

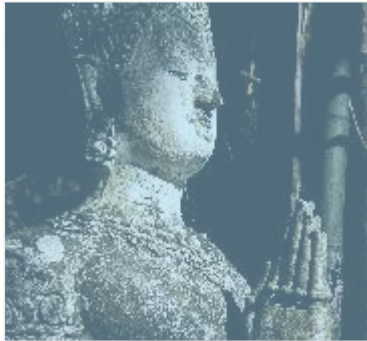


RELIGIONS FOR WORLD UNITY
Beyond Religious Coexistence –
Towards an Inclusive, Transformed Society

11th International Interfaith Conference

Theme: Reimagining Our World Together, Placing Gender Equality
at the Heart of Humanity

24th to 26th July, 2026



Organised by:

City Montessori School

Rajajipuram Campus II (Serenity Building),
C - 1889, C Block, Rajajipuram,
Lucknow- 226017 | Ph: +91 9565687850, 7084220332
Email: interfaith@cmseducation.org
web: cmseducation.org

READ MORE





TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Concept Note — 02-04
- Message from Founder-Director — 05
- Message from Manager — 06
- Message from President — 07
- Message from Head QAID — 08
- Message from Convenor — 09
- Why is The Conference Necessary?
Objective of the conference — 11
- Agenda of the conference — 12
- Participants of 2025 — 12-13
- General Rules & Regulations — 14
- Host Campus — 15
- Competitions — 16-22
- Event Glimpses from 2025 — 23
- Brief biography of
Late Dr Jagdish Gandhi — 24

Our Inspiration



**Late Dr Jagdish Gandhi
(1934-2024)**

Inspired by the belief of late Dr Jagdish Gandhi that a *healthy body houses a healthy mind*; we dedicate the International Interfaith Conference to his memory.

Dr Gandhi was a proponent of holistic education—material, human and divine. His motto, *Jai Jagat* (Victory to the World), embodied interfaith harmony and respect for all beliefs. He taught that no single faith holds a monopoly on truth and that peace arises from dialogue, not division. He believed that the Earth is but one country and mankind its citizens. In a world fractured by division, his message remains a necessary path to peace. He taught us that true religion must be the cause of unity and that differences in belief should not overshadow our shared human dignity.

This conference continues his vision: to bring diverse faiths together, not to debate differences, but to recognise shared values. In that spirit, we honour a man who shaped not only students but also a culture of mutual respect across religions.

"The first principle of global peace is respect between all faiths. No peace among nations without peace among religions."

Here, we do not debate doctrines. We seek understanding. We honour the conviction that genuine spiritual harmony is not a distant ideal but a practical necessity for a peaceful and sustainable world.

Let us uphold his legacy – as we gather and recall the wisdom that the light of unity is so powerful that it can illuminate the whole Earth. By embracing interfaith respect, we transform this vision into action. Let us work together to ensure that our commitment to harmony secures a peaceful, unified future for all generations.

Concept Note

Theme: “Reimagining Our World Together, Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity”

In an interconnected yet uneven world, gender equality remains a defining test of institutional credibility and societal progress. It is not solely a policy objective but a structural and ethical requirement for stable, productive and just societies. The United Nations identifies gender equality as central to the Sustainable Development Goals, yet progress remains slow and uneven.

Contemporary global challenges—economic uncertainty, social polarisation, conflict and rapid technological change—have underscored both the urgency of addressing persistent inequalities and the critical contributions of women's leadership. As of 2025, no country has fully achieved gender parity in leadership roles. Women hold only 27.2% of parliamentary seats globally (IPU, 2025). Nearly one-third women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime (WHO, 2021). Without targeted action, closing the economic gender gap will take another 134 years (WEF Global Gender Gap Report, 2024).

These are not abstract figures; they reflect structural imbalances in access, opportunity and decision-making power. This conference positions gender equality as both a moral imperative and an institutional priority, recognising that durable change requires alignment between values, governance systems and social practice.

Conceptual Focus:

The conference advances a clear proposition: gender equality must be addressed simultaneously at three levels—ethical, structural and generational.

- **Ethical:** Norms and values shape behaviour. Faith traditions and moral frameworks remain influential in defining these norms across societies.
- **Structural:** Laws, policies and economic systems determine access to opportunity and participation.
- **Generational:** Education and youth engagement shape long-term societal transformation.

The programme moves systematically across these dimensions—from moral and spiritual foundations to leadership and policy, education systems, and student-led action. Values without institutional backing remain symbolic, and policy without societal alignment remains ineffective.

Core Areas of Engagement:

The conference will convene policymakers, faith leaders, educators, development practitioners, and student representatives to translate dialogue into accountable

action. Each plenary will include a documented case study of a successful faith-aligned gender equality intervention, detailing what worked, what did not, and why. To ensure tangible progress, commitment letters and policy outcome statements will specify public tracking mechanisms, monitoring indicators, and designated accountability holders over a twelve-month period. A multi-faith working group will be established with defined deliverables, timelines, and ownership of each outcome. Discussions will be grounded in regional contexts to reflect the diverse realities of gender inequality. These mechanisms aim to ensure measurable follow-through, not just aspirational pledges, so as to enable verifiable, sustained change.

Discussions will focus on four thematic pillars:

Pillar 1 – Enabling equitable participation:

Addressing overt discrimination, unpaid care work, mobility restrictions and lack of property rights. Globally, women perform 76% of unpaid care work (WHO, 2024), limiting their economic and political participation. Faith institutions can help by recognising care work as socially valuable and advocating for shared family responsibility.

Pillar 2 – Strengthening education, economic opportunity and digital access:

Globally, 119 million girls are out of school (UNESCO, 2024). Faith institutions can support digital literacy programmes for women and girls in conservative settings. Women own less than 20% of global assets (WEF, 2017). Legal literacy programmes hosted in places of worship can help women claim inheritance and property rights.

Pillar 3 – Reaffirming and critically engaging with faith traditions:

This pillar includes affirmative teachings alongside honest discussion of historical and contemporary interpretations that have justified exclusion. Panels will feature reformist theologians, women imams and priests, and scholars of scriptural reinterpretation. The goal is not to dismiss tradition but to recover its most inclusive possibilities.

Pillar 4 – Fostering collaboration across institutions:

Proposed outcomes include memoranda of understanding between faith bodies, government agencies and women's rights organisations, and the creation of a multi-faith gender equality working group that meets biannually to review progress.

The conference commits to inclusive representation, with at least 50% participation of women across panels and leadership roles and active inclusion of voices across geography, socio-economic context and lived experience.

Intersectionality and Inclusion:

Gender inequality intersects with income, geography, education and access to resources. Rural women,

minority communities and those outside formal economic systems often face compounded barriers. The conference will explicitly address these dimensions to ensure solutions are grounded, inclusive and implementable across diverse contexts.

A Shared Ethical Vision Across Traditions:

Across faith traditions, there is a shared recognition of the dignity, strength and indispensable role of women in the advancement of society.

The quotations represent inclusive interpretive strands, not sole or uncontested readings.



HINDUISM

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्चं नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ।

Translation: *kīrtiḥ śrīr vāk ca nārīṇāṃ smṛtir medhā dhṛtiḥ kṣamā*
— Bhagavad Gita 10.34 (Swami Prabhupada, 1972)

Meaning: Among women, I am fame, prosperity, fine speech, memory, intelligence, steadfastness and patience.



