

The Annual Interfaith Dinner.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: Vedic phrase that means “world is one family”

The signs were auspicious from the start. I knew it, the instant I saw number seven on our table. The number seven brings to memory: the transfer of “true knowledge” from Shiva to the seven sages (Rishi’s) in East, seven days in a week, seven colours of the rainbow, seven notes on a musical scale, seven seas and seven continents. We, from different religious faiths had gathered around this table unified by sentiments of love and respect for each other. Coincidentally, the event started at 7pm. Seven voyages of Sinbad and the seven ages of man described by Shakespeare are popular in literature. Seven is a prime number. It can only be divided by itself and number 1. So was our table, in a prime location indeed!

The guest of honour was Baroness Susan Williams. She gave a very positive and rewarding speech.

The children spoke beautiful verses from Quran and Vedas. Aditya Ajay, aged 10 years and Arnab Ajay, aged 6 years: spoke the ancient Sanskrit Vedic mantras which translated as:

1)May God protect us both, the teacher and student, May God nourish us both, May we work together with energy and vigour, May our study be enlightening and not give rise to hostility. May Peace alone prevail.

2) Unto cosmos be peace, unto the sky and earth be peace. Peace be unto water, unto the herbs and trees ...

This brought to mind a beautiful thought, which I wanted to share: “preserve nature and nature will preserve us” “simplify life and make the nature thrive” “plant trees and make the planet green”

Another blessed sign was the colour red. This was shared partly in the dress code between me and my neighbour at the table. Red is a symbol of happiness, auspiciousness and peace .We exchanged religious views. It was not only our clothing that matched but we understood how we shared common values of goodwill.

The event ended with dinner and desserts. The way we were gathered in this room, I hoped and prayed that humanity will co-exist outside the confines of the room to make earth a beautiful place to live on. The “earth” gave freely, it never put price on the land or its resources. Humans have created barriers on earth and between themselves by creating barriers within their own hearts and minds. I truly hope and pray, that these veils of delusion will be lifted all over the world.

Just like the sun gives freely its warmth, energy and light without asking anything in return, so shall humans give love freely regardless of their differences and be one large happy family.

May selflessness flourish and selfishness fade. May love blossom and hatred wither. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

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