

Faith and Community: Dialogue Final Report

General Information

- A. Name of Recipient: Caba Kovac
- B. State: Serbia
- C. Name of the project: Radio broadcast: *Church and religious communities talk about themselves*
- D. Period: January 30th 2009- April 30th 2009
- E. Financial Award 500\$
- F. Your contribution 500\$
- G. Money spent (sum of the awards and your contribution) 1000\$

Radio broadcast: ` Churches and Religious communities talk about themselves`

Project was performed by a team of volunteers of Radio Marija in Subotica. Conversations lasting half-hour have been recorded, with representatives of Churches and Religious communities on the territory of eparchy of Subotica (Backa). Those are Serbian Orthodox Church, Catholic Church, Evangelical Christian Church, in Serbia and Vojvodina, Jewish community and Islamic community. Religious minority communities have not been taken into consideration now. With the adequate music, each broadcast takes about 30-45 minutes.

The goal was to meet other Churches and Religious communities with which we live and to give out the first information, that has been directly received, in other words, everyone was supposed to represent themselves. These broadcasts were shown on Sunday nights, from 9 o'clock and then they were showed again, on Fridays at 1.45 p.m. They will be broadcasted a few more times, depending on free time.

After the radio broadcasts on the frequency of Radio Marija in Serbia, everything was recorded on one CD in MP3 format and in the beginning 500 copies were made. These CDs were distributed to religious teachers who work in churches and schools and use them for religious education, especially in state schools, where, according to program and curriculum, it has been envisaged, for sure, to talk about other Churches and Religious communities. In eparchy of Subotica, there are about 135 catholic religious teachers who work in about 254 schools and have around 15000 pupils. This means that `the voice` we have recorded will reach everyone and will be well accepted, and that we shouldn't talk about the others, but everyone should talk about themselves.

We also distributed the mentioned CDs to journalists and teachers of religious education from Churches and Religious communities.

During the implementation of this program, and in contacts with representatives of Churches and Religious communities, there was of course talk about the experiences during the visit to the States. The goals of the program *Faith and Community: Dialogue* were at first place, throughout the whole project. Getting to know each other, to accept each other, tolerance and development of active dialogue were promoted among all participants, and among them there were religious individuals from all churches and all religious communities, and the bishops/ parish priests were introduced with the program and they gave their blessing.

I would emphasize, that some contacts that were established, during the implementation of this program, will be permanently kept, and I am sure that this will contribute to more active dialogue among churches in the region. The new joint broadcasts are already arranged, as well as recording the CD in Hungarian language since significant number of this national minority attended the program.

This project helped me in my professional development to see and better recognize what should be priorities in the work, but it also helped me in developing better communication with representatives of other religions and social structures. I wrote a few articles about this experience, in the newspapers, and after publishing one of these articles, they invited me to medical secondary school in Subotica to deliver lectures for teachers about motivation and to tell them about my experiences in the States and situation in schools there.

I would point out, that the result of this, was direct influence on colleagues teachers of religious education, 135 of them, and indirectly through them, on 15000 pupils. Then additionally, the contacts that have been already established, as I already mentioned before, are very important, especially when we have in mind, that for example Islamic community in Subotica is very young. The mosque was opened in 2008. Some citizens of Subotica are full of prejudice, but this was the first official contact, by representing Islamic community to wider public through Catholic radio station. I think that is the good example.

What could make the project Faith and Community even more successful is to create the second level of the project, more exactly after one or two years of work, the participants could gather in their environment in the same team and analyze achieved results and perhaps make some new program together.