JUDAISM

Source:

“She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.”
— Proverbs 31:25–26 (NIV, 1984)

Meaning: This describes a woman of valour whose inner character and wisdom provide her with the confidence to face the future without fear.



CHRISTIANITY

Source:

“There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”
— Galatians 3:28 (NRSV, 1989)

Meaning: This verse asserts that in the eyes of God, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one.



ISLAM

Source:

لَيْسَ آي خَيْرُكُمْ وَأَنَا لَيْسَاءِ رَ حَى رَ كُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ
Transliteration: *Khayrukum khayrukum li-nisā'ihī wa ana khayrukum li-nisā'ī*
— Hadith, Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 3

Meaning: True excellence is defined by treating women with utmost kindness and care.



BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Source:

“The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other is men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly.”
— ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 301

Meaning: This Holy Writing illustrates that global progress and the maturity of human civilisation are impossible without the full and equal participation of women alongside men.



BUDDHISM

Source:

“...women are able to realise the fruits of stream-entry, once-returning, non-returning, and even arahantship...”
— Anguttara Nikaya 8.51 (Gotami Sutta), Nyanaponika Thera, 1970

Meaning: The Buddha explicitly confirms that women are able to realise all stages of enlightenment, including final liberation.



JAINISM

Source:

Parasparopagraho Jīvānām
(परस्परपग्राहो जीवानाम्)
— Tattvartha Sutra 5.21 (5th century CE, Nathmal Tatia, 1994)

Meaning: This verse establishes that all souls are spiritually identical; women possess the same capacity for liberation as men.

These teachings converge in affirming that when women are respected and empowered, societies flourish. Recognising points of tension within each tradition does not weaken this affirmation; it strengthens the dialogue by examining how these principles translate into equitable access, representation and outcomes in contemporary societies.

Student Engagement and Intergenerational Responsibility

A dedicated student track will bring together younger participants to co-create a student-led declaration on gender equality, to be presented at the closing plenary. Outcomes include mentorship pairings between senior faith leaders and young activists, and seed funding for youth-led local initiatives selected through a competitive proposal process.

Gender equality is therefore a systemic issue requiring coordinated action across moral frameworks, institutional structures and generational change. It cannot be addressed through isolated interventions. This conference positions itself as a platform for convergence—bringing together values, evidence and implementation pathways. Its objective is not only to shape discourse but also to enable measurable progress.

Reimagining our world together requires clarity of intent, institutional accountability and sustained collaboration. Placing gender equality at the centre of this effort is both necessary and achievable.



Message from Founder-Director



DR BHARTI GANDHI
CMS FOUNDER DIRECTOR

Dear Esteemed Delegates,

As we gather once again as a global family, united by a shared vision of peace and a collective determination to address the most pressing challenges of our age, I welcome you to the 11th International Interfaith Conference organised by CMS Rajajipuram Campus II. For over a decade, these annual gatherings have quietly shaped the moral imagination of thousands of young minds, demonstrating that interfaith dialogue is not an abstract ideal but a practical pedagogy for peace. This year's theme is both transformative and essential:

'Reimagining Our World Together: Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity.'

To truly reimagine our world, we must recognise a fundamental spiritual truth: that the human soul has no gender. In the sight of the Creator, there is no distinction between women and men; the only true distinction lies in the purity of one's heart and the excellence of one's deeds. Gender equality is not merely a social goal or a modern necessity; it is a spiritual reality that must be reflected in the very structure of our society.

As I was reading recently, I came upon a profound and clarifying truth: ***"The world of humanity has two wings – one is women, and the other is men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly."*** This metaphor is not poetic embellishment; it is a structural truth. A bird with one wing clipped may flutter but never soar. Likewise, any civilisation that systematically restricts

the contributions of half its population remains grounded, unable to reach the heights of justice, prosperity, or lasting peace.

Over eleven editions, this conference has educated children not merely to tolerate difference but to celebrate it and to understand that peace is built not in grand treaties alone but in daily acts of respect across faiths and genders. The progress of humanity has long been hindered by imbalance. As women move into their rightful roles as equal partners in all fields of human endeavour – from science and education to governance and faith – the old culture of force and conflict will give way to an age where compassion, intuition and service gain ascendancy.

By prioritising the education of the girl child and fostering a deep respect for equality in the hearts of our youth, we ensure that the next generation will be the torchbearers of a world free from prejudice and gender inequality. Let us work together to place gender equality at the heart of our families, our schools and our faith communities. Only then shall the bird of humankind finally soar – towards unity, towards justice, and towards a peace that is not merely the absence of war but the presence of a world that honours every soul.

With prayers for the progress of all humanity.

Message from Manager



**PROF. GEETA GANDHI
KINGDON**

MANAGER
CITY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The International Interfaith Conference has evolved into a platform that connects ethical reflection with measurable action. In a period marked by social fragmentation, economic uncertainty and rapid technological change, the need for grounded, values-based leadership is clear.

The theme of the 11th International Interfaith Conference 2026, ***“Reimagining Our World Together: Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity,”*** organised by CMS Rajajipuram Campus II, addresses a structural and moral priority. Gender equality is often discussed as an aspiration; however, it is a prerequisite for just and stable societies.

This conference treats it as an ethical, institutional and generational requirement. Across faith traditions, there is a shared affirmation of human dignity, mutual respect and the equal worth of women and men.

When interpreted with integrity, these values serve as a unifying force, enabling interfaith harmony and strengthening collective responsibility.

This conference approaches the issue across three interlinked dimensions—ethical, structural and generational. Faith traditions offer a common moral foundation that upholds equality. Institutions and policy frameworks must translate these principles into equitable systems and opportunities. Education remains central, equipping young people with the capacity to think critically, act responsibly and lead with purpose.

The panel discussions build on this foundation. They examine barriers to participation, the role of education and economic access, and the ethical grounding within religious traditions. Particular emphasis is placed on interfaith collaboration as an enabler of sustainable progress—where dialogue leads to shared action. Practical pathways will be explored, including recognition of unpaid care work, strengthening digital and financial literacy, and enabling inclusive leadership.

Crucially, students will not be spectators. A dedicated track will produce a student-led declaration poised to develop in them critical thinking, problem-solving and ethical reasoning skills honed through discourses on the role of religion in promoting gender equality. Students will be empowered to engage with complexity, respect diversity and act with responsibility. The principles of ***Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*** remain relevant in shaping global citizenship rooted in respecting interfaith harmony and gender equality.

This conference aims to move from intent to implementation with a shared commitment to act with consistency and purpose. Its success will be measured not by ideas alone, but by the clarity of pathways it creates for a more just, inclusive and balanced world.

Message from President



DR ROGER KINGDON

PRESIDENT
CITY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Dear Delegates, Educators, Faith Leaders, and Young Global Citizens,

As someone who has spent a lifetime in the company of equations, algorithms, and the rigorous demands of scientific inquiry, I have learned that the deepest truths are not always found in data alone. They reside, as often, in the quiet architecture of human values – in the way we choose to see one another across the seemingly unbridgeable divides of faith, culture, and gender. It is a profound honour to welcome you to the 11th International Interfaith Conference, a gathering that has, for over a decade, demonstrated that dialogue is not a soft skill but a structural necessity for a peaceful and just world.

