



# into the Melting Pot

*the question is more important than the answer*

Sunday 11 December 2016

## **The Iona Multi-Faith Experience**

*Brief notes from the discussion, which might remind those present what was said:*

### **What is religion?**

*A belief system linked to a 'greater power' either outside (beyond) or within us.*

*It seeks to link the human with the divine.*

*Religion inevitably develops over time; it evolves*

- 1 Why do we feel the need for religion?  
*Not everyone does!*  
*It provides a moral code*  
*It gives meaning beyond ourselves*  
*Religion acknowledges and feeds our spirit (soul)*
- 2 What do religious people believe?  
*All sorts!!*  
*For many it is about a being (or beings) greater than ourselves.*  
*Some prefer to think less anthropomorphically and prefer 'otherness'*
- 3 What do religious people do?  
*Worship; Engage in ritual*  
*Pray / meditate*  
*Seek to better themselves*  
*Take care of others (sometimes just of the same religion) and the environment*

*The danger of those who stipulate 'we have the truth' (and therefore you do not).*

### **Ninian Smart's Seven Dimensions of Religions**

- 1 Practical and Ritual Dimension: *Church on Sunday (or equivalent); Worship; Ritual; Study – looking for meaning; give to the poor.*
- 2 Experiential and Emotional: *What goes on inside alters behaviour*
- 3 Narrative and Mythic Dimension: *When does a story become myth (or historic fact!) and where is the 'truth' – there is opportunity for interpretation.*
- 4 Doctrinal and Philosophical Dimension: *The Trinity; the Apocalypse. Doctrine has changed over time within Christianity.*
- 5 Ethical and Legal Dimension Social and Institutional Dimension: *The Ten Commandments*
- 6 The Social and Institutional Dimension: *Meetings; Christian Aid*
- 7 Material Dimension: *Building (Church, Synagogue, Mosque, . . .); Writings (Bible, Quran, . . .); the Ark of the Covenant; Cathedral Gift Shops; Icons; Relics; Clothing.*

### **Writings and Prayers**

*Am I 'comfortable' with these writings?*

*There is considerable 'common ground' within them.*

### **Interfaith Activities**

*There is a need to talk, with tolerance, respect and openness.*

*There can be a common purpose in calamity.*