

Comments by Imam Hassan Qazwini

Visit of Adam Cardinal Maida

September 28, 2006

In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful.

In light of Pope Benedict XVI's recent remarks deemed controversial by many Muslims, we, the Muslim community in Michigan, would like to emphasize the need for mutual understanding between Catholics and Muslims.

Indeed, we are told in the Holy Qur'an, "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other)." [49:13] The Holy Qur'an is the first divine book to call on all Muslims, Christians, and Jews to have a dialogue based on their commonalities. The Qur'an says "O People of the Book (that is, Christians and Jews)! Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than God." [3:64] Therefore, we emphasize that great need for a sincere and honest dialogue based on true respect between Muslims and Catholics.

With the many Catholic and Muslim leaders gathered here today, I would like to recognize His Eminence, Cardinal Adam Maida for his genuine gesture of paying a visit to the Islamic Center to meet his Muslim brethren in these trying times. When we remember that the number of Muslims and Catholics exceed half of the world's population, it is easy to see that it is extremely crucial for religious leaders on both side to continue their efforts in reaching out to each other to mend relations.

I wish to once more declare my willingness and the willingness of my Muslim brothers to fully participate in dialogue and promote Catholic-Muslim relations in ways that ensure the betterment, advancement, and spiritual growth of our respective communities.