

## **Gera Philips RSCJ – Artisan of Hope for Interfaith Dialogue**

In a pluralistic world, we are called to make a commitment to dialogue which needs a seriousness of disposition, sincerity of decision and steadfastness towards its completion. This in turn will bring an integrity to meeting people of all religions.

My main experience of interfaith dialogue is meeting, listening, sharing and inviting each other to what is most important to us – our faith. When we speak of our faith, we are sharing with each other our God experience which leaves no space for prejudice, stigma, stereotypes or suspicion.

In my encounter with people of all faiths especially Muslims I appreciate their single mindedness on God, their willingness to enter into the dialogue process with trust and openness. This creates a safe atmosphere to enter into my own heart and into their hearts. It is there that we speak about the issues of humanity, the sufferings of our people, our hopes, our feelings and the ways in which we can work together to build a better world.

My joy in interfaith dialogue is mutually being enriched as we enter into the core beliefs and truth claims of our own faith and open ourselves to the same in our friends who are on the same journey to meet God. My hope is that we can listen to God's call and longing that awakens in us the desire to walk as pilgrims without fear, being a witness that God is alive in our differences and that is what we celebrate together. The Sacrament of difference.