

For immediate release

Hindus welcome Catholic-Jewish dialogue, calling it “step in the right direction”

Hindus have commended the four-day Catholic-Jewish dialogue which concluded in Paris on March two, and called it a “step in the right direction”.

Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, in a statement in Nevada (USA) today, said that it was wonderful to watch the world’s two major religions coming together and acknowledging a common religious duty to help relieve the global consequences of poverty, injustice, discrimination and the denial of universal human rights.

Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, suggested that His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI should invite world Hindu leaders for a similar dialogue in the near future, as Hinduism was the oldest and third largest religion of the world with about one billion adherents.

Rajan Zed pointed out that serious and honest interfaith dialogue was the need of the hour. Religion was the most powerful, complex and far-reaching force in our society, so we must take it seriously. And we all knew that religion comprised much more than our own particular tradition/experience, Zed stressed.

After intensive deliberations, this proposed meeting of Catholic-Hindu leaders should come up with a concrete plan about the common religious concerns like human improvement, peace, ecological responsibility, social & economic development, etc. Maybe this gathering could become an annual feature after that, Zed added.

Rajan Zed further says that in our shared pursuit for the truth, we can learn from one another and thus can arrive nearer to the truth. This dialogue may help us vanquish the stereotypes, prejudices, caricatures, etc., passed on to us from previous generations. As dialogue brings us reciprocal enrichment, we shall be spiritually richer than before the contact.

Holy See’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations participated in the Paris dialogue.

Pope Benedict heads the Roman Catholic Church, which is the largest of the Christian denominations. Moksh (liberation) is the ultimate goal of Hinduism. Judaism is a monotheistic religion of world’s about 14 million Jews whose most sacred text is Torah.