

Week of Peace Part 2

Here is guest-blogger Giuseppe Buffa's follow up report on the Week of Peace celebration in Mazara del Vallo, Sicily. His first report, "Witnessing Wonders," appears below this one.

Thirty languages are spoken in Mazara. Thirty distinct cultural communities live within the city due to its geographical location and its history of integration, which Mayor Cristaldi explained goes back to the eighth century. The Arabic community is the largest of these cultures. We wanted to make sure that representatives of the Arabic community attended the Week of Peace. So late on a sunny morning during the Week of Peace, we decided to walk through the *Kasbah*, which is in the Arab quarter of the city. *Kasbah* means "hearth" or "center of a city" in Arabic.

A friend who speaks Arabic and I took a supply of leaflets to use as invitations to the most special event of the Week of Peace: Prem Rawat's public address on the 27th of May. First, we went into an Arabic food shop, where five people listened to our invitation to the peace conference. Then we moved on along the narrow lanes of the *Kasbah*. They are narrow to keep the hot sun away and allow fresh air to breeze through to cool your face.

Soon we chanced upon another group of young people. They were amazed that we came to invite them to a conference on peace, or *salaam*, as it is called in Arabic. Lastly, we went to a small restaurant where we invited the owner and his whole family to come. Again, they were very happy and appreciated so much our enthusiasm and joy to have them with us at the Friday conference.

The day after the conference on peace, we went on a tour of the *Kasbah* with Mayor Cristaldi, and to our surprise, we saw three of our leaflets that somebody had put up on a shop door as a means of advertising the conference. More than thirty Arabs came to hear Prem Rawat speak on Friday.