This year's theme, *'Reimagining Our World Together: Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity,'* is not a political slogan. It is a systems problem of the highest order. From my work in artificial intelligence and complex systems, I know that any system – whether a machine-learning model, a scientific institution, or a society – that systematically excludes half its available intelligence is not only unjust; it is functionally inefficient and, ultimately, unstable. Gender inequality is a design flaw in the architecture of our civilisations. As I was reading recently, I came upon a profound insight: *"The world is a garden, and its beauty depends on the harmony of its flowers. When one species is denied sunlight, the entire garden suffers."* This metaphor is not merely poetic; it is ecologically and socially precise. A garden where half the flowers are stunted cannot flourish. Likewise, a

society that withholds opportunity, voice, or dignity from women cannot reach peace or prosperity. The conference has shown repeatedly that interfaith harmony and gender equality are not separate pursuits – they are the sunlight and water that allow the garden of humanity to bloom.

For eleven editions, this conference has educated children not in abstract tolerance but in the lived practice of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – the ancient understanding that the world is one family. When our students engage in interfaith dialogue, when they debate gender equality across traditions, they are not merely learning civics. They are internalising the very habits of heart and mind that build peaceful societies. This is character-based education in action, aligned directly with CMS's 6 Cs – critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, compassion, and contribution. Through structured dialogue, theatre, music, and collaborative projects, young learners build the skills to navigate difference, challenge prejudice, and lead with empathy. These are not extracurricular additions; they are the core competencies of responsible global citizenship. By engaging early with the world's deepest questions, our students are nurtured as a byproduct to become exactly that: citizens who do not wait for peace but build it, daily, in every classroom conversation and every act of quiet courage.

I invite you to participate not as passive attendees but as co-architects of a more intelligent, more compassionate, and more balanced world.

With respect and hope.

Message from the Head QAID



MS REENA SOTI

HEAD QUALITY ASSURANCE & INNOVATION DEPARTMENT, CITY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

"Where all human beings are treated as family, Where no faith is a stranger, no soul an enemy, Where the light of compassion guides every hand – There, and only there, shall we find peace in every land."

— United Nations

There are moments in the life of an institution that rise above the ordinary – moments that carry within them the quiet power to reshape minds, soften hearts, and rekindle the hope of a better world. The 11th International Interfaith Conference is one such moment. Grounded in the conviction that faith, at its purest, is a luminous force for healing and solidarity, this conference gathers voices across traditions and geographies not merely to speak, but also to listen with humility and act with purpose. The theme of the conference – ***'Reimagining Our World Together, Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity'*** – is not merely a declaration; it is a clarion call. It is an invitation to set aside the barriers of creed and custom and to imagine a world where every human being is seen, honoured, and included, with gender equality as its beating heart.

As the Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai reminds us, ***"We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back."*** And in the words of former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, ***"There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women."*** Interfaith harmony and gender equality are not separate pursuits; they are twin pillars of a just and peaceful society. When faith communities champion the dignity of women, they accelerate the very peace they pray for. City Montessori School Rajajipuram Campus II, has shown admirable initiative and deep-

rooted purpose in hosting this landmark event. To organise an international interfaith conference is to affirm that education must reach beyond textbooks and touch the conscience of the learner. By opening its doors to dialogue across traditions and perspectives, CMS Rajajipuram Campus II, surely has transformed itself into a laboratory for peace, a space where the next generation can practise the art of living together.

We turn our thoughts with profound gratitude to our revered Founder Manager, the late Dr Jagdish Gandhi, whose vision – ***"the world is but one country and mankind its citizens"*** – continues to light our path. We also thank our Founder Director, Dr Bharti Gandhi, and our Manager, Dr Geeta Gandhi Kingdon, whose steadfast encouragement enables every campus to engage with the world's great questions.

My warmest congratulations to the Headmistress of Rajajipuram Campus II and her entire team for the meticulous care and heartfelt passion with which they have brought this conference to life. May the spirit of reimagining our world together take deep root in every young heart so that our students grow into citizens who carry its promise forward into every home, every faith, and every corner of the earth they inherit.

Message from the Convenor



MS KHYATI LAMBA

HEADMISTRESS OF RAJAJIPURAM
CAMPUS II & CONVENOR OF
11th INTERNATIONAL
INTERFAITH CONFERENCE 2026

“True humanity begins not when we speak of equality, but when every voice is heard with dignity, every dream is given space to grow and every soul is valued beyond all divisions.”

Dear Distinguished Delegates, Faith Leaders, Thinkers and Changemakers,

It is with deep humility and purpose that I welcome you to the 11th International Interfaith Conference organised by CMS Rajajipuram Campus II from 24th to 26th July 2026. For eleven years, this conference has served as a living platform for peace, shaping young minds across continents. We gather not merely to converse, but to reimagine a world where the wisdom of our faiths guides humanity toward the gender equality that our societies urgently need.

The theme, **“Reimagining Our World Together, Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity,”** reflects the timeless teachings of all faiths. From the Genesis declaration that man and woman are created in the divine image to the Quranic affirmation of the equal worth of all believers, our sacred traditions remind us that dignity belongs equally to every soul. As Dr Martin Luther King Jr. observed, justice advances only when we choose equity over convenience.

