

ACTIVITIES OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE - 2014

December 2013

- 9 Fr. Franco and Sr. Maria De Giorgi take part in the meeting, held once every two months, of the interreligious study group of Fukuoka.
- 17 Fr. Sonoda (as one of the main speakers) and Sr. Maria De Giorgi participate in the interreligious forum organized by the *Myokenkaku Temple* of Osaka (Nichiren Buddhism).
- 24 The Community of Shinmeizan brings a Christmas message (and a Christmas cake!) to various families of our village, to the Seimeizan-Schweitzer Temple and to the Lutheran Community of Tamana.

January 2014

- 1~3 We welcome people coming to Shinmeizan for the traditional visit to a temple at the beginning of the new year.

February

- 2 With the "Group for interreligious dialogue of Kumamoto" we pay a visit to the *Zenjo Temple* (Zen Buddhism), in Kumamoto, the place where, in 1636, 15 Christians suffered martyrdom. They were beatified in 2008. After the interreligious meeting at the temple, we pray at their tomb on Hanaoka Hill.
- 5 Fr. Franco travels to Tokyo to take part in the meeting of the Subcommittee for interreligious dialogue of the Japan Bishops' Conference.
- 17 Fr. Franco attends the regular meeting of the Fukuoka Interreligious Study Group.
- 20-28 Sr. Maria and Fr. Sonoda accompany the Archbishop of Algiers, Ghaleb Bader, introducing and translating his conferences in Tokyo, Yokohama and Osaka on dialogue with Islam in a tour organized by Shinmeizan on behalf of "*Kakehashi*", the Association of Religious and Missionary Institutes collaborating for interreligious dialogue in Japan.
- 27-28 Sr. Maria, Fr. Sonoda and Fr.. Franco participate in the meeting of the association "*Kakehashi*", where also Archbishop Bader holds a Conference on dialogue with Islam.

March

From the beginning of March to the end of May Sr. Maria holds her annual courses at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome on the theology and practice of interreligious dialogue. On March 15, at the same University, she takes part in the International Symposium held to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the foundation of Sophia University in Tokyo, with a conference on "Intercultural and interreligious dialogue in Asia".

- 5 Fr. Franco e Sr. Ikeda Kumiko attend the annual commemoration of the foundation of the Buddhist association *Risshokoseikai* in Kumamoto.
- 7 Members of the Buddhist Association "*Byakko Shinko Kai*" visit Shinmeizan.
- 17 Fr. Franco, while in Rome on behalf of the Liturgical Committee of the Bishops' Conference of Japan, takes part in a meeting held at the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

April

At the beginning of the month, Shinmeizan forwards the message sent by the Pont. Council for Interreligious Dialogue to Buddhists in Japan (on the occasion of the feast of "Hanamatsuri" commemorating the birth of the Buddha) to all its Buddhist partners in dialogue, and to all the Parishes of the diocese of Fukuoka, to be distributed to Buddhist relatives and friends. Fr. Franco takes it personally to the Seimeizan-Schweitzer Temple in Tamana.

- 7 Fr. Franco attends the regular meeting of the Fukuoka Interreligious Study Group.
- 28 Shinmeizan hosts the meeting of the "Group for interreligious dialogue of the diocese of Fukuoka" directed by Fr. Franco.

May

- 11 Fr. Franco and Sr. Kumiko Ikeda guide the "Group for interreligious dialogue of Kumamoto" in a visit to the Yatsushiro branch (Kumamoto Pref.) of the Buddhist Association *Risshokoseikai*.
- 17 Fr. Franco represents the Catholic Church at the "Symphony of prayers for peace" (SOPP), an interreligious event organized by the Buddhist association "*Byakko Shinkoi*" at the foot of Mount Fuji.
- 19 In Rome, Sr. Maria participates in the solemn celebration for the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Pont. Council for Interreligious dialogue.
- 25 Fr. Franco holds a conference on "The tea ceremony and the Mass" at the Cultural Center of Tamana.

June

- 15 Shinmeizan participates in the commemoration of the unjust execution of Nishi Takeo, held annually at the Seimeizan-Schweitzer temple in Tamana as an important moment of the campaign against capital punishment in Japan.
- 18 Upon invitation of the Japanese Bishops, Fr. Franco addresses them, in their annual study session in Tokyo, on the subject of the controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine from the "ritual" point of view.
- 23 Fr. Franco and Sr. Maria attend the regular meeting of the "Interreligious Study Group" of Fukuoka.

July

- 6 Shinmeizan leads the "Group for interreligious dialogue of Kumamoto" in a visit to the local Center of "*Omoto*", one of the recognized forms of Shintoism not linked with the National Association of Shinto Shrines.
- 22~25 Shinmeizan organizes two courses for Students of the University of Industrial and Medicine of Kitakyushu, on the topic of: "Religion. Religions. Interreligious Dialogue".
- 31~3/8

August

- 1~9 Sr. Maria accompanies, and acts as an interpreter for, Rev. Indunil Janakaratne Kodithuwakku Kankanamalage, Undersecretary of the Pont. Council for Interreligious Dialogue, in his official visit to Japan. In Tokyo he pays a visit to the National Association of Shinto Shrines, to the National Headquarters of "Religions for Peace" and to the Headquarters of the Buddhist Association *Risshokoseikai* ; in Kyoto he participates in the annual interreligious event of Mount Hiei, organized by the headquarters of the Tendai Buddhism; at Nara he visits the headquarters of Tenrikyo (the oldest and most numerous of the so called "new religions" of Japan). He then takes part in the interreligious events that accompany the annual commemoration of the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- 6~7 On his way from Hiroshima to Nagasaki, Rev. Indunil Kodithuwakku, Undersecretary of the PCDI, pays a visit to Shinmeizan.
- 13~17 Shinmeizan holds the 12th course of introduction to the culture and the religions of Japan for newly arrived missionaries.
- 29~31 Ven. Nobutake Maeda, head of the Chigen Temple (Pure Land Buddhism) of Osaka visits Shinmeizan.

September

- 7~9 Sr. Maria travels to Antwerp (Belgium) to participate in the 27° International Interreligious Meeting organized by the Community of Saint Egidio.
- 8 Fr. Franco attends the regular meeting of the interreligious study group of Fukuoka.

October

- 5 Shinmeizan celebrates the 11° interreligious meeting of prayer for peace, held once every two years, to which about fifty representatives of nine different religious traditions participate.
- 26 The Community of Shinmeizan visits the Koren Temple (Pure Land Buddhism) in Tamana.
- 27 Fr. Franco presides at the meeting of the group in charge of interreligious dialogue in the Diocese of Fukuoka, held at Shinmeizan.

- 29~ 30 Sr. Maria, Fr. Sonoda and Fr. Franco take part in the biannual meeting of "Kakehashi", the Association of Religious and Missionary Institutes cooperating for interreligious dialogue in Japan, held at Mefu (Hyogo-ken).
- 30~31 Fr. Franco and Sr. Maria are invited to the Myokenkaku Temple of Osaka (Nichiren Buddhism) for the preparatory meeting of the interreligious forum which will be held there on December 3rd.

November

- 9 The community of Shinmeizan attends the celebration of the solemn rite of "Shinsan" (the official installment of a head of a Buddhist Temple) at the Jokoku Temple (Soto Zen Buddhism) in Kumamoto.
- 18~19 Representatives of the Buddhist Association *Byakko Shinko* visit Shinmeizan.
- 22 Fr.Franco participates as a panelist in the annual session of the "International Shinto Seminar" in Tokyo, which this year has as a theme 'dialogue between Christianity and Shintoism'.