

# CADEIO CONNECTION

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October 2010



## Ecumenical Officers Gather at Collegeville for Advanced Institute

by Father Avelino González-Ferrer, Archdiocese of Washington, DC

This past July 25–31, CADEIO held its Advanced Institute for Ecumenical Leadership at the Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Collegeville, Minnesota. The Collegeville Institute, founded in 1967 by Father Killian McDonnell, OSB, a monk at St. John’s Abbey, welcomes scholars, thinkers, and artists from around the world who desire to pursue independent research in ecumenical or interfaith dialogue. The institute provides a small residential community nestled among trees and a

beautiful lakeshore within the St. John’s University campus.

Nine ecumenical officers and others involved in ecumenical work from eight dioceses attended the training. Among the themes covered was ethics in ecumenical dialogue—a topic that is increasingly becoming a challenge. Two main lecturers presented the history and the behind-the-scenes debates for two major dialogues in which the Roman Catholic Church participates. Dr. Michael Root, a

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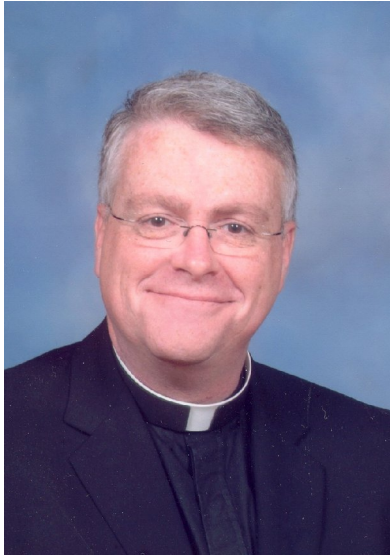
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Standing, back row, from left: Father Don Rooney, Msgr. Ray Barton, Mel Robeck, Brother Jeff Gros, FSC; second row: Jan Skrehot, Lorraine Silva, Julie Conroy, Father Jim Massart, Father Avelino González-Ferrer; kneeling: Father Erich Rutten, Father Killian McDonnell, OSB.

## President's Letter by Father Don Rooney



Dear Friends,

This summer we welcomed our new Imam to the Islamic Center of Fredericksburg, Imam Sami. He stopped by one day with one of the Muslim community leaders and introduced himself, and invited me to come for Iftar the following Sunday. Sami also came to one of our morning Masses that Sunday, and we introduced him and welcomed him to the area.

I have long understood the breaking of the Ramadan fast and how we have in common the whole idea of fasting and prayer as mainstays of our spiritual lives. But I didn't realize until I was there that I had been invited to the 27th day of Ramadan, Laylat-al Qadr, the significance of which in the observance of Muslims, Sami explained, compared to our Easter Vigil. As they break their fast at sunset and gather for a wonderful community meal, they complete

the seasonal chanting of the complete text of the Qur'an and continue to pray until dawn. I was moved by the fervor of this community.

Laylat-al Qadr, or the "night of power," Muslims believe, is the night that the first revelation occurred to the prophet Muhammad. According to the Qur'an, this is the night when God determines the course of the world for the coming year. So I did a little research to see how this celebration might be an opportunity of convergence in our interreligious calendars.

Laylat-al Qadr is sometimes compared to Shavu'ot, or the Festival of Weeks when Jewish culture celebrates the historical giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, also known as Hag Matan Torateinu. Fifty days following Passover, when the people were freed from physical bondage, the festival recalls where the people were redeemed from spiritual bondage of idolatry and sin. Though it is called Pentecost, it has no similarity with Christian Pentecost, except that Christians also believe that by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, the Word-made-flesh would be made clear and put into action beginning with the apostles. There is no later feast in the Catholic Church which distinctly celebrates the giving of the Word of God. Perhaps Pentecost is the most applicable in our tradition for this theological theme.

"Our work requires time together and can't be replaced with more budget-friendly conference calls and Google-group communications."

At any rate, a few reflections came out of my experience with Imam Sami at the Islamic Center this past Sept. 5. I stayed from about seven o'clock in the evening until midnight: there is no substitute for the luxury of time together. Our work requires time together and can't be replaced with more budget-friendly conference calls and Google-group communications. We ate, discussed, went out for a coffee, came back, observed the assembly as they swayed and prayed together: we

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## President's Letter

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formed a friendship. I might even study Arabic with him. This is how sincere dialogue begins. In a conversation at our Faiths in the World Committee meeting this month, Dr. Scott Alexander described time together as “the only legitimate and fertile context for witness, within a relationship of trust.”