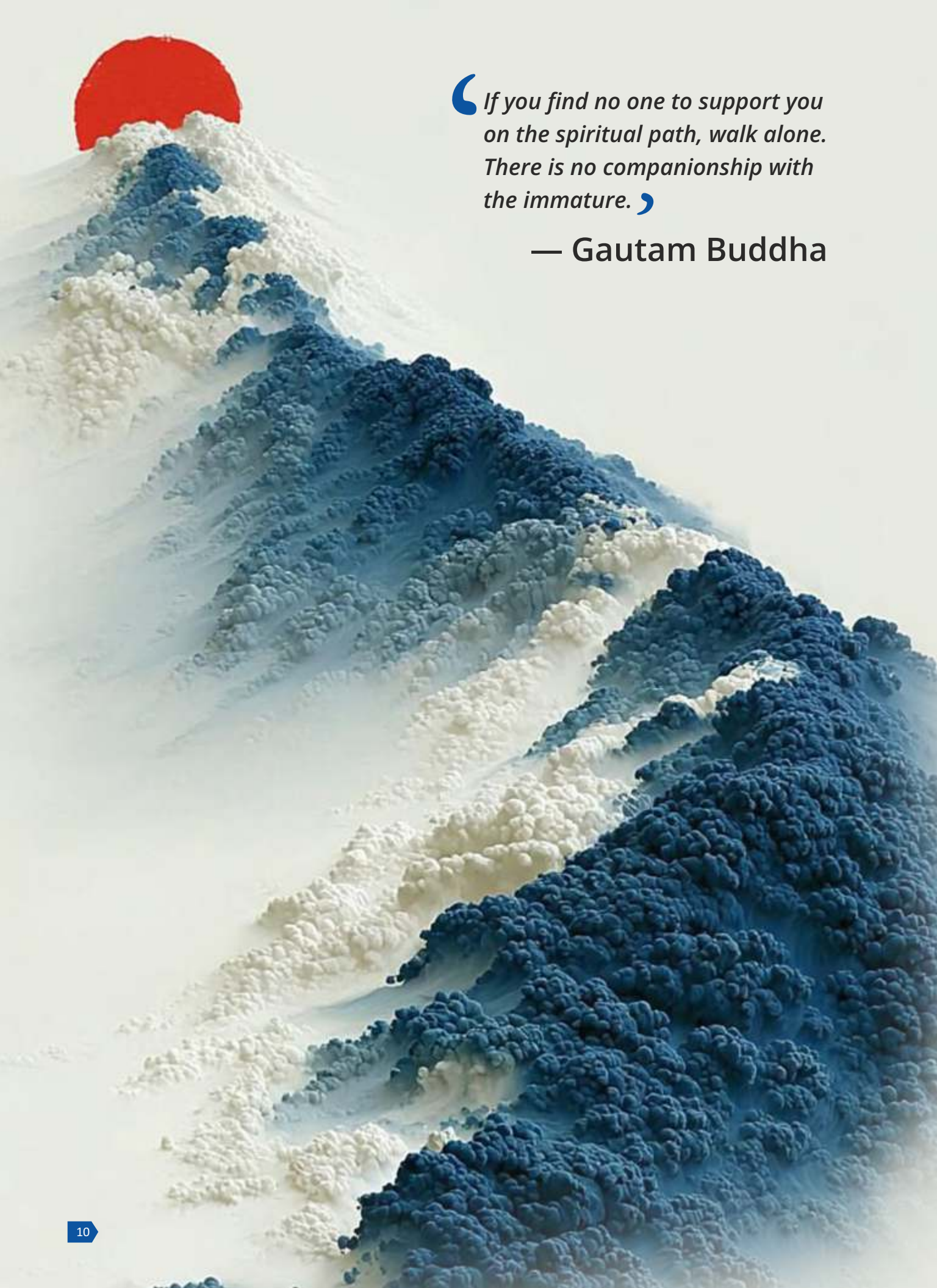
Over the years, this conference has taught children not merely to tolerate differences but to celebrate them, proving that interfaith harmony and gender equality are essential pillars of lasting peace. Through theatre, music, dance and spoken word, students at our campus carry these values into their homes and communities. A child

defending equal opportunities for his sister reflects transformation at its most meaningful level.

The UN Women Gender Snapshot 2025 report notes that closing the gender digital divide could add USD 1.5 trillion to global GDP by 2030, demonstrating that spiritual wisdom and social progress go hand in hand. Gender equality requires more than policy; it demands the courage to challenge inherited assumptions and create institutions that value potential over prejudice. From villages to global cities, gender equality must become part of the moral foundation of society.

This conference reminds us that peace is not merely a prayer we recite, but a practice we build — one classroom, one conversation and one courageous act at a time. As Convenor, I invite you to participate not only with intellect but with sacred intention. Let us move beyond dialogue into meaningful action for our faiths, our children and our shared future.

With hope, responsibility and faith in our shared future.



☾ *If you find no one to support you on the spiritual path, walk alone. There is no companionship with the immature.* ☽

— Gautam Buddha

Why is the Conference Necessary? Objectives of the Conference

At a time when humanity is more connected than ever, yet increasingly divided by inequality, exclusion and social fragmentation, the 11th International Interfaith Conference 2026 emerges as a timely and necessary platform for moral reflection and collective action. Under the theme, “Reimagining Our World Together, Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity,” the Conference responds to an urgent global need: to reaffirm that peace, justice and sustainable progress cannot be achieved while gender inequality persists. As faith traditions continue to shape values and social structures across the world, this Conference seeks to reclaim religion as a force for compassion, dignity and inclusion, while fostering dialogue that bridges differences and promotes shared human responsibility.

The Conference recognises that gender equality is not a peripheral issue, but central to the future of humanity. Persistent disparities in leadership, education, economic opportunity and social participation continue to weaken societies, while global crises have further exposed the disproportionate burdens borne by women and girls. At the same time, women’s resilience, leadership and transformative contributions offer pathways to more just and peaceful communities. In this context, the Conference serves as a vital forum where faith leaders, policymakers, educators, scholars and youth can collectively examine how ethical values, institutional reforms and social practices can align to advance equality as a lived reality.

A central objective of the Conference is to affirm gender equality as a shared spiritual, moral and social responsibility deeply rooted in the highest teachings of all faith traditions. By highlighting common ethical ground, the Conference seeks to demonstrate that equality is not contrary to religion, but intrinsic to its most inclusive and humane ideals. It also aims to foster interfaith dialogue that moves beyond symbolism toward

practical collaboration, encouraging institutions and communities to address barriers to participation, challenge harmful stereotypes, and strengthen inclusive leadership and policy thinking.

Another key objective is to emphasise the transformative role of education and youth engagement. By involving students as active participants alongside global leaders and scholars, the Conference reflects the belief that young people are not merely inheritors of the future, but co-creators of it. Through dialogue, student-led initiatives and intergenerational exchange, the Conference seeks to nurture globally conscious citizens equipped with empathy, ethical vision and a commitment to justice. In doing so, it advances the longstanding mission of City Montessori School to use education as a means of building peace and world unity.

Ultimately, the 11th International Interfaith Conference 2026 aspires to move beyond discussion and become a catalyst for measurable action. By bringing together values, evidence and implementation pathways, it seeks to inspire sustained collaboration across faith communities, educational institutions and civil society, and to contribute to a larger global movement where faith becomes a unifying force, gender equality a lived truth, and humanity a shared identity. In reimagining our world together, the Conference reaffirms that harmony can flourish only when equality is placed at the heart of human progress.

Agenda

Plenary I — Ethical Foundations of Equality: Reclaiming Faith as a Force for Human Dignity

This opening plenary explores gender equality as a moral and spiritual imperative rooted in the ethical teachings of the world's faith traditions. It will examine how sacred traditions affirm the dignity and equal worth of women and men, while engaging critically with interpretations that have enabled exclusion. The session will consider the role of faith leadership in shaping attitudes, challenging harmful norms and restoring religion as a force for justice, peace and human flourishing.

Focus: Ethical foundations • Inclusive interpretations • Responsibility of religious leadership

Plenary II — Faith in Action: Enabling Equitable Participation in Family, Society and Public Life

This plenary addresses the practical barriers that continue to limit women's participation in social, economic and public life. It will explore how faith communities and institutions can support equitable participation by recognising unpaid care work, removing social and cultural barriers, and expanding opportunities for women's leadership in community and institutional spaces.

Focus: Shared responsibility • Participation and leadership • Community-level action

Plenary III — From Commitment to Systems Change: Policy, Education and Economic Empowerment

This session examines how ethical vision can be translated into structural change through education, public policy and economic opportunity. Discussions will focus on

gender-responsive governance, access to education and digital inclusion, women's economic agency, and the role of institutions in ensuring equality moves from aspiration to implementation.

Focus: Policy and governance • Education and digital access • Economic empowerment

Plenary IV — Youth as Co-Architects of a Balanced World: Education, Citizenship and Intergenerational Responsibility

This plenary highlights young people as partners in shaping a just and inclusive future. It will explore how education can cultivate ethical consciousness, challenge stereotypes, nurture global citizenship and inspire youth-led action. Emphasis will be placed on student voice, mentorship, digital responsibility and intergenerational collaboration.

