

# Heroes of Faith

Co-hosted with the World Congress of Faiths

Global Cooperation House, London

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May

On this May Day, the World Congress of Faiths were invited to hold their Annual General Meeting at the Brahma Kumaris UK headquarters. In the evening, the trustees joined the public and participated in a panel discussion with representatives of different faiths sharing on their personal Heroes of faith.



**Alan Race**, Chair of the World Congress of Faiths, led the panel through their personal stories and helped them reminisce of what their heroes meant to them in their lives.

**Mary Braybrooke** represented Christianity and spoke from her past experience as a social worker, interfaith activist and magistrate. She chose Martin Luther King, the Christian pacifist and pastor, because he believed in equality between men and women. His 'I have a dream' speech particularly inspired her, *'I have a dream...when we allow freedom to ring...to ring from every village, state and city, we will speed up that day when all of God's children will be able to join hands and sing 'free at last, thank God Almighty, we are free at last.'* Mary remarked how Martin Luther King worked with the light, which is what she aims to do.

**Maqsood Ahmed**, OBE, Director of Community Development at Muslim Hands representing Islam shared his faith hero, the Sufi poet, Rumi. What most strikes him about Rumi's work was his high clarity of vision. *He came from a powerful family and journeyed spiritually on the path of Sufism. He shared love and sincerity and he was not just a Muslim saint, but a saint for humanity. He is now the most popular poet in the US!*



**Sister Jayanti**, represented the Brahma Kumaris, chose as her hero the founder of the Brahma Kumaris, Brahma Baba. He was an amazing visionary and he started in 1936 with his visions of a better world. His vision was one of justice, truth, equality, love. He had the courage to put his vision immediately into practise. He trained young girls and some women in their 20's to become spiritual teachers and leaders as he saw the inequality of gender existed everywhere. Still today this is not happening on a universal level. His essential teaching was REMEMBER ONE GOD.

Sister Jayanti also shared an example of another hero, Lesley Edwards, a secondary school teacher, who throughout a lengthy illness, remained hopeful and reassuring and gave comfort to those dear to her as she left this life.

**Dadi Janki, Administrative Head of the Brahma Kumaris**, at 102 years old, joined the gathering and she invited everyone to sit in silence, to sit in peace and shared the following wisdom.

“We are all the children of God and yet when we recognise God He consciously adopts us. Once God adopts us, He hugs us and then he teaches us to fly. There is no effort or ego in that. When we are free of ego there is a great deal of happiness. We have two enemies: Ego and attachment. When we are free of both these, God will enable us to create huge fortune. On one side is God and on the other side is my fortune and we receive God's power. Even if we don't want it, human nature is such that ego comes in. God reminds us – who are you showing your ego to. Be an honest child of God and you will become egoless. The vision of love and honesty is what I can share”.



**Georgina Long**, the Brahma Kumaris Interfaith Co-coordinator, on behalf of all present, thanked the World Congress of Faiths trustees, the panellists and the audience for their contribution.

**Marcus Braybrooke**, the president of the World Congress of faiths finalised by giving thanks to Dadi Janki: “Thank you Dadi for your whole way of life, your example and the love and for the kind hospitality we have had this evening”

Dadi Janki shared toli and blessings with all.