This time gave Sami and me the chance to imagine what a dialogue might actually look like. We talked about the possibilities that religions have for making a new expression in relationship when they are freed from violence and domination. A shadow has been cast over the sincere witness of all world religions at various times throughout history when our messages have been muddled by politics and the thirst for temporal power. Today we have the unique chance in our country to see how these religions might come to the forefront of our society as spiritual and not temporal movements.

We also spoke of the urgency of the work of dialogue among faiths. The window seems to be closing in our civic culture, which has pretty much developed outside of religion. Extremism in all faiths has resulted in a sort of defamation of religion in general. The sincere mainstream faithfulness, peacefulness, and goodwill of churches and religions today needs to be broadcast and celebrated, to become the voice that people hear despite the manipulation of agenda-driven interest groups and a sometimes sensationalist press.

Interreligious work is very popular today for a good reason. Recent events have illustrated a great need for deeper understanding and conversation. When something comes out in the press that seems like it's wrong, people who have formed friendships are less likely to jump to conclusions and more likely to seek explanations rather than condemnation. Even greater communication is often the result.

We have several things in the works this year, most important, our Institute for Interreligious Studies around the last week of July in Mundelein, just north of Chicago. I plan to enroll again because each time I look, I see more. I invite all our bishops, diocesan ecumenical and interreligious delegates, and interested people to plan to take advantage of this opportunity to grow in knowledge that will serve well in practice. We will do our best to keep costs down and welcome interested people to inquire about registration options.

For all of you who are so dedicated to this work we do, both in obvious and quiet ways, thank you. Let us keep one another in prayer.



Father Don Rooney

“The sincere mainstream faithfulness, peacefulness, and goodwill of churches and religions today needs to be broadcast and celebrated.”

# The Executive Committee Meets in Pittsburgh

by Rev. Msgr. George Appleyard, CADEIO Secretary, Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma

**F**ather Don Rooney, our president, was in Pittsburgh to participate in a planning session of the national committee for the 2011 National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) during the week of Aug. 22. He called for a meeting of CADEIO's executive committee on Wed., Aug. 25. The meeting opened at 1:00 p.m. with prayer, after the national committee completed its work that morning. A full set of the minutes from the Tampa workshop was handed out. The officers will report any needed changes or adjustments to the secretary before the minutes are presented at the general assembly next year in Pittsburgh.

The president provided a lengthy agenda which—except for a dinner break at 6:00 p.m.—would keep the officers working until 9:00. Don suggested we improve the orientation program



Father Don Rooney (left), president, leads the meeting of the officers, with Father Erich Rutten, treasurer (center), and Father Alexei Smith, vice president (right), facing him.

for newcomers, perhaps involving the officers. The change of treasurers has delayed a full report, but it is expected soon. The president reviewed long-standing goals, such as increasing membership, and he brought up some new considerations, such as setting up proper archives. Many details about the next NWCU were also decided.

While in Pittsburgh, the officers from out of town had a chance to visit the venues for the various events. One of the best aspects of the site is that the hotel is located in a tourist park called Station Square. A variety of restaurants are available right outside the hotel door, and the venues for the events are in walking distance but are also available by public transit for a nominal fee. The social, a boat ride on the three rivers of Pittsburgh, leaves from a dock beside the hotel.



The chapel of Ss. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, where the officers were billeted.

# The Passing of a Friend: The Ecumenical Council of San Diego County

by Msgr. Dennis Mikulanis, Diocese of San Diego

After 40 years of solid ecumenical work in San Diego, breaking down barriers and building friendships, the Ecumenical Council of San Diego County (ECSD) has passed into history. After declining interest in the work of the council by judicatory members, leading to declining membership and declining income, the ECSD membership voted in a general assembly in June to cease operation as a formal body and become a program of the Interfaith Shelter Network (ISN), which has had remarkable success in working with the homeless for the past 15 or so years. Since its inception, the ISN has been a program of the ECSD, but now the birthing parent becomes the cared-for child.