Focus: Youth leadership • Transformative education • Global citizenship and action

Closing Roundtable — From Dialogue to

Accountability: Collaborative Action for Measurable Change

The concluding roundtable will focus on moving beyond dialogue toward concrete commitments. Faith leaders, policymakers, educators and civil society representatives will identify collaborative pathways, accountability mechanisms and follow-up actions, including a proposed multi-faith working group and conference outcome statement.

Focus: Institutional collaboration • Accountability frameworks • Measurable commitments

Participants of 2025

Hon'ble Justice Dr Dr (h.c.) Adel Omar Sherif

First Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt & Founding Patron, International Interfaith Harmony Conference

Dr David E. Risley

Founder – 'Justice Voices' & 'God Unites', USA
Founder & Director- Egypt Justice Project, USA

Dr Sally Hammoud

Consultant, Communication and Digital Media Specialist, Lebanon

Ms Carmen Balhestero

Global Spiritual Leader
Founder - Pax Universal, Brazil
Regional Coordinator, URI-Asia (India: North & West Zones)

Maulana Syed Kalbe Jawad Naqvi Sahab

Prominent Shia Cleric. Social Reformer
Advocate for Azadari & Waqf Rights

Maharishi Bhriгу Pithadhishwar Goswami Sushil Maharaj Ji

National Convenor, Bhartiya Sarva Dharma Sansad (BSDS), New Delhi

Maulana A. R. Shaheen Qasmi

General Secretary, World Peace Organisation, New Delhi

Dr Anil Sarwal

Chairperson, Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is,
Former Associate Professor of English, DAV College, Chandigarh

Dr Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar

Chief Priest & Honorary Secretary, Judah Hyam Synagogue (New Delhi)
Interfaith Advocate & Human Rights Activist

Marazban Nariman Zaiwalla

Trustee, Delhi Parsi Anjuman
Behdinshban, Zoroastrian Parsi Community, New Delhi

Shri Paramjeet Singh Chandok

Chief Advisor, Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee & International Affairs, Ex-Chairman, Gurudwara Shri Bangla Saheb, New Delhi

Participants of 2025

Haji Syed Salman Chishty

Gaddi Nashi, Dargah Ajmer Sharif
Chairman, Chishty Foundation, Ajmer

Rev. Father Sebastian Kollithanam

Principal, St. Fidelis School, Aligarh
Director of Kusht Niyantaran Evum Unmoolan Samiti (KNEUS),
Greater Noida, UP

Swami Veer Singh Hitkari Ji Maharaj

National Press Secretary, Akhil Bhartiya Ravidassia Dharam Sangathan Bharat,
Bulandshahr

Acharya Vivek Muni Ji Maharaj

Founder Chairman, Acharya Sushil Muni Mission, New Delhi

Rev. Acharya Yeshi Phuntsok

Former Deputy Speaker, Tibetan Parliament in Exile
Senior Advisor, Bharat Tibet Sahyog Manch, Patron of Salute Tiranga, Mahayana
Buddhist Monk & Board Member, Tibetan Cultural Religious Publication Centre

Dr Ajit Kumar Shasany

Director, CSIR-NBRI, Lucknow

Mr Sandeep Kumar

President, Aalamban Associates Charitable Trust & Ex-Chief Commissioner of
Income Tax (Govt. Of India) - IRS

Prabhu Aparimay Shyam Das Ji

President, International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), Lucknow

Shri Bhikkhu Gyanlok

Bhikkhu-In-Charge, Buddha Vihara,
President, Maha Bodhi Society of India, Lucknow

Sardar Harpal Singh Jaggi

Working President & General Secretary, Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee,
Cantt. Lucknow; Former VC, Uttar Pradesh Punjabi Academy

Maulana Khalid Rasheed Farangi Mahli (Islam-Sunni)

Imam Eidgah & Qazi Shahr, Lucknow
Chancellor, Darul Uloom Farangi Mahal &
Chairman, Islamic Centre of India

Maulana Dr Kalbe Sibtain (Noorie)

Distinguished Islamic Scholar (Shia tradition)
Founder, Unity Mission School, Lucknow

Rajyogini BK Radha Behen Ji

Senior Rajyoga Teacher, Brahma Kumaris, Lucknow

Rev. Fr. Robert Quadras

Parish Priest of the Cathedral Church, Hazratganj
Catholic Diocese of Lucknow

Shri Shailendra Jain

National Vice President, Bhartiya Jain Milan, Lucknow
Proponent of Jain Philosophy and Values

Mrs Shipra Upadhyay

Representative from Baha'i Faith, Lucknow

Prof. Dr Abraham Karickam

Former Principal, Mar Thoma College, Tiruvalla
Interfaith Scholar & Peace Advocate

Mr Asif Iqbal

Co-Founder, Dhanak of Humanity, Ghaziabad
Pioneer, Strengthening Alliances for Humanity and Secularism (SAHAS)

Mr Jwalant Shah

Co-Founder & Director, Technology & Projects
SWAAHA Resource Management Pvt. Ltd., Indore

Ms Rupa Trivedi

Founder, Adiv and the Temple Dye Project, Mumbai



General Rules and Regulations

Reporting Time & Registration:

The following reporting schedule must be strictly followed by all participants and team leaders:

- All Team Leaders must report on 23rd July 2026 in the Control Room at the World Unity Convention Centre (WUCC) between 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM for registration and verification purposes.
- All Panellists must reach the venue on 24th July 2026 by 10:00 AM for the Press Conference.
- All Students and Team Leaders must report to the venue on 26th July 2026 by 10:00 AM for the commencement of the competitions.

Verification of Details:

Delegates are requested to read the conference brochure carefully and verify the correct spelling of names, designations and institutional affiliations before filling out the registration form.

On-site Registration:

Upon arrival, all teams/delegations must report to the Control Room in the Basement for on-site registration, verification and issuance of delegate credentials.

Dress Code:

All student participants are required to be dressed in formal white attire throughout the conference.

- Delegates are expected to maintain decorum, modesty and dignity in their attire, appropriate to an international interfaith forum.
- As per programme or performance requirements, participants may wear approved costumes relevant to their assigned presentation or role. Such costumes must be simple, dignified and consistent with the conference's spirit of unity and inclusion.
- Displaying the name, logo or identity of any school or campus through attire, costumes, badges or accessories is strictly not permitted.

Registration Deadline:

The duly filled registration form must be submitted at the earliest and latest by 6th July 2026 via email at:

interfaithconference@cmseducation.org

A unique Delegate Code will be issued upon successful registration.

The scanned copy of the duly filled registration form should be emailed to interfaith@cmseducation.org. The hard copy must be carried at the time of registration.

Responsibility of Delegations

Team coordinators / delegation heads shall be fully responsible for the safety, discipline and personal belongings of their respective participants during the conference. All participants are required to carry their own lunch for the day.

Registration Fee:

The registration fee is ₹2500/- for local and outstation teams, payable at the time of registration, as per the instructions shared by the organising committee. Registration fee shall be charged for participating City Montessori School (CMS) campuses also.

Code of Conduct:

All delegates must uphold the sanctity, inclusivity and spirit of mutual respect that define the Interfaith Conference. Any behaviour or expression that may hurt religious, cultural or social sentiments will not be permitted.

