



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR
INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

*Christians and Jains:
To promote a culture of conviviality together*

MESSAGE FOR MAHAVIR JANMA KALYANAK DIWAS
2020

Vatican City

Dear Jain Friends,

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue extends its warmest greetings to all of you as you commemorate the 2618th Birth Anniversary of Tirthankar Mahavir on 6 April this year. May the celebrations centred on this feast reinforce the spirit of togetherness among you and fill your families and communities with peace and joy!

Taking forward our cherished tradition of sharing few thoughts with you on a relevant theme on this occasion, this year we wish to reflect on how we, Christians and Jains, can promote together a culture of conviviality for a harmonious coexistence and prosperity of all in the world.

Conviviality is *living together* with an attitude of sharing life's goods and gifts with one another - joyously and generously. It displays sharing of resources: natural, human, material and spiritual. It is living in agreement but also *living with differences*, while respecting diversities: ethnic, religious, social and cultural. It is about living in harmony with nature and ensuring equality and justice for all. It is also *working together* for the common good. In the words of Pope Francis, conviviality is "a sure barometer for measuring the health of relationships" (*General Audience*, 11 November, 2015) among humans and, between humans and nature.

With the rising indifference and insensitivity humans show towards others rendering harmonious co-living difficult even in families and communities, cultivating conviviality becomes a necessity and a responsibility of the entire human family. Tirthankar Mahavir taught, "Have benevolence towards all beings - jīvā and non jīvā" (*Tattvārta sōtrā*, Lesson 7, Sutra 11). Christianity teaches us, "Love your neighbour as yourself (Holy Bible, *Mathew* 22: 39); "If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry" (*Luke* 3: 11).

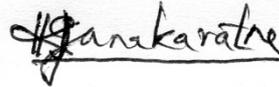
Both our religious traditions call for sparing no effort in building universal and fraternal conviviality everywhere. Along with families, the sanctuaries of life, where respect for the transcendent dignity and diversity of the other, trust, justice, kindness, sharing, cooperation, responsibility, solidarity, compassion for the poor and the needy and care for nature are easily learned and taught, all religious leaders, educational institutions and the mass media need to play a vital role in promoting a culture of conviviality, using all available means.

As believers rooted in our own respective religious traditions and as persons with concerns for the welfare of humanity, may we, Christians and Jains, promote gestures and concrete actions of conviviality in our homes and communities and may we, joining hands with people of other faiths and of good will, nurture a culture of conviviality whereby people may live together in peace and harmony, with love and happiness!

Wish you all a happy feast of Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Diwas!



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