threat of burning the Holy Quran by Pastor Terry Jones of Florida, USA.

At this occasion, The Revd. S.P. Asghar, The Revd. Joseph John, The Revd. Tanzeel Zafar and other prominent Christian community members expressed solidarity with Muslim community, condemning the US Pastor.

Courtesy "The News Int'l, Sept. 17, 2010"

Christians flay US pastor

Peshawar: The Christian community in the provincial metropolis on Thursday expressed solidarity with Muslims and condemned the US pastor for his designs about the desecration of the holy Quran.

The condemnation was expressed by a delegation of Christian pastors that called on the Provincial President of Jamaat-e-Islami Prof Mohammad Ibraheem Khan and was led by the Bishop of Peshawar Humphrey Sarfaraz Peter. Bishop Humphrey Peters came down hard on the US pastor Terry Jones and said he had shown disrespect for all the divine books by expressing his intension to burn the holy Quran.

Prof Ibraheem said harming the minorities in Pakistan in reaction to the utterances of the US pastor was un-Islamic and vowed to oppose such incidents.

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'Press Conference' at the Jamat-e-Islami Office

"The US Government personally must put an end to the desecration of the holy books by its citizens". This is a conspiracy against the Christian/Muslim unity in the world". He said.

Therefore, the Christian Community stands together with their Muslim brothers against this shameful act, and we demand that US Govt. must take strict action against the Florida Pastor and punish him for his crime". He added, "The Christian community highly and strongly condemns such acts, and will participate in the rallies held against this blasphemous act". He further said that Freedom does not mean to offend people of other faiths.

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Thanksgiving & Prayer Requests



Diocese of Peshawar is grateful to God for His blessings and Mercies and also to the Partners for their financial and prayer support.

Please also pray for;

1. Kindly remember the people affected by the deadly monsoon rains and floods and for the Diocesan Relief & Rescue efforts for the victims of this natural disaster.
2. The War on Terror is still going on, kindly pray for those who are determined to eradicate this menace for good.
3. We need your prayer support for those who are living in hostile areas of NWFP, especially the Pakistani Christians and their institutions.
4. The Diocesan Relief Work in Pateka, Balakot. May God help the Diocese to work more effectively for the development of the Earthquake victims.

Special Prayer requests;

1. Please remember Pakistan and especially the minorities as they are facing the daily scarcity of flour and other food commodities; the prices have gone extremely high.
2. Military operation against the Taliban in South Waziristan is at its full swing. Thousands of people have evacuated the area and are getting themselves registered as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in D.I. Khan and Bannu.

(The National Scenario)

(Article)

In the name of 'Freedom'

The US pastor, Terry Jones has proved once again that the 'fanatics' grow like mushrooms and they come in all shapes and sizes. Usually people in the west attribute the word 'fundamentalist' to those who agree with Al-Qaida's philosophy and/or the 'Jehadi' elements within the Muslim community, but the threat to burn the 'Holy Quran' by the so called pastor has proved that the fundamentalists, or whatever one may call them are not the entity of any one nation, cast or creed.

Although he did not burn the Holy Quran, thanks to the US governments timely intervention, but the damage has been done. The very next day, a church in Jerusalem was attacked and the Holy Cross was also broken. Similarly riots and rallies were organized in many pre-dominantly Muslim states all over the world. God forbid, had his threat materialized, it would have created hell on earth. Nevertheless, his blasphemous act has already inspired many to gain cheap popularity overnight world over, especially within the US, where there are no hard and fast rules to tackle this menace which takes its course in the name of the so called 'freedom of expression'.

In Pakistan, the already oppressed Christian community made lots of hue and cry against the Terry Jones threat, and held joint conferences with the Muslim religious and political leaders. They also participated in the rallies, showed solidarity with Muslim majority and strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran.

Although, some Muslim scholars in Pakistan publically declared that harming the minorities (read Christians) in reaction to the utterances of the US Pastor is un-Islamic, but the Christian community is well aware of the fact that once the agitated masses are out on streets, it will be naive to expect any concession or rationality from them, they will attack churches, Christian institutions, and/or kill the innocent Christian as well, as it has already happened in the past.