Participation Certificate:

Participation Certificates will be awarded only to those delegates who attend all scheduled sessions and actively participate in conference deliberations.



Host Campus

In a world of rapid change, where progress often outpaces empathy and conscientious voices struggle for attention, the need for dignified dialogue grows urgent. The 11th International Interfaith Conference 2026 is not merely an event. It is a reaffirmation that faith's highest purpose is to unite, uplift, and guide humanity toward justice and harmony.

This year's theme—**Reimagining Our World Together, Placing Gender Equality at the Heart of Humanity**—invites us to look beyond belief and background. It asks us to recognise a universal truth: humanity cannot advance unless every voice is heard and every individual is empowered. When faith becomes a bridge, dialogue transforms into understanding, and understanding into collective action.

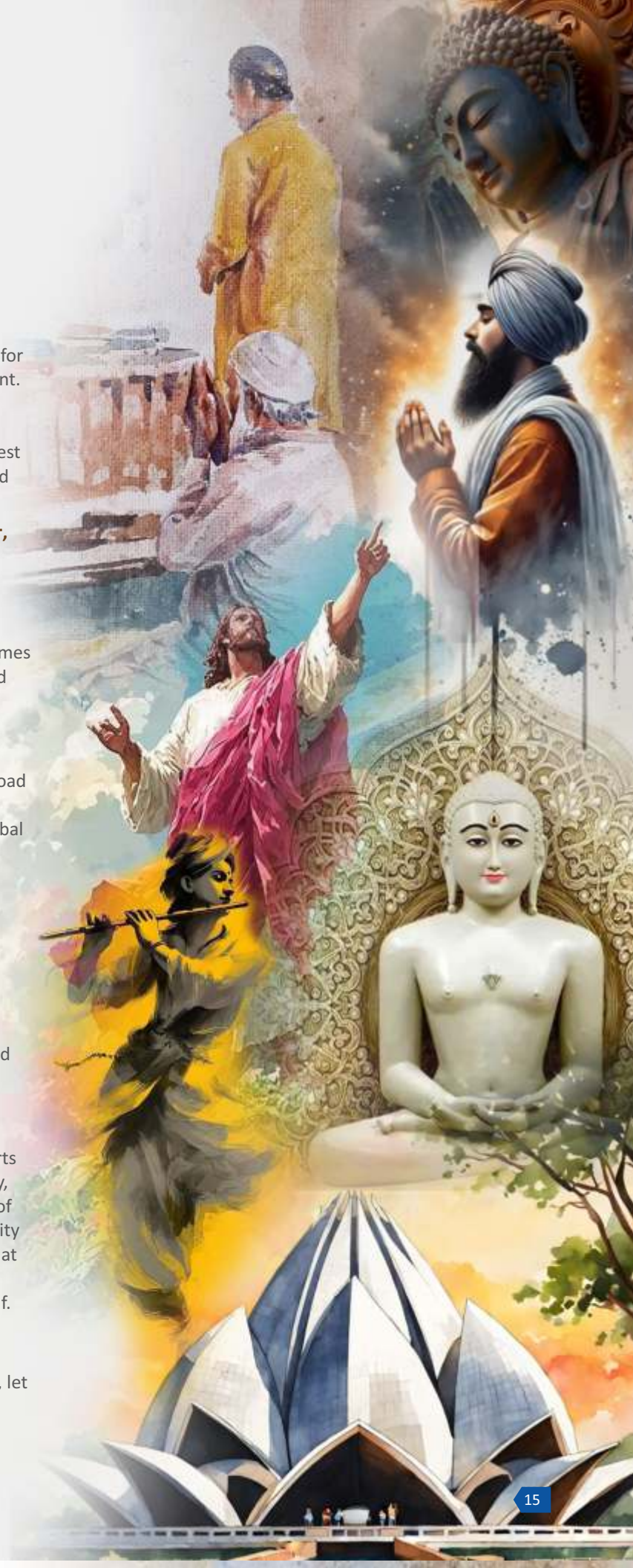
CMS Rajajipuram Campus II is honoured to host the 11th International Interfaith Conference 2026 at the World Unity Convention Centre at the CMS Kanpur Road Campus in Lucknow. As the convening campus, we remain committed to the CMS vision of nurturing global citizens who are grounded in values, guided by conscience, and devoted to the ideal of Jai Jagat—Victory to the World.

Established in 2002, CMS Rajajipuram Campus II operates on the principle that Learning is Fun. This philosophy recognises that true education flourishes only in an atmosphere of peace, equality and mutual respect.

The campus offers ICSE education up to Grade VIII and pursues holistic development—intellectual, moral, spiritual, social and global—to shape responsible, compassionate and capable world citizens.

Our students' achievements in academics, creative arts and sport reflect an environment that values integrity, inclusion and purpose. However, it is their daily acts of empathy—through environmental projects, community initiatives, literacy advocacy and service-learning—that define them most clearly. These actions demonstrate that education is not preparation for life; it is life itself.

As the host campus, we invite faith leaders, policymakers, educators, social thinkers and young visionaries to join this meaningful dialogue. Together, let us reimagine a world where faith nurtures equality, leadership is guided by compassion, and humanity moves forward balanced, united and at peace.



COMPETITIONS

Two Wings, One Sky- Colours of Harmony

Theme: *Gender Equality and Togetherness*

Two Wings, One Sky – a hybrid colouring and expression activity for Nursery and KG students, symbolising equality, friendship and togetherness through colours.

Category: Nursery and KG

Mode: Hybrid

No. of participants: Two (One from Nursery and one from KG)



Event Rules:

1. The competition will be conducted offline.
2. Participants must use A3-size drawing sheets only.
3. The artwork must clearly reflect the theme, 'Two Wings, One Sky – Colours of Harmony'.
4. Only the child's own work will be considered. No assistance from teachers or parents is allowed.
5. Participants must write their Name, Class, School Code, and Unique Code neatly on the back of the sheet.
6. The completed artwork must be submitted by email by 6th July 2026.
7. Final judgement will take place on 26th July 2026 in the presence of the Team Leader.
8. The judges' decision shall be final and binding.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Colour sense	10
2. Neatness	10
3. Understanding of the theme	10
4. Confidence and expression	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Upasana Shahi

Contact No.: +91-9005 075781

COMPETITIONS

From Farm to Frame – Millets in Art

Theme: *Promoting Indian Millets (Vegetable / Pulses Painting Competition)*

The competition encourages individual participation, creativity, and originality, with poster colours or watercolours are permitted. A3 drawing sheets should be used. This activity nurtures creativity, sensory learning, environmental awareness and early appreciation of India's traditional nutritious foods.

Category: Class I and II

Mode: Hybrid

No. of participants: One



Event Rules:

1. Participants may use vegetables, pulses and millets (whole or cut) for stamping/printing. Use of poster colours or water colours is allowed.
2. A3 Drawing sheets should be used.
3. Students must use vegetables, pulses, millets, colours and palette.
4. Only the child's own work will be considered; no assistance from teachers or parents during the competition.
5. The artwork must clearly reflect the theme of Indian millets and healthy food.
6. Participants must write their name, class and unique code neatly on the back of the sheet.
7. The decision of the judges shall be final and binding.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Theme Relevance	10
2. Creativity	10
3. Use of materials	10
4. Neatness	10
5. Visual Appeal	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Vandita Srivastava

Contact No.: +91-98896 29545

COMPETITIONS

Symphony of Souls

Theme: *Respect, Fairness and Equal Opportunity*

Voices of Harmony – an offline expressive speech competition on equality and respect.

