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Marriage

An Interfaith Symposium

Monday 30 September – Wednesday 2 October 2013

Thomas Carr Centre, 278 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne VIC 3002

www.cam.org.au/eic/symposium

In cooperation with Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Australian Catholic University Centre for Interreligious Dialogue, Victorian Council of Churches, Islamic Council of Victoria, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Hindu Foundation of Victoria, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria Inc. and Faith Communities Council of Victoria.



Day One: Monday 30th September

Theology and Anthropology of Marriage

8.30am

Registration

9am-9.30am

Welcome

Welcome Very Rev Denis Stanley, Episcopal Vicar for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Opening: by Mrs Jan Kronberg MLC, representing Hon Nicholas Kotsiras, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship

9.30am 10.15am

Session One: Introducing the Symposium

Moderator: Fr Denis Stanley (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission)

- Dr Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer: Why is marriage important to people of faith
- Professor Gary Bouma: The changing practice and meaning of marriage

10.15am-10:45am

Morning Tea

10:45am-12.15pm

Session Two: The Meaning of Marriage and Sexuality in My Tradition

Moderator: Fr Denis Stanley

Three presentations

(20 minute presentations followed by half hour moderated panel discussion)

- Dr Jayant Bapat (Hindu)
- Professor Surindar Singh Cheema (Sikh)
- Dr Thel Thong (Buddhist)

12:15pm-12.30pm

Joint Reflection Session

A time to pause for a time of reflection/prayer/meditation

12.30-1.30pm Lunch (BYO or nearby cafes)

1.30pm-3pm

Session Three: The Meaning of Marriage and Sexuality in My Tradition

Moderator: Fr Denis Stanley

Three presentations

(20 minute presentations followed by half hour moderated panel discussion)

- Dr Conor Sweeney (Christian)
- Rabbi Yaacov Glasman (Jewish)
- Dr Khairy Majeed (Muslim)

3pm-3.30pm

Afternoon Tea

3.30pm-5pm

Session Four: "Who owns Marriage in a Multifaith Society? The State or the Community or the Couple?"

Moderator: Dr Max Stephens (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission)

- Main presenter: Dr Desmond Cahill (RMIT)
- Respondent: (TBC)

Open discussion

Day Two: Tuesday 1st October:

Preparation and Rituals of Marriage

- 9am-10.30am** **Session One: How you get married in my tradition**
Moderator: Dr Adam Cooper (John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family)
Three presentations
(20 minute presentations followed by half hour moderated panel discussion)
- Ms Rachel Shields (Indigenous) (Acknowledgment of country)
 - Pandit Abhay Awasthi (Hindu)
 - Mr Albert Chang (Chinese Buddhist)
- 10.30am-11am** **Morning Tea**
- 11am-12.30pm** **Session Two: How you get married in my tradition**
Moderator: Dr Adam Cooper
Three presentations
(20 minute presentations followed by half hour moderated panel discussion)
- Rabbi Gersh Lazarow (Jewish)
 - Fr Jean Mawal (Orthodox Christian)
 - Sheikh Riad Galil (Muslim)
- 12.30pm-12.45pm** **Joint Reflection Session**
A time to pause for a time of reflection/prayer/meditation
- 12.45pm-1.45pm** **Lunch Break (BYO or nearby cafes)**
- 1.45pm-3pm** **Session Three: “Civil Celebrations and Interfaith Marriages: The Community and the Couple”**
Moderator: Ms Anna Krohn (Anima Womens Network)
- Mr Ange Kenos JP (Orthodox Christian):
Forming civil marriage rituals in a multifaith or secular environment
 - Mr David Schütz: (Catholic) Models for Interfaith Marriages
 - Respondent: Ms Myly Nguyen (Buddhist)
- 3pm-3.30pm** **Afternoon Tea**
- 3.30pm-5pm** **Session Four: Faith perspectives on the proposal to legislate for same sex marriage**
Moderator: Fr Denis Stanley (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission)
Four presenters from different faith perspectives and a moderated group discussion
- Rabbi Adam Stein (Jewish)
 - Mrs Chelsea Pietsch (Christian)
 - Mr Mohammed El-leissy (Muslim)
 - Mr Jagdeep Singh Shergill (Sikh)



Day Three: Wednesday 2nd October

Contemporary Pastoral Issues surrounding Marriage

9am-10.30am

Session One: The Pastoral Care of Marriages

Moderator: Sr Cheryl Camp (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission)

- Ms Denise Lacey (TBC) (Christian): Marriage Preparation and Enrichment
- Ms Monique Toohey (Muslim): Marriage Counselling
- Mr Kalman Rubin (Jewish): Marriage Mediation

Followed by Panel discussion.

