



## UN Climate Change Conference COP24 Katowice, Poland

7<sup>th</sup> – 8th December

### Friday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec:

This morning, our team met for the half way briefing. All of the programs and activities have gone well. This year we noticed that there is a more debate on plant-based diet, excessive air travels and lifestyle change. Topics like hope, solidarity and trust are also being discussed more than ever. There is a growing uneasiness for the future. Everyone in our team is ready for another week of action.

### Reception for our Friends



This year, Brahma Kumaris (BK) hosted its reception in the convent of St Stephens Catholic Church, quite close to the conference venue. These events are well known for the sense of belonging they create and the delicious food. So, it was no wonder that more than 30 of our friends and contacts came. One participant said: Thank you so much for providing a family for me while I am at COP. After a powerful moment of silence, we enjoyed our vegan snacks and had a lively discussion.

Sister Jayanti, Adam Palion from the Catholic Church, and the Polish and international team at the reception





## Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> December: Climate March



More than 1000 campaigners and activists from around the world demonstrated in the annual "March for Climate". The demonstration has a long tradition at the COPs. This year, it was accompanied by an equal number of police.

The demonstration usually marks the middle of the conference and is intended to give the needed push to the negotiations. Some of these so-called "climate pilgrims" have walked thousands of kilometres before arriving in Katowice.

BKs Aneta, Bishek and Valeriane participated in the march.



## Interfaith meeting UNFCCC

The Islamic Relief, GreenFaith, Brahma Kumaris, Franciscans International, Quakers and World Council of Churches had a pleasant meeting with Orvais Sarmad, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNFCCC and presented him with the COP24 "Interfaith Statement". Afterwards, there was an engaging discussion about the moral and ethical dimensions of



climate change. Mr. Sarmad had visited the Interfaith Talanoa Dialogue on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and was eager to hear about the outcomes and conclusions.

He described the success of the "[#TakeYourSeat](#) and speak up" campaign. It has gone viral and already received more than 1.2 million messages. Sister Jayanti and other faith leaders offered their help and cooperation towards the success of the UNFCCC process.



Mr Orvais Sarmad meeting with interfaith representatives

## Krakow Programs

Krakow, an hour drive from Katowice, is the former capital of Poland and hosts many universities. It has a famous medieval city centre. Around 50 BKs had come from all over Poland to meet Sister Jayanti and the international team at the local university. Sister Jayanti spoke about COP, her main impressions and need of the time. She encouraged all to widen their viewpoint and create a community of greatness.



Sister Jayanti and the Polish COP support team



## Care for the Earth, Care for the Self

BK organized a public program at the same venue in Krakow: "Care for the Earth, Care for the Self". Marek and Asha moderated the program and Golo informed the participants (almost 100) about the latest findings in climate change, the renewable energies projects in India and the power of yoga to create changes. He said: First heal yourself and then heal the earth.

Sister Jayanti spoke about kindness and how it helps everybody to care more for the self and the earth. One small act of kindness will reach more than 120 people in your personal network, so never think that your actions don't count. She asked the audience how to keep hope in these days of climate crisis? With faith in our inner values, hope returns. She stated that both matter and soul are eternal and that there is always a way back to equilibrium, to a state of peace and harmony.



Asha, Sister Jayanti, Golo and Marek at the public program in Krakow





The audience at Krakow

## Salt mines



On the way to the program in Krakow, Golo, Marek, Francis and Sonja visited the world famous "Wieliczka Salt Mine". The mine has been operational since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It has almost 250 kilometres of meandering corridors and many caverns chiselled out from the rock salt. It is an absolute marvel of medieval engineering and features hundreds of statues. It even has a fully featured cathedral.

The tour took almost 3 hours, but still we saw only 2% of the mine. In its peak days, the mine generated 30% of Poland's income but the timber requirement to stabilise the mine shafts led to a massive deforestation in the region.



## Vatican News

An article featuring our side event at COP24 can be read in the Portuguese version of [Vatican news](#), including a photo with Sister Jayanti.

See pictures from Krakow on the next page.