Category: Class III

Mode: Offline

No. of participants: One



Event Rules:

1. Time limit: 1:30 to 2:00 minutes.
2. The speech must be prepared in advance.
3. No props allowed.
4. No reading from paper.
5. Participants should mention name and school code only.
6. Quotations from famous personalities may be used with attribution.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Content	10
2. Confidence	10
3. Expression	10
4. Language Clarity	10
5. Theme relevance	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Pooja Dixit

Contact No.: +91-99359 76832

COMPETITIONS

Words that Weave Equality

Theme: *Gender Equality, Respect and Shared Humanity*

“Laugh Lines for Equality”
– Limerick Writing & Recital

Laugh Lines for Equality is an offline creative poetry competition where Grade 5 students compose and recite a limerick that reflects values of fairness, respect, unity and gender equality—using humour and rhythm to convey a meaningful message.

Category: Class IV or V

Mode: Offline

No. of participants: One



Event Rules:

1. Each participant must write one original limerick (5 lines only).
2. The rhyme scheme must be AABBA.
3. Time limit for recitation: 1:00 to 1:30 minutes.
4. Limerick must be self-composed.
5. Language should be simple, positive and appropriate.
6. No offensive or derogatory content is allowed.
7. A printed copy of the limerick must be submitted to the judges.
8. Participants should mention only the name and school code, not the school name.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Adherence to limerick structure (rhyme & rhythm)	10
2. Creativity and originality	10
3. Clarity of message	10
4. Use of language and humour	10
5. Confidence and expression during recitation	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Shilpi Srivastava

Contact No.: +91-81275 00423

COMPETITIONS

Faiths United for a Greener Tomorrow

Theme: *Equality, Sustainability and Shared Responsibility*

“Unity from Utility” – *Soft Board Decoration (Best out of Waste)*

Unity from Utility is an offline creative challenge where students decorate a soft board using only discarded or waste materials to express unity, equality and harmony.

Category: Junior level Classes VI, VII & VIII

Mode: Offline

No. of participants: Four



Event Rules:

1. Time limit: 2 hrs.
2. Only recyclable and reused materials are permitted.
3. A brief title and message card must be included.
4. Participants must explain their concept to the judges.
5. Teams must set up their boards outside the Auditorium at the World Unity Convention Centre, CMS Kanpur Road, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Note:

Teams must set up their soft boards outside the Auditorium at the World Unity Convention Centre, CMS Kanpur Road, on 24th July 2026 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Students, along with a Teacher In-charge, must report for the setup.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Innovation and design	10
2. Message clarity	10
3. Sustainability focus	10
4. Material usage	10
5. Presentation and explanation	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Atmika Srivastava

Contact No.: +91-8840 601476

COMPETITIONS

Palette of Peace – Colours from the Earth (Natural Colour Painting)

Participants will create paintings using only self-prepared natural colours derived from eco-friendly sources such as turmeric, coffee, soil, flowers, leaves, fruits, vegetables and spices. Synthetic colours of any kind are strictly prohibited.

Category: Class VIII or IX

Mode: Offline

No. of participants: One



Event rules:

1. The time limit is 2 hrs.
2. Painting sheets will be provided.
3. Participants must bring their own natural colours, brushes and tools.
4. A 40–50 word explanatory note must be written on the back of the artwork.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Creativity	10
2. Effective use of warm and cool colours	10
3. Sustainability awareness	10
4. Technique	10
5. Clarity of concept	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Ambika Tiwari

Contact No.: +91-94534 41289

COMPETITIONS

The Interfaith Oratory skills

Proposed Motion: *“Gender Equality is the Strongest Foundation for Global Peace”*

Voices That Shape the World – an offline interfaith debate competition.

Category: Senior Wing Class IX or XI

Mode: Offline

No. of participants: One



Event rules:

1. Time limit: 3 minutes per speaker.
2. The position, for or against the motion, will be allotted by draw of lots.
3. A rebuttal round may be included.
4. Participants are expected to use formal language.
5. Participants must state only their name and school code.

Evaluation Parameters:

1. Content and logic	10
2. Clarity of argument	10
3. Rebuttal skills	10
4. Confidence and articulation	10
5. Adherence to topic	10

Event Coordinator:

Ms Renuka Goel

Contact No.: +91-88537 59297

Event Glimpses



A Brief Biography of

Late DR JAGDISH GANDHI

Founder, City Montessori School (CMS), Lucknow, India

Late Dr Jagdish Gandhi, a distinguished educationist and social activist, was deeply influenced from his early years by the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave.

In 1959, Dr Jagdish Gandhi, along with his wife Dr (Mrs) Bharti Gandhi, laid the foundation of City Montessori School (CMS) with just five children, with the vision of imparting value-based education. Through dedication and perseverance, CMS steadily grew to become one of Lucknow's most respected institutions, known for meaningful education and holistic development.

CMS has attained a unique distinction as the world's largest school (in terms of pupil enrolment in a single city), with over 64,400 students across 22 campuses in Lucknow, as recognised by the Guinness World Records.

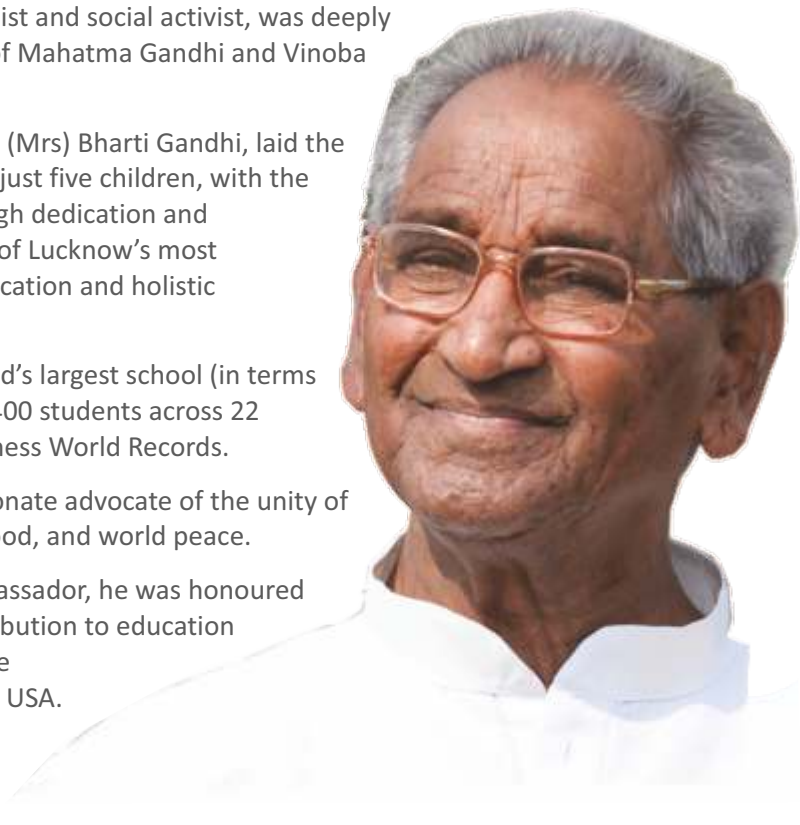
A visionary leader, Dr Jagdish Gandhi was a passionate advocate of the unity of mankind, interfaith harmony, universal brotherhood, and world peace.