10.30am-11.00am

Morning Tea

11.00am-12.15pm

Second session: It takes a Village to raise a family: The Cycle of Marriage and Family Life

Moderator: Mr Matthew MacDonald (Life, Marriage and Family Office, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne)

A moderated panel of parents from a variety of religious communities to discuss how religious community and practice affects marriage and family life, including ceremonies and rituals, and the religious upbringing of children

- Timmy and Kalman Rubin (Jewish)
- Rafiq and Maryam Clarkson (Muslim)
- Amarjit Singh and Gurmit Kaur (TBC) (Sikh)
- Mark and Linda Williams (Latter Day Saints)

12.15pm-12.30pm

Joint Reflection Session

A time to pause for a time of reflection/prayer/meditation

12.30-1.30pm

Lunch Break (BYO or nearby cafes)

1.30pm-3pm

Third Session: Divorce, Remarriage and the Religious Courts

Moderator: Dr Des Cahill (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission)

Speakers will take questions afterwards.

- Rabbi Meir Shlomo Kluwgant (Jewish): The role of Jewish religious courts
- Sheikh Abdinur Weli (Muslim): The role of Muslim religious courts
- Fr Tony Kerin (Catholic): The role of the Catholic Tribunal

3pm-3.30pm

Afternoon Tea

3.30pm-4.30pm

Fourth Session: One thing I have learnt from these days

Moderator: Dr Max Stephens (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission)

A moderated reflection and feedback session

4.30pm

Summing up and Thanks:

Very Rev. Denis Stanley, Episcopal Vicar for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Speakers

Abhay Awasthi is president of the Hindu Community Council of Victoria and the Executive Director of the Hindu Foundation of Australia, which established as an international network for the benefit of Hindus wishing to establish a marriage relationship in accordance with Vedic tradition. Born in Fiji, Pandit Awasthi has lived in Australia for more than three decades. He was the vice-chair of the Melbourne Program committee for the 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions.

Jayant Bapat AOM is an Adjunct Research Fellow at Monash University and works on the sociology of Hinduism. He is also a Hindu priest and an Authorized Marriage Celebrant. He has co-edited the book, "Goddesses of India, Nepal and Tibet" (2008) and is also the co-author of "The Indian Diaspora: Hindus and Sikhs in Australia", currently in press. Jayant has served as a priest for the Hindu community in Australia since 1980.

Gary D Bouma AM is the UNESCO Chair in Intercultural and Interreligious Relations – Asia Pacific, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Monash University and President of the Australian Association for the Study of Religions. He is an Associate Priest in the Anglican Parish of St John's East Malvern.

Desmond Cahill is a member of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. He is Professor of Intercultural Studies at RMIT University, and has been a world leading researcher and teacher in the areas of immigrant, cross-cultural and international studies for more than three decades. He is the deputy moderator and co-president of Religions for Peace Asia, chair of Religions for Peace Australia, and Australian representative for Religions for Peace International. He led Melbourne's successful bid to host the Parliament of the World's Religions in 2009.

Albert Chang is a Chinese Malaysian, who migrated to Australia 25 years ago. He is married with three adult children. Two of his children are married, and for their wedding they performed their version of a traditional Chinese ceremony in Melbourne. He is now retired and doing some volunteering work with the Buddhist Council of Victoria (teaching Buddhism for primary school children) and Yun Yang Temple at Narre Warren North.

