

PRESS RELEASE

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THE INSTITUTE OF JAINOLOGY LEADS JAIN DELEGATION TO THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

VATICAN, 31st May 2016. The Institute of Jainology have again led a Jain delegation to the Vatican, to attend the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious dialogue. Representing Jains, globally the delegation presented a collated report of Jains' involvement in the promotion of inter-religious dialogue in various countries.

The council and the delegates, also discussed Jain-Christian relations in general and drew up plans on ways to improve them. To end the session with the council, a keynote was given with both a Christian and a Jain perspective on 'Taking care of Earth, the home of human family'. IoJ director, Dr Mehool Sanghrajka, presented the Jain perspective, summarizing his paper, he commented:

"The signs of our environmental damage are all around us. Degradation of the environment and climate change are already causing great suffering. Unchecked consumerism and wastefulness, the hallmarks of modern life, continue to cause irreparable damage to the planet. From a Jain perspective, taking care of the earth is not merely concern for the environment. It is far deeper, and rooted at the heart of Jain preaching. Co-existing with all other forms of life in an interdependent world, is about not causing harm to our fellow souls, and sin to one's self."

H. Ex. Mons. Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, MCCJ, Secretary, of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious dialogue, presented the Christian perspective on the topic. The delegation and members of the Council were then invited to a luncheon, organised by the Institute of Jainology to continue discussions in an informal setting, afterwhich the Council kindly organised a tour of St Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museum for the entire Jain delegation.

The delegation were then fortunate enough to have an audience with HH The Pope the next day, and Mr Nemu Chandaria, Chairman of the Institute of Jainology, presented HH with a book celebrating the Institute's 25 year anniversary, along with various other gifts from Jains worldwide.

The delegation's successful trip paves way for inter-religious effort on making people not only more environmentally friendly, but friendly in all mannerisms and to all beings.