There were several good reasons for the decline in interest and membership in the ECSD, including a valid sentiment by some that the mutual respect for each other's beliefs and doctrines was being sacrificed for the sake of social acceptance. Some judicatories hadn't participated in the ECSD for years, and the Catholic Diocese of San Diego recently withdrew its membership for serious financial and pastoral reasons. The Faith, Order, and Witness Committee of the ECSD continues to meet for monthly discussions on preselected topics, and a movement has begun to find new ways by which ecumenism can serve the church in San Diego. Also, the Anglican–Roman Catholic Dialogue of San Diego (A/RC/SD) has been on hiatus for the past year. Again, serious problems in contemporary theology and practice have undermined three decades of good work by A/RC/SD. The leadership of A/RC/SD is exploring ways in which we can continue to meet and discuss those concerns that affect the unity of the Church.

“In some ways the ECSD is a victim of its own success because we have come to a greater understanding of and appreciation for one another.”

In some ways the ECSD is a victim of its own success because we have come to a greater understanding of and appreciation for one another than was known a generation or two ago. Perhaps the era of “conciliar” ecumenism has done its job and must now move on to some other paradigm.

All of the apparent disappointments notwithstanding, local area ecumenical gatherings continue to happen with shared prayer and com-

munity service in many parts of the diocese. The North County Interfaith Services Agency is largely supported by the interreligious community of North San Diego County and continues to be an important part of San Diego. The Poway Interfaith Team continues to provide excellent monthly programs for interreligious dialogue, and the Society of St. John Chrysostom–Western Region develops increasingly good relationships between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. We also participate in the West Coast Catholic-Muslim dialogues as we

continue to reach out to the Muslim community, and Catholic-Jewish cooperation and work continues with another successful Bearing Witness Program. (More than 150 San Diego Catholic educators have participated in Bearing Witness, which teaches about the Holocaust, mutual respect, and cooperation between Catholics and Jews.) Furthermore, the diocese participates in an annual interreligious panel discussion hosted by Congregation Beth Israel, which is open to the public and is well attended.

While this is not a “golden time” for this vital ministry of the Church, there is still a good deal of ecumenical and interreligious cooperation and growth in the Diocese of San Diego.

# Interfaith Connections: East Meets West

by Sister Judith Kreipe, IHM, Archdiocese of Philadelphia

The International Visitors Council (IVC) of Philadelphia participates in the Community Connections program, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Agency for International Development, Bureau of Europe and Eurasia and World Learning. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia was invited by IVC to host a delegation of 10 interfaith leaders from the Russian Republic on June 22. These leaders were Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Buddhist, and Muslim. Two interpreters and two staff of IVC assisted with the process.

The participants from the Russian Federation were interested in learning about successful strategies and programs that they could share with their colleagues at home to further develop interfaith relations in their country. The key question concerned how social services are provided by the Archdiocese. The delegation expressed appreciation for the acceptance of other faith groups in the Archdiocesan social service programs and for the ecumenical and interfaith work of the Archdiocese.

Msgr. Michael J. Carroll explained that the reason for the delegation's interest in social service work was that during the communist era of the Soviet Union, faith-based charities were taken over by the state. Religious denominations were forbidden to operate such programs. "They had to relearn how to do this," he said.

The delegation came for lunch at the Archdiocesan Office Center, then met on the thirteenth floor for an exchange regarding interfaith work. Then a docent provided an informative tour of the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul. The members of the delegation took many pictures of Philadelphia from the 13th floor vantage point and many pictures within the cathedral basilica itself.

The delegation also visited Washington, DC, and New York City, where they attended a Russian Orthodox liturgy. Rabbi Elena Rubenstein of St. Petersburg summarized her experience with one word: "blessing." Speaking



The delegation visits the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia.

through an interpreter, she said, "For the first time in my life I was present in a Russian Orthodox Church for a service. It was good for thought. I already knew, but saw for the first time, clergy of all denominations use exactly the same words when they preach a sermon. They are talking about faith; they are talking about love; they are talking about peace; and they are talking about respect."

We e-mailed the social service link from the Archdiocesan webpage to the delegation to help with their newly reinvigorated social service initiatives. "The visit was great," said Ann Stauffer, IVC executive vice president. She noted that this type of exchange program works well because "America has a great history of respecting other people's religions."

