

Ideas for Partnering Activities

Muslim Catholic Alliance Pairings Project

Here is a list of ideas for projects that Muslim and Catholic Communities can use to develop relationships, to build understanding, and to do good together. These are a starting point but there are many other possibilities.

- **Service projects/interfaith cooperation** – a single day event working at Foodlink or Habitat for Humanity together. Include an icebreaker before the work starts and a meal or discussion at the end of the service if you can. Consider a regular monthly or quarterly service event so people who can't make it one time might be able to come another time or an ongoing project- neighborhood clean-up, working in a food pantry, community garden etc.
- **Interfaith dialogue & Observing Worship**-plan a worship exchange with teaching before and after and a little bit on etiquette, and what you can expect to see. MCA can offer guiding questions and/or leaders for these events.
- **Education-Islam 101, Christianity 101** where the two groups learn about basic beliefs and practices. MCA can offer speakers for these events.
- **Discussion Series** with sharing around different topics-death, Mary, creation, prayer, holiness, fasting.
- **Book Discussion or Book Club** with these or other books:
 - *In the Spirit of St. Francis and the Sultan: Catholics and Muslims Working Together for the Common Good*, George Dardess (also available in DVD, 2 sessions of 25 minutes each with questions).
 - *THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: An Islamic Perspective*. Dr. David Bell, the author of *Sermon on the Mount* is a member of the Muslim Catholic Alliance and is available to speak for these events dsbell67@hotmail.com.
- **Recreational/Hospitality** events picnic, children's festival, soccer with mixed teams
- **Gather "like groups"** do both partners have a moms' group or a men's group? Is there a service project group in each place or a hospitality group that provides food or outreach in each place? Get the two groups together for interfaith dialogue.
- **Youth events** – any of the events listed could be done by youth or focus on youth. Youth can give a special energy to the effort and it is sometimes easier to start with the young.

A Few Tips:

- Review "Guidelines for Dialogue" before you begin planning and make sure everyone understands the goals of dialogue (the goal is not conversion but understanding).
- Sometimes it is better to start with a small project first to increase your chances of success and let that be the foundation for a larger task down the road.
- Talk about food guidelines. It is not difficult to provide foods that everyone can partake of and food is a great community builder! But groups may need a little education about what to serve.
- If you are trying to plan with a larger group: Keep track of good ideas. A more complex project might be great later on! Be sure people feel valued even if you do not chose their idea. Watch out for strong personalities and make sure everyone gets a chance to be heard.
- As you plan keep negative talk to a minimum. There are always many reasons why something might not work (and it's ok to be realistic) but don't let naysayers weigh down your group. If there is a lot of resistance to one idea move onto something else.