

His Grace Archbishop Kevin McDonald
Bishops & Reverends
Trustees of OAUk, BOA, Honorary Members
Directors of IOJ
Ladies & Gentlemen:

Jai Jinendra, Good Morning & Namaste

It gives me great sense of pride that I stand before you and formally welcome you all to Oshwal Centre, The Headquarters of OAUk.

Let me take this opportunity to give you a brief introduction to our CHIEF GUEST: His Grace Archbishop Kevin McDonald and members of his team.

His Grace was born at Stoke-on-Trent and completed his schooling there. He studied Latin at Birmingham University and attended the English College in Rome until 1975. Having been ordained Priest in 1974, he completed his Licentiate in Moral Theology in 1975.

His Grace worked at the Pontifical Council in Rome from 1985 to 1993 during which he completed his Doctorate. On returning to England, he was Parish Priest at English Martyrs until 1998.

Because of his interest in inter-religious dialogue he holds posts at Commission for Other Faiths and Committee for Catholic-Jewish Relations.

Presently he is Archbishop Emeritus of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark and Chairman of the Bishops' Conference.

Accompanying His Grace today, we have:

Bishop Paul Hendricks

Mr Alfred Agius

Rev. Jon Dal Din

Ms Katharina Muller

And Franscesca Khaliq [FRANCHESKA.]

Dear friends, you can all mark this day in your diary as a historical day because you have visited a JAIN DERASAR, or TEMPLE, which is the FIRST of its kind in Europe.

The Oshwals are the largest sector of the Jain Community in the UK, having migrated from the East African Territories, starting in the late 50's, and gathering pace in the 70's and 80's

In fact to my knowledge we have today in the audience, the first Oshwal who was born in this country some 50 years ago.

May I request XXXXX to stand up and confirm this fact!

The Jain community has always participated in Interfaith & other community activities, sharing our values and philosophical ideas with other communities. I believe that it is necessary for us all to learn & understand the diverse cultures and faiths in modern Britain.

We are pleased to note that His Grace developed an interest in Interfaith Dialog whilst at Sparkhill and he is still listed as a NOTABLE RESIDENT of Sparkhill. His participation in *Commission for Other Faiths* and *Committee for Catholic-Jewish Relations* is also noteworthy.

Jains embrace the philosophy of community cohesion through the doctrine of ANEKANTAVAD which means acceptance of plurality and multi-dimensional existence.

Non-violence or AHIMSA is an essential way of life in Jainism. You will have witnessed this today in your visit to the Derasar gardens with the Ahimsa Symbol, characterised by the palm of the hand at the main entrance to our Derasar Site. As Jains we consume, only VEGETARIAN food necessary to lead a healthy life. These values by their nature are environmentally friendly and so necessary as proven by more and more people are changing their diet.

We are very happy to share these values with you all.

A Jain delegation to the Vatican on 6th December 2011 had the privilege of an audience with His Holiness the Pope and leading from that visit, today we are so privileged to have the honour & pleasure of this visit of His Grace and leaders of the Catholic faith.

I hope that your first visit today to our Derasar complex will be a memorable one and that not only will you be returning more often but encouraging others to visit our beautiful Derasar Complex . It is also pleasing to note that we have many schools which are teaching about different faiths, including Jainism, and many of them visiting the centre here, as part of the students' learning experience.

We are hoping in the future to have a Library and catering facility for all visitors so that their experience of the pilgrimage to our Derasar can be even more rewarding and memorable.

Oshwal centre is the headquarters of our Organisation & you will all be pleased to know that we also have a smaller local community centre for our members in Croydon, South London. This was a former Church building and now adapted for our local community and also has a small Derasar. We hope that one day His Grace will also be able to visit there as well.

I hope once again that your visit here today is fruitful.
Thank you all for coming.

Jai Jinendra , Jai Oshwal