The Danish blasphemous caricatures had put the life of the Christian community in jeopardy, and unimaginable damage was caused both to the general public and of the Christians property. The discriminatory blasphemy laws in Pakistan are another hanging sword on the neck of the minorities, especially the Christians.

The common perception in Pakistan is that this threat of burning the Holy Quran is part of a much broader conspiracy, with an objective to create a rift between the Christians and Muslims all over the world, and to dismantle the harmony among various cultures and religions. Some think, it's a plan to ignite an open war among the Christian and the Muslims, like a Crusade or a deadly 'Jehad'. Whatever the reasons may or may not be, but one thing is very clear that the Christian minorities living in Islamic states have been put in danger, especially in Pakistan.

Although, the blasphemy like negative laws exist in Pakistan, and need to be repealed. But, it is also true that most of the time the minorities in Pakistan live in place and enjoy the religious harmony. In some parts of the country, there is relatively less religious tolerance. But in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the Christian community lives relatively more peacefully.

The minorities are very active in Inter-faith activities, thus conferences at the local, regional and international level are held often. One can practically see the coexistence and religious tolerance among various faiths. In the 70's decade, long before the official launch of the 'Inter-faith Concept', the Z A Bhutto's government nationalized all the Institutions owned by the Christian community, but the 'NWFP' government simply refused. Infact, the 'Pathans' by nature are peace loving people, unless provoked. Similarly, today, all the minorities are working hard to promote Inter-faith and a culture of tolerance, and have been successful, so far.

The so called pastors, and the individuals like Terry Jones put the world peace (whatever there is left) in peril. Today, the countries like US do admit that Islam is not a foreign religion anymore in America, and so is the case in many European countries, where Muslim communities have earned recognition in all walks of life.

The western world has to find a way to tackle this menace of fanaticism which is being unleashed in the name of 'Freedom of Expression, or of the Press'. They do need to constitute strict laws to define clear-cut lines between freedom and the acts which are considered as 'blasphemous' for other faiths, and insulting to various cultures. If one can not respect the sensitivities of others, then the 'Freedom of Expression or of Speech' is just an empty slogan.

A Source of Joy
'Eid Package for Flood Victims'



'Eid Package' distribution

This year the Eid ul Fitar was celebrated in a very simple way on 10 & 11 September 2010, due to floods. The flood affected people due to their poor financial state were not able to shop to mark the Eid festival with traditional pomp and show.



The Bishop of Peshawar announced a special Eid Package for the Muslim neighbours of the Christian community living in the flood affected areas, to enable them to enjoy and celebrate their Eid. This was in addition to the relief packages already provided. This was a huge package including Prayer mates, food & non-food items, and new dresses to wear on this special occasion. The distribution was made by the Development & Relief Staff and of the Diocese. The Bishop himself visited some areas and met the people, spent sometime with them and exchanged Eid Greetings.



This Eid package became a source of joy for the people on Eid, this further enhanced the social ties and unity between the Christian and Muslim communities. This was also an example of Christian brotherly love, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. The country's print and electronic media also highlighted and appreciated this act of the Diocese.

Medical Services
'Medical Camp for Flood Victims'



A view of Free Medical Camp for Flood Victims

The Mission Hospital, Peshawar organized a 'Free Medical Camp' in Hassan Ghari, Peshawar for the flood victims, as eye-infections, cholera, malayria, various skin diseases are rapidly spreading and the communities are at risk. Both the government and private sector are trying their utmost to control the spread of the various contagious diseases.



Team of Mission Hospital, Peshawar

There are about 50 Christian families in Hassan Ghari, and the rest belong to the Muslim majority. In this medical camp, the doctors and para-medical staff provided free treatment and free laboratory and x-rays tests etc., even they provided free medicines to the local community, without discrimination of cast and creed.