Surindar Singh Cheema graduated with a PhD at Monash University in 1978 and has worked as a neuroscientist specializing in motor neurone disease research. During this time he worked in the USA and other leading universities and institutes in Victoria including Melbourne University, The Walter & Eliza Hall Institute and The Howard Florey Institute. Professor Cheema also has extensive neuroscience teaching experience involving medical, physiotherapy and science students at Monash University. He was Vice Chancellor of a medical school in Samoa until 2011 and has now embarked on a new venture as the CEO of Healthcare and Management Training College that is based in Collins Street in Melbourne. Surindar is a Sikh and has lived in Australia for 44 years, married, and has three daughters and two grandchildren.

Mohammed (Mo) Elleissy is a Melbourne-based Community Worker, former comedian, and contestant on the Amazing Race Australia. He currently is a member of the Victorian Multicultural Commission's Regional Advisory Council for North West Metro as well as a member of the National Leaders Group for the White Ribbon Foundation. He has previously served on the Victorian Premier's Multifaith Multicultural Youth Network and was a participant of the Governor's Roundtable into Multicultural Policy. In 2009 he was a speaker at the International Parliament of World Religions. He had also been an alumni of the Australia Indonesia Muslim Exchange Program. From 2009-2013 he was the Youth Engagement Officer with the Islamic Council of Victoria.



Speakers

Riad Galil OAM is the Imam of West Heidelberg Mosque. He is deeply involved in the Interfaith movement in Australia. Sheikh Riad is an executive member of the Jewish Christian Muslim Association and has served as president of the Association from 2011 to 2013. He also serves as a Chaplain at RMIT and Deakin Universities.

Yaakov Glasman is the Chief Minister of St Kilda Hebrew Congregation. He served as the President of the Rabbinical Council of Victoria from 2009 until 2012 and remains a senior member of its Executive Committee. He is a highly sought after speaker both in the Jewish and wider community and delivers popular fortnightly lectures at his Synagogue on a range of topical and often controversial issues.

Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer, Ph.D. (Regis College, University of Toronto) is a lecturer in the School of Theology at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. His primary research interests include the theology of grace, Lonergan studies, and theologies of religions. He has published in leading journals including Theological Studies, American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly, Australian eJournal of Theology, and Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia.

Ange Kenos is of the Hellenic Orthodox faith but he has been a Civil celebrant for over 15 years. Serving as Vice President for almost a decade with the national body. Training people to become Celebrants and retraining existing celebrants with two different colleges. He is a firm believer in the dignity of inter cultural relationships.

Tony Kerin is the Associate Judicial Vicar for the Province of Victoria and Tasmania and immediate Past President of the Canon Law Society of Australia & New Zealand. He is also Episcopal Vicar for Justice and Social Service in the Archdiocese, a Past President of the Catholic Society for Marriage Education, President of the Corpus Christi Seminary Alumni Association and Parish Priest of St Martin De Porres Parish Avondale Heights.

Meir Shlomo Kluwgant is the President of the Rabbinical Council of Victoria and Vice President of the Organisation of Rabbis of Australasia. He serves as ex-officio Director of Melbourne's Jewish Ecclesiastical Court and is a police chaplain and member of the Victoria Police Multifaith Advisory Council. Rabbi Kluwgant is the spiritual leader of Jewish Care Victoria and is a registered marriage celebrant.

Jan Kronberg MLC is Member of the Legislative Council of the Victorian Parliament for the Eastern Metropolitan Region. A member of the Liberal Party, Jan was elected in November 2006 and re-elected November 2010. An Executive Member of the Liberal Women's Council of Victoria, Jan has graciously agreed to open our Symposium as representative of the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Hon Nicholas Kotsiras. She is married, with two children, two step-children, and two step-grandchildren.

Denise Lacey is manager of the Marriage and Relationship Education Unit at CatholicCare. I She manages a team of 37 educators working in the areas of pre-marriage preparation, marriage enrichment, and parenting programs. She is responsible for program and resource development, supervision, employment and training.

Gersh Lazarow is passionate educator with a strong commitment to Progressive Jewish values, tradition and community. As a young professional, Gersh served as the Youth & Program Director of the United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong and as the Education Director of Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles. In 2009 Gersh returned to Melbourne to take up the position of Rabbi of The King David School where he directed the Centre for Living Judaism. In 2013 he was appointed Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel, only the fourth person to service in role since the founding of the Congregation in 1930.

