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Living Faith Traditions

01.14.2010 | Culture and Society, Catholic The University of Dayton will host a three-event symposium to discuss how faith influences life in five major world religions and explore the importance of interfaith dialogue.

Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim practitioners — all University of Dayton faculty members — will participate in the "Living Traditions" series Jan. 26, Feb. 3 and Feb. 11. All events are free and open to the public.

"There is a lot of religious strife in the world today," said Patricia Johnson, Alumni Chair in the Humanities and event sponsor. "It's important for people to openly discuss their religious commitments and share their experiences so we can relate to one another. When we understand each other, we get along better."

The symposium will kick off with a panel discussion 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, in Sears Recital Hall. Speakers include Elizabeth Harrison, Learning Teacher Center faculty member on Buddhism; Joseph Castellano, accounting professor, on Catholicism; Monish Chatterjee, engineering professor, on Hinduism; Myrna Gabbe, philosophy professor, on Judaism; and Muhammad Islam, mathematics professor, on Islam.

Panel members will discuss how their religious traditions impact their life choices followed by a question-and-answer session facilitated by David O'Brien, University Professor of Faith and Culture.

Part two of the symposium continues at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3, in Sears Recital Hall and includes a discussion on Buddhism led by Lama Kathy Wesley of the Columbus-based Karma Thegsun Choling Tibetan Buddhist Center.

The Rev. David Fleming, S.M., professor of the University's program in India, will wrap up the symposium with a discussion on the importance of interfaith dialogue at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, in Sears Recital Hall.

Johnson said she hopes the audience will walk away with a greater appreciation for various religious traditions. She said the discussion is in keeping with the University of Dayton's commitment to diversity, founded in its Catholic heritage of social justice, and the Marianist tradition of equality and being inclusive of people from all segments of society.

"This symposium is important because the world we live in is a pluralistic world, so all of us must have an appreciation and respect for each other," she said. "The event contributes to the University of Dayton's commitment to open dialogue and to having a diverse group of students, faculty and staff."

The annual Humanities Symposium, now in its 17th year, focuses on four basic themes of the University's humanities program: faith and reason, autonomy and responsibility, the individual and society, and human beings and nature.

the Office of Alumni Chair in Humanities at 937-229-3490 or Patricia Johnson at patricia.johnson@notes.udayton.edu.