Dr. Emmanuel examining the patients

The local community was grateful to the Diocese of Peshawar for their efforts, and the relief work for the flood victims. They also thanked the Mission Hospital staff for organizing the free medical camp, and asked them to hold such camps on regular basis.

Youth equipped with Health Knowledge
'Seminar on Health Awareness'



Participants of the Health Seminar

18 Sep, 2010: The St. John's Cathedral Youth Group organized a 'Health Awareness Seminar' at Peshawar, as various contagious diseases are spreading rapidly, due to the recent floods.

The Youth Group invited two Christian lady-doctors, Dr. Khushbakhat H. Peters and Dr. Kiran for this purpose. They gave a briefing on the causes of the various diseases, and taught how to overcome this problem. They also talked about the preventive measures, diagnosis and treatment of the contagious diseases.



Participants of the Health Seminar

A good number of people were invited from different churches of Peshawar. People from the flood affected areas were also invited to the seminar. They understood the message, and were equipped with the knowledge/awareness to overcome the problem in their communities.

The youth took a good initiative to develop awareness among the people, as it was a dire need of the present times and situation in the flood affected areas.

“Unleashing the Potential” **An Ecumenical Approach towards** **Youth Empowerment**



Session in progress during the Youth Conference

The Diocesan Youth Desk with the kind support and collaboration of IMPACT (International Mission for Poverty Alleviation and Community Transformation) organized a ‘Youth Empowerment Conference’ Peshawar on 10 – 11 September 2010, keeping in view the theme “Unleashing the Potential”, Empowering the Less Privileged.



Panel of facilitators in the Conference

This was a two-day conference, about 150 young people participated and were equipped with the knowledge of ‘Empowering the Youth’. It presented great unity as the ‘Body of Christ’, as the youth from all the denominations/churches and various para-church organizations were present in this conference, i.e. Church of Pakistan, Roman Catholic Church, Assembly of God Church, Orthodox Church in Pakistan, Ealoheem Pentecostal Church, Full Gospel Assembly (FGA) Church, and students from PFES (Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students), SCM (Students Christian Movement), CCC (Campus Crusade for Christ). The unity to cross all the bridges together was visible for the overall development of the community.

It was also a part of an exchange programme between the youth of Karachi and Peshawar.

A team of young people from IMPACT organization came from Karachi to help in arrangements and to participate in the conference.

The inauguration ceremony was led by Mr. Safdar Messey, the Diocesan Secretary, DoP, Dr. Mrs. Rabia Shaheen Peters, (Bishop’s wife, DoP), Pastor A. R. Hushmat, Chairman, Assembly of God Church, Mr. Zeeshan James, Executive Director, IMPACT, and Mr. Insar Gohar, Youth Officer, DoP.

The 1st Session was led by Pastor A.R. Hushmat on ‘Christian Living’, the 2nd Session on “the role of youth in the Church” was led by Rt. Revd. Ernest Jacob, Bishop of Orthodox Church in Pakistan. The session on “Fellowship with God” was led by Revd. Shahid Anwar from Karachi.



Participants of the Conference

The second day’s 1st Session was led by Dr. Sarah Safdar, Dean, Social Work Deptt., University of Peshawar and the topic was “Importance of Education for Youth”. The 2nd Session on “Time Management” was led by Revd. Sunil from Karachi. The 3rd session was led by Mr. Insar Gohar on “Sexual Immorality in our young generation”. The 4th Session was led by Miss Sarah Lawrence from Karachi, she talked about “Personality Development”.

The ‘Panel Discussion’ was held in the last Session. The participants were also given opportunity to put questions and share their opinion on different topics of the conference as well.

The Rt. Revd. Humphrey S. Peters, Bishop of Peshawar led the Closing Session, he encouraged the youth to step forward to take responsibility as leaders to serve the Lord and His people, and work hard to develop the Christian community in Pakistan.

He also thanked the joint efforts of the IMPACT, and of the Diocesan Youth Desk for nicely organizing the conference.

He also encouraged and motivated the youth leaders to organize this kind of youth gatherings more often.



Participants of the Conference

The Conference ended with a prayer and benediction by the Bishop of Peshawar.

