

MULTIFAITH INFORMATION MANUAL

6TH EDITION

AN AUTHORITATIVE GUIDE TO
RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS



CANADIAN MULTIFAITH FEDERATION, TORONTO

(Formerly Ontario Multifaith Council, OMC)

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3570 Victoria Park Avenue Suite #207,
North York, Ontario, Canada, M2H 3S2
Phone: 416-422-1490; fax 416-422-4359;

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ABOUT THE MANUAL

- A resource to understand how religious traditions are embedded in all human cultures
- A definitive guide to spiritual care and religious (SC&R) rights
- Very comprehensive source about ways to accommodate the SC&R needs of believers of 48 Canada's religious and spiritual traditions
- Handy tool for caregivers, both front-line workers and administrative, and coordinating professionals
- Covers over 50 different areas of life, death, work, prayers and celebrations, in light of beliefs, practices, and ritual observance in each religion
- Selected by many campuses that teach multiculturalism, multifaith and / or any specific religions.
- Comparative religion students will find valuable data relating to prayers, rituals, death, dying, funerals, etc. in different theological worldviews
- Social workers, funeral programs and the like recommend this as part of readings
- Helps the community organizations, public institutions and individuals to proactively address conflict, difference and prejudice

INTRODUCTION

The provision of spiritual and religious care in Canada is supported by the member faith traditions which comprise the Canadian Multifaith Federation (CMF) (formerly, Ontario Multifaith Council, OMC). The concept and realization of this Multifaith Information Manual have evolved from work begun in 1986. Throughout the evolution of this document, the principle of presenting the authentic voice of each faith tradition has been a constant. It is retained and enhanced in this edition.

Each chapter in the Manual explores themes, such as, Basic Beliefs, Sacred Books, Worship, Structure, Divisions, Leadership, Rituals, Laws, Dress, Diet, Sacred Symbols, Death & Dying, and Holy Days & Festivals. Also included, for the first time, in this edition are Suggested Readings (See: Appendix A, page 328) and a Glossary of Common Terms in Spiritual and Religious Care (See: Appendix B, page 330).

This Manual also covers many more practical and ethical issues around care for believers of different faiths--at the end of a chapter are Frequently Asked Questions and faith-based responses (FAQs) (See: List of Questions, Appendix D, page 338).

Considerably expanded this edition covers new chapters on Scientology, Coptic Orthodox, Macedonian Orthodox, Spiritual Baptist, Humanist, Taoism, Spiritualist Church of Canada, Methodist, Quaker, Cao Dai, Centres of Spiritual Living, Eckankar and Unification Church. This Manual, however, is not an exhaustive catalog of all the religious traditions in Canada. If we have not included a religious tradition of significance to an institution or workplace, please feel free to inform us. We will be more than happy to find a way to accommodate in our future edition. For a list of others who were contacted, but had no response, please see Appendix C, page 337.

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WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THIS BOOK

The audience of this book are professionals in a variety of settings who require authentic information regarding accommodations in spiritual and religious care. This is what some of them have said about the Multifaith Information Manual:

"The Multifaith Information Manual has been my 'go to' reference since its inception in 1986. It is an invaluable resource for discerning the facts, issues, and concerns for Chaplains for the patients, residents, inmates, and Staff in their care. It is a quickly referenced, straight-forward guide that only gives the information, contact information, and practical insights we need, without unnecessary jargon or details. This Manual is a 'must-have' and will find it's place near the desk of any spiritual and Religious Caregiver in the Province." **Rev. Nick Swirski**, B. A. Div., Chaplain Maplehurst Correctional Complex, Milton, Ontario.

"... it is my privilege to endorse this important work. The Multifaith Information Manual is a resource we use regularly at Toronto Youth Assessment Centre. The MIM gives us clear insight and direction in determining religious rights and requirements of inmates." **Rev. Fred Boom**, Duty Chaplain, Toronto Youth Assessment Centre, Ordained Elder in the Free Methodist Church.

"... we placed the manuals on nursing floors as an educational resource. Staff read sections concerning their patients or residents and enjoyed checking information on their faith traditions. The manuals are a concrete demonstration of our commitment to multi-faith education as well as spiritual care." **Harry Lynch**, Chaplain, Providence Centre.

"The Multifaith Information Manual is a valuable tool for educators. It is an accessible resource which can assist in the development of a truly inclusive curriculum and in the accommodation of the range of religious requirements, practices, and observances of Toronto's diverse communities." **Vanessa Russell**, Instructional Leader, Equity Department, Toronto District School Board.

"This Canadian publication focuses on the practicalities of meeting the needs of friends who may belong to a specific faith community with useful sections on sacred objects and writings, and on the beliefs and practices regarding death appertaining to the faiths included. Faith communities represented includes: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Rastafarian, Sikh and Zoroastrian." **Soul Midwives Shop**, Birmingham (UK)

"I have found the Multifaith Information Manual to be an exemplary, easy to use and very helpful resource that fairly represents and references the varieties of faiths, and the different versions and characteristics of a faith, that can apply within Ontario and across Canada." **Len Thomas**, Humber College Chaplain.

"This manual is essential information for institutional leadership concerned about human rights and human dignity. It is a wonderful resource for spiritual and religious care providers but also gives importance guidance for any administrator wanting to helm a holistic and humane institution of any kind." **Kate Johnson**, chaplain at Queen's University.

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