# A Century of Ecumenism: Reviewing the Conference

by Father Erich Rutten, CADEIO Treasurer, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Edinburgh Conference, as it has come to be known, served as a major catalyst for the modern ecumenical movement. To examine all that has been achieved in ecumenism in the past hundred years, the St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, hosted a conference June 17–19 entitled “A Century of Ecumenism: What has been achieved? What are the next steps forward?”

The conference was the inspiration of Msgr. John Radano, faculty in residence of the St. Paul Seminary, “on loan” from Seton Hall. Msgr. Radano served for more than 23 years as the western director of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity under Cardinals Johannes Willebrands, Edward Cassidy, and Walter Kasper. He was the Vatican’s “guy at the table” for many of the breakthroughs of recent history. Because of this experience, he was able to assemble an extraordinary group of presenters to speak from both the Catholic and

non-Catholic points of view, including Dame Mary Tanner, president of the World Council of Churches; Dr. Geoffrey Wainwright, noted Methodist theologian; Dr. Mel Robeck, Pentecostal ecumenist; and Dr. Peter Bouteneff, longtime member of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue. Msgr. Radano brought the presenters together to highlight the accomplishments of the modern ecumenical movement and to begin to ask questions about next steps.

It is difficult to name just a few “take-away” points from the last century, which has seen so many joint statements and declarations. Each presenter, focusing on the history of his or her own specific bilateral or multilateral dialogue, had several significant accomplishments to highlight.

The mutual lifting of excommunications by Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras after almost 1,000 years; the Lutheran-Catholic signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, significantly resolving almost 500 years of theological posturing; and even the very willingness of Baptists recently to discuss the role of Mary: How else can we describe these events but as the literally miraculous working of the Spirit of God among us!

One highlight of this recent conference was its prayer service to offer thanks for this movement of God and to ask God’s ongoing help. It was noted that at the Edinburgh Conference no agreements were signed. The only action taken was a virtually unanimous decision to continue



Participants and presenters at A Century of Ecumenism, St. Paul Seminary, June 17–19.

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## Institute

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Lutheran theologian, spoke on Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, and Dr. Mel Robeck, a Pentecostal theologian, spoke on Pentecostal-Catholic dialogue. Both were in the frontlines of these historical dialogues and had wonderful firsthand experiences to convey.

The lectures were more like informal talks given in a friendly setting—much like a parish hall meeting. Open dialogue and stimulating questions illuminated the conversations. Dr. Root presented a detailed explanation on the genesis of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification from a Lutheran point of view, highlighting the texts that were the most controversial and significant. One of the greatest “take-aways” was his comment that the ecumenical movement needs to “attract people other than just academics.”

Dr. Robeck’s presentation was a tutorial on Pentecostal churches, their history, and their beliefs. He also gave a detailed explanation of the ecumenical dialogues between the Pentecostal churches and the Roman Catholic Church, in which he has had a significant role. In describing the notion of sanctification in the Pentecostal tradition, he said, “You begin a life



Brother Jeff Gros, FSC, Father Avelino González-Ferrer, and Father Don Rooney at the Episcopal House of Prayer.

of sanctification when you have a religious experience where the power of God’s grace is manifested.”

The abbot from St. John’s Abbey, Father John Klassen, OSB, addressed the group on Wednesday, July 28, and spoke about the history of the ecumenical movement at St. John’s University and the role of the Benedictine monks of the abbey.

One of the highlights of the week was a visit by Father Killian McDonnell. In a short period, he explained to us the 30-plus-year history of his ecumenical work, including his involvement in the Pentecostal-Catholic dialogue. Also included in his fascinating historical perspective was a short catechesis on Cyril of Jerusalem’s sermon on the Rite of Christian Initiation in the context of the Easter Vigil. He ended his talk with a suggestion: “We need to learn from the Pentecostals.” This was a reference to their great love for, and emphasis on, the Holy Spirit.

The evenings during the institute were spent in a relaxed living room environment, reflecting on the topics discussed earlier in the day. Brother Jeff Gros, FSC, who organizes the Institute for Ecumenical Leadership, did a wonderful job in guiding the conversation.

For anyone who is involved in ecumenical or interreligious dialogue, the Institute for Ecumenical Leadership is a wonderful experience and learning opportunity that should not be missed. I hope more ecumenical officers and leaders across the United States take advantage of this training.