Speakers

Khairy Majeed was born and educated in Iraq, and migrated to Australia in 1985. He obtained a PhD in Public Health from the University of Queensland in 1992. Over the last thirty years Khairy has held a range of positions and roles in the academic and research field as well as the social welfare sector in overseas and Australian institutions. Khairy is currently the Senior Cultural Advisor with the Broadmeadows Family Relationship Centre, where he works with other practitioners in the centre to ensure the delivery of culturally responsive family services including Family Dispute Resolution to parents and families in the community. He is a founding member of the Australian Iraqi Forum and its current Vice President and the Cultural Coordinator.

Jean Mawal of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, studied at St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College in Sydney before being ordained to the priesthood 5 years ago. He is currently serving at St Paul's Church in Dandenong. He is chairperson for the central youth committee of the Archdiocese in Victoria and has a passion in the field of marriage and family life. His parents were migrants from Lebanon, but he was born and raised in Australia. He describes himself as "very blessed with a beautiful wife and three young children".

Myly Nguyen was appointed a civil celebrant in 2001 - first Vietnamese-Australian woman in this role. Specialising in spiritual, civil, religious and non-denominational ceremonies, her aim as a celebrant is to assist couples in creating a ceremony that matches their values, beliefs, traditions and story. She is a member of the Civil Celebrants Graduate Association (Monash University) and the Australian Federation of Civil Celebrants.

Chelsea Pietsch is a member of the Lutheran Church and is married to Tom, a Lutheran Pastor. She has degrees in Arts (Philosophy) and Law (Hons) from the University of Adelaide and is the Executive Officer of Freedom 4 Faith, an ecumenical religious freedom organisation.

Kalman Rubin is a counseling psychologist currently in private practice and mediation at Victoria Legal Aid. For 10 years he was the Manager of Counselling/Mediation and counselor with the Family Court of Australia. He is on the Board of Management of the Family Mediation Centre and is currently working on his Ph.D. Thesis "The Effects of Sexual Abuse on Personality Development".

David Schütz has been the executive officer of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission since 2002. He is the Chair of the Victorian Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission and past Secretary of the Jewish Christian Muslim Association. His theological interests focus on ecumenism, church history and liturgical theology, and he is also a professional librarian. He is an educator for Anima Education and a cantor in his local parish and at the Cathedral.

Rachel Shields is a descendant of the Gamilaoy and Wailwan people of North West New South Wales. She is a counsellor working with children and families in the sexual assault sector, runs workshops in wellbeing, teaches Aboriginal Culture and Indigenous perspectives in schools and organisations, represents Indigenous spirituality amongst interfaith networks, and is also a performing artist.

Jagdeep Singh Shergill is lawyer, practicing primarily in property and commercial matters, but also in family law, wills and estates law and administrative law. He has represented the Sikh and Punjabi communities in Melbourne in many capacities over the years, including committee membership of the Multicultural Multifaith Youth Network, Centre Of Melbourne Multifaith and Others Network, Inter-Action Multifaith Youth Network, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria and the Sikh Cultural Society of Victoria. He was appointed a commissioner of the Victorian Multicultural Commission in 2009.



Speakers

Adam Stein is the rabbi of Kehilat Nitzan Synagogue, the only Masorti/Conservative shule in Melbourne. He received BA in Judaic Studies from University of California, San Diego, with minors in Theatre and Philosophy. He spent three years living and studying in Jerusalem during university and seminary studies. His rabbinic ordination and MAEd are from American Jewish University. Adam moved to Melbourne from the United States in 2011 with his wife Tamar, and they now have a five and a half month old, Eli.

Conor Sweeney is a lecturer in sacramental theology and postmodern philosophy at the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family, Melbourne. He is the author of a forthcoming book that explores the theme of sacramental presence in light of the postmodern critique of the metaphysics of presence, entitled *Sacramental Presence After Heidegger*.