A globally respected educationist and peace ambassador, he was honoured with the Derozio Award for his outstanding contribution to education and human enrichment. He also served as a peace representative of the World Peace Prayer Society, USA. Under his dynamic leadership, CMS was awarded the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education (2002) in recognition of its efforts to promote universal values of peace and tolerance.

Dr Gandhi was the first Indian to be honoured with the Key to the City of Georgetown, USA, by its Mayor, in recognition of his visionary contributions to education, particularly the introduction of Quality Control Circles in education. He also served as the Founder-Chairman of the World Council for Total Quality and Excellence in Education (WCTQEE).

His talks on prominent television channels such as Aaj Tak, News18 India, APN News, K News, Sadhna Plus News, India News, Network 10, Bharat Samachar, India Voice, and Sahara Aalmi were widely appreciated and followed by audiences across diverse communities, reflecting his deep spiritual insight and universal appeal.

Dr Jagdish Gandhi passed away on 22nd January 2024 leaving behind a timeless legacy of peace education, global citizenship, and the enduring vision of 'Jai Jagat'—the whole world is one family. His life continues to inspire generations of learners and educators across the world.



64 GLORIOUS YEARS DEDICATED TO WORLD UNITY

Late Dr Jagdish Gandhi

STRIVING FOR WORLD UNITY

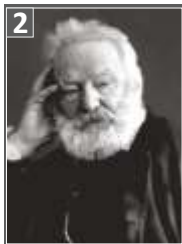
SINCE 1959

DR JAGDISH GANDHI

for World Unity through meaningful education



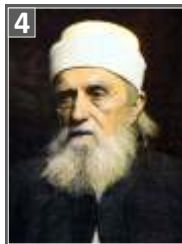
Mahatma Gandhi



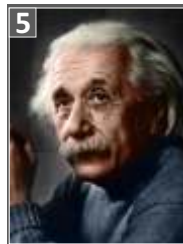
Victor Hugo



Nelson Mandela



Abdul Baha,
son of Baha'u'llah



Albert Einstein



Jan Tinbergen



Vinoba Bhave

1. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Dr Jagdish Gandhi, besides imparting quality education, has been trying to inculcate universal values of Truth, Non-violence and Love for Whole Humanity in the minds of over 61,000 students of his school – the City Montessori School (CMS) Lucknow, India.
2. Drawing inspiration from Victor Hugo who said "there is one thing stronger than all the armies of the world and that is AN IDEA whose time has come" and from the continuous struggle of Nelson Mandela for justice, Dr Gandhi came up with the IDEA that "Enforceable International Law and Empowering the International Court of Justice is 'THE IDEA' whose time has come". With this IDEA in mind, he called upon the World Judiciary on the need of Enforceable International Law to safeguard the future of world's two billion children and generations yet-to-be-born. For the last nine years he has been organizing International Conferences of Chief Justices of the World as the self-appointed guardian of world's two billion children.
3. Baha'u'llah had taught that 'Earth is but one country and mankind its citizens' and that the world will not survive without unity of hearts. He said that remedy for all the ills of 'This Day' is 'UNITY OF HEARTS'. Inspired by His teachings, Dr Gandhi propagates His concept of Unity of Hearts, 'Oneness of God', 'Oneness of Religion' and 'Oneness of Mankind', through manifold daily school activities and also through 26 annual international events, to over 61,000 CMS students, their parents and global society at large.
4. Inspired by Albert Einstein's thought that "Only World Law can ensure progress towards a Civilized peaceful community", he has been running a campaign by calling all nations of the world to empower the International Court of Justice for peaceful resolution of international disputes, which will also obviate the need for armed conflicts.
5. Inspired by Nobel Laureate Jan Tinbergen's observation that world's problems can be solved only by strengthening the United Nations System, Dr Jagdish Gandhi approached Kofi Annan, the then Secretary General, United Nations on behalf of two billion children of the world, requesting him to safeguard the future of world's two billion children by initiating steps to make International Law enforceable and binding upon all the nations of the world.
6. Walking on the footsteps of Vinoba Bhave, he is making tireless efforts to instill his concept of Jai Jagat (victory to the world) in the hearts & minds of his students who greet each other with the call, 'Jai Jagat' and have imbibed the spirit of global unity. He is raising his voice for the safe future of world's two billion children and generations yet to be born which has attracted worldwide attention.
7. Another person who according to him has saved his spiritual life, is his daughter Prof. Geeta Gandhi Kingdon. Dr Gandhi regards his second daughter as his 'Spiritual Mother' because she prevented him from contesting for a second term in state legislative assembly elections and be involved in divisive politics, since the family had now accepted the Baha'i Faith for spiritual regeneration and the faith prohibits its followers from participating in Divisive Politics which it believes is a hindrance in spiritual progress.

DR JAGDISH GANDHI

Unique endeavours towards World Unity through Meaningful Education



Dr Jagdish Gandhi is a visionary and a far-sighted person, who has been making incessant efforts to make the vision of One World into a reality. His courage and fighting spirit, not against persons, but against all odds and impediments in the path of realization of his vision, bound by sound reasoning, is exceptional. His vision is World Unity, which, he believes can be attained by a two-pronged strategy. Dr Gandhi firmly believes that 'Jai-Jagat' based quality education to children and

imparting in young impressionable minds the ideas of World Unity: and the other one is to make efforts at global level by approaching the World Judiciary, for making efforts to make this world a better place to live in, so as to bequeath to the next generation and generations yet-to-be born, a safer and brighter inheritance than that was bequeathed to us.

Convinced that human progress springs from education he established City Montessori School (CMS) in 1959 at the age of 23 years with initial enrollment of only 5 children. His aim to establish CMS was not only to

impart the best quality education but also to inculcate in children an intense feeling for international understanding for political unity and economic equality of the world that would bring to an end all disputes arising out of borders or border encroachments or arising out of economic disparity among nations, which have been the principal cause of wars including world wars in the past. According to him eternal peace can be established in the world only by following one world order in which the political and economic system is one and the same and in which there are no racial or religious or regional squabbles.

Impressed by the success of his vibrant educational system based on global priorities the present strength of students has grown to 61,000.

He has launched a parallel campaign for uniting the world by convening International Conferences of Chief Justices of the World every year in December, in which, ways and means are discussed to convince the statesmen and rulers of different nations to unite the world under one political and economic system as a permanent means of putting to an end the ongoing disputes in the world.



RELIGIONS FOR WORLD UNITY

Beyond Religious Coexistence –
Towards an Inclusive, Transformed Society

11th International Interfaith Conference

24th to 26th July, 2026

Organised by:

City Montessori School

Rajajipuram Campus II (Serenity Building),

C - 1889, C Block, Rajajipuram,

Lucknow- 226017 | Ph: +91 9565687850, 7084220332

Email: interfaith@cmseducation.org

web: cmseducation.org

READ MORE