Founder of the Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research Father Killian McDonnell, OSB, and Mel Robeck of Fuller Theological Seminary.



## Updates from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Methodist-Catholic dialogue discussed the relationship between the environment and Eucharist, June 28–30. <http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-130.shtml>

Father Leo Walsh, associate director of the Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (SEIA), attended the Presbyterian General Assembly, July 2–10, in Minneapolis. <http://ga219.pcusa.org/>

SEIA executive director Father James Massa attended the Christian Leadership Initiative in Israel, July 19–30, sponsored by the Shalom Hartman Institute and the American Jewish Committee. The initiative is a comprehensive program that grounds its participants in the central ideas of Jewish ethics and faith, the diverse ideologies and practices of contemporary world Jewry, and the intellectual foundations of religious pluralism and interreligious studies.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) hosted the Bearing Witness Program, sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League, July 22. Father Leo Walsh gave the welcome, and Archbishop Donald Wuerl spoke to the participants. The program provides Catholic school educators with the training and resources to teach their students about the historical relationship between Jewish and

Catholic communities and the impact of that relationship on Catholic teaching, catechesis, and liturgy. [http://www.adl.org/bearing\\_witness/default.asp](http://www.adl.org/bearing_witness/default.asp)

SEIA associate director Father Ron Roberson took part in the fall Anglican-Catholic Dialogue (Sept. 8–11), in which dialogue members examined their different approaches to moral theology. <http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-161.shtml>

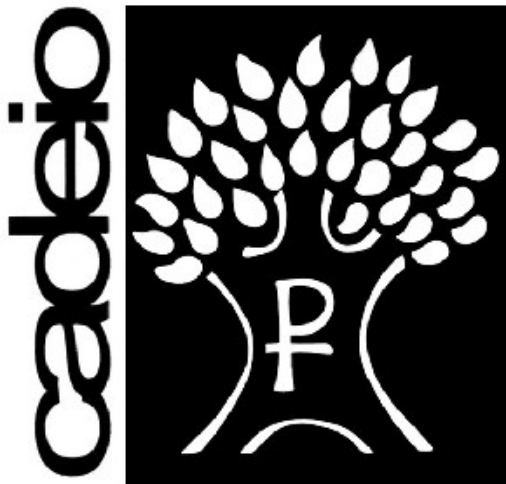
Father James Massa was present at the Aug. 25–27 meeting of Lutheran Coalition for Reform (Core), which saw the birth of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). The NALC was formed in direct response to, among other issues, the move of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada to ordain pastors in homosexual relationships. See <http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2010/08/31/not-your-smallest-lutheran-church/>

On Sept. 7, the SEIA joined leaders of many faiths who met in Washington, DC, to denounce anti-Muslim prejudice. They issued the joint statement, “Beyond Park 51.” <http://www.usccb.org/seia/response-muslim-prejudice.shtml>

### Conference

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to meet to work on unity and greater collaboration. At that moment, in Edinburgh 100 years ago, the participants stood and sung out the Doxology together. We renewed this gesture at this conference on behalf of the present generation. May God continue to lead us and bless us with greater and greater unity!



“One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.” Eph. 4:5

The CADEIO Connection is a publication of the Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers.  
www.cadeio.org

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Please send your reports, articles, and photos to Julie M. Conroy, editor, at [jmtconroy@gmail.com](mailto:jmtconroy@gmail.com)

**The Purposes of CADEIO**

- To stimulate the exchange of ideas, experiences, and networking among the ecumenical officers of the dioceses in union with Rome.
- To promote programs which further the work of Christian Unity and interreligious cooperation.
- To cooperate with the Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and other ecumenical and interreligious agencies.

Upcoming Events

- NCCC Centennial Gathering, Nov. 9–11, New Orleans, LA  
<http://www.ncccusa.org/witnesses2010/>
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Jan. 18–25, 2011: “One in the Apostles’ Teaching, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread, and Prayer” (Acts 2:42)
- National Workshop on Christian Unity May 9–12, 2011, Pittsburg, PA
- Institute for Interreligious Leadership (dates to be announced)

Membership Application

- Enclosed is \$10 (payable to CADEIO) for an associate membership.
- Enclosed is \$200 (payable to CADEIO) for a full membership (see criteria at <http://www.cadeio.org/membership.php>).

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