Thel Thong was an ex-Colombo Plan student in the 1970's. He left Cambodia alone to pursue his post graduate study while the country was still at war. He earned a Master degree in Linguistics from Monash University. As he could not return home due to the war, he retrained again as a secondary teacher of ESL and French. He furthered his study and earned a PhD. in Education from the same university. He worked as teacher in Language Centres and later on as a Multicultural Consultant in the Southeastern Region until he took an early retirement in 1994.

Monique Toohey is Managing Director and Principal Psychologist of Nasihah Consulting – Northern Psychology Clinic. For 17 years she has specialised providing counselling and psychological services to Melbourne's Muslim community. She is an Executive Member of the Islamic Council of Victoria and she will release her debut book, *Without You: Rising above the impact of an abusive relationship* in November 2013.

Abdinur Weli is the Imam of the Islamic Council of Victoria. He also serves on the Victorian Board of Imams and Australian National Imams Council. Sheikh Abdinur has extensively worked with refugees and migrant communities over the past 14 years. He served on various government and community boards on refugee and asylum-seeker issues and continues to work with newly arrived and emerging refugee communities.



Abhay Awasthi



Jayant Bapat AOM



Gary D Bouma AM



Desmond Cahill



Albert Chang



**Surindar Singh
Cheema**



**Mohammed (Mo)
Elleissy**



Riad Gall OAM



Yaakov Glasman



**Christiaan
Jacobs-Vandegeer**



Ange Kenos



Tony Kerin



**Melir Shlomo
Kluwgant**



Jan Kronberg MLC



Denise Lacey



Gersh Lazarow



Khairy Majeed



Jean Mawal



Myly Nguyen



Chelsea Pietsch



David Schlütz



Rachel Shields



**Jagdeep Singh
Shergill**



Adam Stein



Conor Sweeney



Thel Thong



Monique Toohey



Abdinur Weli



Moderators

Cheryl Camp is a Sister of Mercy and a member of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission. She served for eleven years in Papua New Guinea in primary, secondary and adult education, seven years in Pakistan running a Women's Development Program, and with Aboriginal Communities in Australia for eight years. She has a Master of Islamic Studies from Melbourne University, and is currently studying for her PhD.

Adam Cooper is a Senior Lecturer at the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family (Melbourne). He has published scholarly and popular articles on theology and the Fathers, with a focus on the theology of the body. His STL thesis (summa cum laude) was entitled 'Performative Nuptiality: A Liturgical Theology of the Body'. His books are *The Body in Saint Maximus the Confessor: Holy Flesh, Wholly Deified* (OUP, 2005) and *Life in the Flesh: An Anti-Gnostic Spiritual Philosophy* (OUP, 2008). He is married to Elizabeth, and has one son, Ben.

Anna Krohn is a graduate in theology from the Melbourne College of Divinity. She has worked as a researcher for the Southern Cross Bioethics Institute and for the Bioethics Centre at St. Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne. She is a Foundation member of the Catholic women's movement Anima and the Women's Liaison Officer for the Archdiocese of Melbourne, a tutor in Spirituality and Nursing Ethics at the Australian Catholic University, and a columnist for *The Record*, a weekly Catholic newspaper in Western Australia.

Matthew MacDonald: For the past five years Matthew has worked as Executive Officer of the Life, Marriage and Family Office for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. With his wife Julie, he has been involved for more than ten years in speaking with students and young adults about forming healthy relationships as well as preparing couples for marriage as well, writing and teaching about marriage and family life. Matthew is currently completing a Masters in Theology at the John Paul II

Denis Stanley PP EV is the Episcopal Vicar for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. A longstanding member of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission, he was appointed the Chair of Commission in 2010 following the retirement of Monsignor Peter Kenny. He is parish priest of the Frankston Parish.

Max Stephens has the honour of being the longest serving member of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission. Max teaches mathematics at Australian Catholic University, and is also Adjunct Professor of Education at RMIT University and National Coordinator of Numeracy Research Projects at the University of Melbourne. He has served as Chair of the Faith and Order Commission of the Victorian Council of Churches and is active in inter-church activities as a member of the pastoral council of his parish in Kensington.



Cheryl Camp



Adam Cooper



Anna Krohn



Matthew MacDonald



Denis Stanley PP EV



Max Stephens





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