(Education Sector)

New standards set for **Educational Institutions** **‘Heads Meeting’**

The Directorate of Education, DoP time to time arranges meetings of its Institutional Heads, and the progress of the institutions and their further development is discussed.

A similar kind of meeting was held on Friday, 10 September, 2010, which was chaired by Mrs. Naseem Dass, the Additional Director of Education. All the educational institutions heads of the DoP, along with assistant director academics, finance & admin were also present.

The meeting was held to discuss, “How to further develop the educational standards of the institutions, and the strategies for arranging trainings course for teachers within service, and how to use effective teaching methods and techniques for better teaching and learning. Some new techniques regarding this matter were also discussed. Regarding the teachers ‘dairy and lesson plan’, some recommendations for improvement were made by the participants.

During this meeting, various appointments, transfers, suspensions, and terminations were finalized for different institutions. The meeting ended with prayer, and followed by a fellowship lunch.

Women to promote Peace & Harmony 'Inter-faith Conference'



A Christian speaker addressing the Conference

24, Sep, 2010: The 2nd Women Inter-faith Conference was held at the Edwardes College School (Wing – 1), Peshawar.

The Conference was organized by the World Council of Religions (Faith Friends) in the collaboration with the Diocesan Women Desk. The theme of the conference was 'The Role of Women in Inter-faith Peace & Harmony'.



Participants of the Conference

Mrs. Reena Patrick, the Women Coordinator, DoP welcomed the guests/participants. Mr. Qari Ruhullah Madni, the chief coordinator of the Faith Friends in his welcome address presented a brief report of the activities of the Faith Friends.

Various speakers from 4 different religions expressed their views on the theme/topic of the Conference. Ms. Aisha Ayaz, Ms. Khadija Aziz and Ms. Noor Fatima from Muslim community, Ms. Farah Noureen and Ms. Sarah Zeba from Christian Community, Ms. Rashana Shibidiyal and Ms. Sharda Haroon from Hindu Community, Ms. Harjinder Kor from the Sikh Community shed light on different aspects, and efforts made by the women folks to promote Peace & Harmony.

They all emphasized to continue the good work in the future, as well. They also said that their efforts enable the women folk to become good citizens of Pakistan.

A special guest from the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Mr. Rizwan Ali was also invited, in his speech, he appreciated the great work of the women for promoting peace and harmony in the region.



NCA Representative presenting Souvenir to a speaker

In the end, The Rt. Revd. Humphrey S. Peters, the Bishop of Peshawar, addressed the audience and appreciated the efforts of the women for the noble cause of promoting peace and harmony in the region. He said that it is very important these days to work for Inter-faith peace & harmony. The Bishop encouraged and appreciated the women efforts for coming forward and working together for peace and harmony.



Bishop Humphrey along with Qari Ruhulla, during the Inter-Faith Conference

The Bishop also thanked the organizers and participants for making the conference successful. He also thanked the speakers for their ideas and input for promoting 'Peace and Harmony' in the region.

The conference ended with prayers offered by the people of different faiths.

Priests to form Disciplined Parishes

'In-service Training for the Clergy'



A view of historical Mission Hospital Chapel

10 Sep, 2010: The Diocese of Peshawar organized 'In-service Training Programme' for its Clergy, at the Mission Hospital Chapel, Peshawar. All the Presbyters and Deacons of the Diocese participated in this training.

The programme started with the Holy Communion, and the Devotion was led by Revd. Ijaz M. Gill, Dean, Southern Deanery, DoP. In his message, he talked about, "we as Pastors are actually stewards of God, we should use our authority in God's fear.

Both teaching sessions were led by the Rt. Revd. Humphrey S. Peters, the Bishop of Peshawar, his sessions were about "How to deal with the Parish (how to deal with the parish matters)". He quoted the reference from (Deuteronomy 17:14-20), "When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it"....

