

E-CONFERENCE ON RELIGION, CATALYST FOR VIOLENCE OR PEACE?

Despite the frustrations with the delay of the 10.00 am scheduled beginning of the eConference, partly caused by the central computer system for the eConference “crashing” with the unexpected overload from so many computers in Australia and Overseas connecting to the transmission, the eConference on Religion, Catalyst for Violence or Peace? Probing the Abrahamic Traditions for Answers finally went ahead. A group of interested people met at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Ballarat on Tuesday, June 23.



During the eConference, presented by Broken Bay Institute, there was not much time for discussion. This was unfortunate, particularly as much of the content was rather new to us and we needed more time to share our responses to the information.

All four speakers, two Christians, a Jew and a Muslim, lectured at some length, leaving us with content-overload and probably restricted appreciation of the important convictions and spiritualities that are essential characteristics of the various religious traditions.

Imam Mohamad Abdalla spoke particularly well, with important information that is not generally known by Catholics in Australia. When the DVD of the eConference is released in the not too distant future it will be possible to borrow the DVD from the Diocesan Resource Centre in Ballarat. It would be a good exercise for a parish group to listen to and discuss the excellent presentation by Imam Mohamad Abdalla. He gives background history which helps us develop a better understanding of the numerous Muslim people coming to Australia.

The day after the conference the Broken Bay Institute sent out an evaluation form to all the local coordinators and facilitators of the eConference. Evaluation of such events are always a helpful way of processing and planning for future occasions.

Fr Kevin Murphy