

14 APRIL 2022

BRAHMA KUMARIS PHILIPPINES

SERVICE NEWS

INTENSIFYING DIVINE LIGHT AND MIGHT: AN INVITATION TO EXPERIENCE SILENT CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD

The program host, Emmie Velarde, a multi-awarded journalist, and student of Brahma Kumaris aptly introduced the remembrance of God's name and the memory of God through the words of Sandra Thurman Caporale of the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston. YHWH. Four letters. YH (inhale), WH (exhale). Indeed, God's name is the very breath we take. 'Being alive means breathing, I speak His name constantly. Is it heard the loudest and clearest when I am the quietest?'

Sister Rajni Daulatram, National Coordinator of the Brahma Kumaris Japan and Philippines lovingly welcomed the guests and panelists in the program saying that the Lenten time naturally brings us to moments of self-reflection and soul-searching. The program is special to the heart of Brahma Kumaris, a spiritual organization open to all mankind that is honored to have the presence of faith leaders, practical believers of life and goodness, and close friends in the gathering. She implored that together we nurture ourselves by having silent conversations with God. With pure feelings, each one of us comes closer and closer to the loving heart of God.

Setting the Tone

Sr Gopi Patel, an experienced meditation teacher, international speaker and spiritual educator set the tone of the conversation. She was raised in Africa and educated in the UK and India, thus, she carries a rare and fine blend of Eastern spiritual wisdom and Western education and culture.

Checking in from Mt. Abu, Rajasthan, India, Sr. Gopi finds herself sitting in the Tower of Peace – a beautiful memorial for Brahma Baba, the founder of BK, who has dedicated and surrendered his life to intensifying God's light and might in himself and in the world. She shared that when one sits by this memorial, a very simple tower, one is taken into the experience of deep silence. This then becomes a powerful reminder of coming alone and going back alone, which is not a loneliness, but a reality of life that allows us to move beyond the noise of everything that we have identified with that is limited.

In self-examination, she made everyone reflect on the question, 'What do I still identify with?' Then further explained that whatever it is that we identify with, rules our experience.



April 14, Maundy Thursday started with a very beautiful contemplation and conversation with God in silence through the collaboration of Brahma Kumaris Philippines and Uniharmony Partners Manila, an interfaith program that explores a common ground in all faiths, religions and beliefs – communion with God, the Holy Light, the Supreme Being.

 
HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 14 | 4:00 TO 6:00PM
Make time for a silent conversation with God.

INTENSIFYING DIVINE LIGHT AND MIGHT WITHIN US



66

**Remember, I will still be here as long as you hold me in your memory...
I'm with you whenever you tell me your story - for I'm the only One
Remember Me**

99

In Sr. Gopi's 40+ years of experience, in connection with the Divine, she has completely experienced and felt how unlimited the Supreme presence is. It was her spiritual effort to re-identify again with God at a very deep level and engage with this energy in various forms – child, friend, mother, father, friend, life companion. These different relationships bring magic to our lives.

But what does it take to sustain and nurture the connection with God? Sr. Gopi made everyone reflect on the second question: What are you incubating in your life right now?

To manifest and sustain that relationship, we need to begin to INCUBATE the experience of the purest energy inside ourselves. As soon as we hit the core inside, and become familiar with it, we recognize that beyond the human costume, we begin to see that 'I too am an eternal being, a spiritual being, a soul having a human experience.'

A short meditation experience followed, allowing the soul to let the inner quality of peace emerge, to fill the mind and heart. This vibration of peace touches everything in our life. As we incubate, this creates a space in our hearts for God to reside. There is nothing more special than having the feeling of being with God. All we must do is to match the frequency with these two questions in mind: What am I still identifying with? What am I incubating inside me?

Silence and Prayer

Prof. Bong Baybado, Associate General, Religions for Peace Asia and Coordinator of UniHarmony Partners Manila, moderated the conversations which focused on experiencing, sustaining and igniting the communion with God in the tradition of the different religious and spiritual practices of the invited panelists.



The first round of conversations featured Elder Steven Bangerter, General Authority Seventy, Philippines Area Presidency from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and The Rev May Casiano Casada, the Dean and Director of the Cathedral of St. Philip and St. James Episcopal Church, Diocese of Davao. Both shared their experience of God in the light of Sr. Gopi's reflective opening, highlighting the point that in the quiet communion with God, we see through, feel through the veil that separates us from God. Padi May pointed out that the Holy Week is a time to be with God in silence through prayer, fasting and meditation.

Tanya Diaz, a writer and consultant for All Children, Inc. sang 'ONE GOD,' a very powerful and uplifting song during the program's intermission between the two conversation sessions.. She was accompanied by her mother, Tina Diaz Ilete, a singer and composer who is a student of the Brahma Kumaris.

Sister Gopi noted from the panelists' sharing that a preparation of creating a space inside is crucial in order to sustain a meaningful conversation. Otherwise, we bring in the energies of the dramas in our life into the conversation. Then it turns into a complaining conversation, instead of a peaceful, quiet one. We beg and ask God to do something. The core of this relationship is so much of love, beauty and respect. Can I accept that God loves and respects me? When I sit in the self-respect of being loved, accepted and respected by God, then I will make a time to create that space to initiate a respectful and loving dialogue.

Elder Steven mentioned that in the tradition of the Latter-Day Saints, this preparation comes in the form of stripping away before instituting the Eucharist, a sacred sacrament. In the Anglican or Episcopalian tradition, Padi May Casada stated, 'Prayer is at the centerstage of the conversation – a time to be thankful and to commune with God, not for petition or supplication, but to have a moment with God, to discern and ask for guidance.'





***A sincere conversation where
the quality of thought I bring in
front of God is sincere.***

***Being able to reveal what I am
to God,
Brings the soul to a natural
form silence.***

Silence combines with a heartfelt prayer, a sincere conversation combined with silence, brings to light something very special and unique."

Atty. Emily's insights on the word 'incubation' brings back the conversation to silence as a gift. In her words, meditation is a way of connecting to God. This can happen anywhere, even while walking under the moonlight.

With the natural beauty around us, there is a sense of being embraced and silence comes as a natural thing. What is natural is real. Sister Gopi then alludes to the seasons of change, the drama of life. Humanity is in its wintertime, thus, incubation should be the focused practice at this time. To be introvert, but not to isolate. The whole drama of life is a balancing act like nature. Awareness is the key to balance. Who is seeing the beauty of nature? It is the spiritual being within, God's co-creator in creating heaven on Earth. Experience the Creator at work. Experience the solitude of silent communion.

Dr. Erlinda Senturias, a Protestant whose ecumenical work involves Asian Interfaith Network on AIDS, Christian Conference of Asia and the World Council of Churches who attended the program concluded the conversations and experience as calming, nourishing and spiritually-filling.

Participants then summed up their individual spiritual experience through a Mentimeter word cloud exercise led by Sr. Vicky, coordinator of BK Makati Center

One or two words to describe your spiritual experience during the program