About the administrative role of a Priest in the Church, he said, "the priest can arrange different trainings for his parish committee members, for Sunday school teachers, and for the Youth and Women leaders". "Bible study groups and programmes for the spiritual growth of the congregation could also be organized. A priest should maintain discipline in his parish, and carry-out the administrative and managerial responsibilities. Only a disciplined and determined/committed Priest can form a disciplined parish," he added. Some of the liturgy and the other spiritual matters within the parish were also discussed.

“his name is Today”
‘Mental Health Centre’

The Peshawar Diocese as the Body of Christ promotes Peace and Reconciliation through its various Health, Education and Welfare programmes, which are excellent examples of ‘Minority helping the Majority’, but the Mental Health Centre, Peshawar bears a unique witness, and provides its services to all without discrimination of cast and creed.

Mental Health Centre, Peshawar is a training and resource base in the field of Special Education and Community Based Rehabilitation. Its facilities are utilized by the government and various NGO’s.



Instructors helping the students in various activities

Various schools of Nursing, Khyber Medical College, Peshawar, and various facilities of the University of Peshawar send their students for internship to the centre. Whereas, advocacy Services for the disabled persons reach beyond Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan.

The main services include;

- 1) Assessment and various therapies for handicapped children
- 2) Assessment and physiotherapy for physically disabled persons
- 3) Behaviour and Speech therapy
- 4) Orthotics and rehabilitation-aids workshop
- 5) Vocational training for mentally handicapped adults
- 6) Personnel training and Family Counseling
- 7) Information, publication and advisory services.

The special education school caters for mentally and multiply handicapped children. It’s a day care centre, and has room for 32 pupils.

The degree of handicap varies from mild to moderate. It has separate sections for boys and girls. This is the only centre, who caters for the severely mentally handicapped children and grown-ups. A student teacher ratio of 1:5 is maintained. Pick-n-drop facility for the school children is available.



The policy of the centre is to involve families and communities of the disabled persons in education, training and rehabilitation efforts, thus enabling them to carry-on the development programme/work at homes and at the community level.

*We are guilty of many Errors
 Worst of them is abounding our
 Children*

*Right now his bones are being
 developed
 His blood is being formed*

*A Child cannot wait for our Socio-
 economic development*

*Right now is a time to nourish him
 As, His name is ‘Today’*

(Gabriel Minstreal, Nobel Prize winner poet from Chilli)

Those who live in remote areas, and/or do not reside in the catchment area are offered ‘Home-Based’ therapy programme. Short term orientation courses about management of the disabled persons at home are offered for parents and close relatives. In all the rehabilitation efforts top priority is given to the ‘Human Dignity’, thus improving the quality of life of the disabled persons.

The children are taught mainly, social and academic skills, sports, leisure, various therapies, reading writing and daily living skills, whereas, vocational training, Inclusive Education and main

streaming of the mildly handicapped children is also a priority.

The Counseling Services are also an integral part of the services extended by the centre. Counseling services are provided both to the disabled persons and their families. Counseling helps them to overcome the disabling affects of the impairments, thus it promote a culture of cooperation and tolerance among the family members. It also helps families to adopt positive attitudes. Thus, counseling prevents/helps families to avoid marital breakdown after the birth of a handicapped child.

This centre, which is also known as ‘The little town of Bethlehem’ has been a smooth ride for the past 30 years. But, the recent global economic recession hasn’t spared anyone, and Pakistan is no exception. Charitable organizations like ‘Mental Health Centre’ have really been hit hard. The past couple of years have been quite turbulent, as survival of such organizations depends on the generosity of its friends and well wishers.



Activities for handicapped persons

Thank God; Mental Health Centre didn’t collapse, but has been badly affected by the sky-high prices of the fuel and of the other commodities. It used to provide its services six days a week, but now the special school is open only for five days a week. Of course, the disabled community and their families are suffering. Anyhow, it is pertinent to mention that the ‘Physiotherapy Clinic’ of the Centre is still providing its services six days a week, and throughout the year.

Mental Health Centre is a survivor, and hopes to survive, whatever the situation may be. All it needs is the support, cooperation and goodwill of the people with positive attitudes towards the disabled persons.