



INFORMATION FOR FAITH/ INTERFAITH ORGANISATIONS



YOUR FAITH/INTERFAITH GROUP AND HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2014

Faith and interfaith organisations play a fundamental role in fostering understanding and good relationships between different faith groups in the UK. Marking HMD is an opportunity for people of all faiths and none to come together to celebrate the diversity of their communities, challenge prejudice and intolerance and create a safer, better future. This factsheet has guidance on how your faith or interfaith group can mark 27 January.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2014 – Journeys

On Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) – 27 January – we challenge hatred and persecution in the UK by sharing the memory of the millions who have been murdered in the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

The experience of those affected by genocide is characterised by forced **Journeys**. For HMD 2014, we will learn of the multitude of **Journeys** that people were forced to undertake because of genocide, in fear of what would be found at the end. We will do so at events that bring us together with our neighbours, strengthen bonds of respect, and enable us to pledge to **take a step** to create a safer, better future.

HMD is a really important reminder for all people, regardless of their faith or belief. To say that the Holocaust was a tragedy is a gross understatement. It was a moment when humanity lost its humanity. And yet genocides and mass killings continue in our world and hatred and prejudice are all too common. We must – all of us – resolve to learn the lessons of the past in order to build a better, more peaceful, future'
Dilwar Hussain, Islamic Society of Britain and HMDT Trustee



A multi-faith service in Kings Lynn involving the Mayor, speakers from the Muslim and Traveller communities and a local choir © Lynn News



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Faith / interfaith groups, the Holocaust and the subsequent genocides

HMD has a unique significance for faith and interfaith groups. During the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides individuals and groups were targeted simply because of their differing beliefs and identities. The Holocaust was a campaign to murder European Jewry in its entirety. During the 1990s war in Bosnia, extremist Bosnian Serbs promoted hatred of Muslims and murdered over 8,000 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica. By reflecting on the impact of these atrocities on different faith communities we can work towards challenging hatred and discrimination in the UK today.

The Holocaust and other genocides also offer many examples of individuals reaching out to people of different faiths, offering them protection and assistance at great personal risk. These stories show the human capacity for good in the face of evil.

How can your faith / interfaith group mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2014?

For HMD 2014, you could:

- **Enjoy a shared meal** – sharing traditional dishes from other religions or cultures is a great way to bring people from different communities together.
- **Organise a faith or interfaith ceremony** – you could include readings from religious texts, poetry, prayers, hymns or songs.
- **Hold a discussion** – discussion can evoke fruitful ideas as well as encouraging greater mutual understanding for those involved.
- You could also invite other community groups, the police, local politicians and the general public to your event.

Things to consider

- The first consideration is religious days. The Jewish Shabbat lasts from Friday evening until Saturday evening and the Islamic Jumu'ah prayer is on Friday. Sunday is the religious day for Christians. Depending upon your audience, a day on which there are no conflicts with significant religious days might be the most appropriate for HMD commemoration.
- In identifying a room or space where the activity can be held, it is important to be respectful to all faiths, so activities could be held in a neutral space.

Claim your free Activity Pack
This pack includes HMD 2014
display materials

hmd.org.uk/activitypack

Order your free handout materials
Available in boxes of 50
to give out to attendees at
your event hmd.org.uk/handouts

Just about every faith has its own version of what is called 'The Golden Rule'. Judaism has it in the text of Leviticus 19:18 – 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' A first century rabbi called Hillel said that the essence of all Jewish teaching was the phrase, 'what is hateful to you, do not do to another.' When Jews talk of the Holocaust, they say 'never again'. Let us be very clear, we mean 'never again to anyone of any faith, race, or nationality.' To make this real, we must build bridges between faiths, races, sexuality and nationalities because, ultimately, we are all human.

Rabbi Richard Jacobi



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Free Resources for you

- The story of **Gino Bartali**, an Italian cycling legend and a devout Catholic who helped to save the lives of many Jews during the Second World War hmd.org.uk/ginobartali
- A podcast of the story of Catholic singer, **Vali Rácz**, who hid Jewish friends in her home hmd.org.uk/valiracz
- A podcasts on the role of the **Righteous Muslims** which provides an example of a group of Muslims who were guided by their faith to rescue Jews during the Holocaust hmd.org.uk/righteousmuslims
- The life story of **Hasan Hasanović**, a Bosnian Muslim who embarked on a 100 kilometre journey to escape the massacre of over 7,000 men in Srebrenica hmd.org.uk/hasanhasanovic
- Holocaust survivor **Freddie Knoller's life story** describes his forced journey across Europe and deportation to Auschwitz hmd.org.uk/freddieknoller

- A podcast by **Dr Toby Howarth, Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs for the Archbishop of Canterbury**, about the importance of speaking out when we see discrimination happening in our communities hmd.org.uk/tobyhowarth



In Stafford people from different faiths joined together to plant a cherry tree © HMP Stafford

What's next?

Get in contact with us – we've helped thousands of organisers put on events for HMD in the UK.

Whether you'd like to order your free Activity Pack, find out about local opportunities with other groups marking HMD or just bounce some ideas around, our dedicated outreach team can assist you with advice and support as you plan for HMD 2014.

You can contact us now on:

020 7785 7029 enquiries@hmd.org.uk

Let us know – even if you don't need any help, we'd still love to hear what you're doing. We can promote your event and share good ideas to inspire others. And to make sure that the strength of the UK commemoration for HMD 2014 is known, it's vital that we find out about your activity. You can let us know and also promote your event to the public on our website hmd.org.uk/letusknow

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