

Muslims give awards to Catholics

Maureen Fiedler | Oct. 30, 2009 NCR Today

I was pleased to be part of the Peace and Dialogue Awards Ceremony of the Rumi Forum Oct. 27. It took place in the Cannon House Caucus Room on Capitol Hill.

Most of the recipients (four out of six) were Catholic. Dr. John Borelli of Georgetown University received an award for his lifelong commitment to interfaith dialogue. Dr. Sidney H. Griffith of Catholic University received the Rumi Peace Award. Congressperson Gerald E. Connolly, a Catholic representing Virginia's 11th district (Fairfax County), was given the Congressional Service Award. And I was honored to receive the Media Excellence Award for our work on Interfaith Voices.

Many of these awardees sat at my dinner table, and it was obvious that all of are "Vatican II Catholics," people whose ideals were forged and developed in that era when ecumenical and interfaith awareness opened up the horizons of religious faith and practice in our lives.

The Rumi Forum represents a vision of Islam that values and fosters interfaith and intercultural dialogue. It is named for the world famous 13th century poet, Rumi.

It struck me that night that we belonged together in that room that evening. Both groups -- Vatican II Catholics and our Rumi Forum friends -- envision faith communities, not as places to exclude, but to welcome -- not as places to lay down laws and rules, but to open dialogue. And most of all -- as places to envision a future where the common good is the major concern.

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