



World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Mission and Vision Statement, 2008

Inspired by the Convention on the Rights of the Child...and guided by our religious traditions, we commit ourselves to protecting the rights of our children to live in safety and security.

In our prayer, meditation, worship and action, we express our hope that the world can indeed be made fit for children.

The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children:

- affirms the right of every child to full and healthy physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development and is guided by five key principles of respect for:
 - (a) the dignity of human beings from all religions, cultures and civilizations ¹
 - (b) the spiritual, religious and faith tradition of every child
 - (c) the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion ²
 - (d) the rights of parents to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child ³
 - (e) the liberty of parents, and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions. ⁴
- clearly recognizes the primary role of parents and guardians in guiding the spiritual and religious formation of their children. Therefore, it is our firmly held conviction that we respect the cultural, religious and spiritual heritage of the child. This is both a principle of our mission and an international human right.
- is an initiative of Arigatou International, whose founder, the Reverend Takeyasu Miyamoto, recognizes the inherent right of the child to spiritual growth. "It is my firm belief that spiritual decline and lack of attention to basic ethics is at the root of the increasing violence and injustice we see all around us today. An essential step on the road to peace is to ensure that every child grows up with full access to his/her innate capacity for spiritual development." ⁵

The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children is not:

- a movement to promote any religion, nor does it promote any ideology or organization;
- an occasion for secular organizations to be co-opted nor for religious organizations to proselytize;
- about imposing any belief or faith, nor does it call on religious traditions to compromise their key beliefs or teachings;
- about supporting beliefs, concepts or practices that are overly polarizing or controversial, but it is about creating global movement for action to prevent violence against children.

ENDNOTES

1. Arigatou Foundation, *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education*, Geneva, 2008. <http://www.ethicseducationforchildren.org>

2. United Nations Children's Fund, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, New York, 1989. <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

3. Ibid.

4. United Nations, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, New York, 1966. <http://www.un.org/millennium/law/iv-4.htm>

5. Miyamoto, Takeyasu in *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education*, p. 14.