Compassion for the Environment: A Multi-faith Conversation

Facilitated by sister Eleanor Francis, Rabbi Debra Smith and Dr. Shabiha Sheikh

Sunday, April 5, 2020
2-4 PM
St. Marguerite’s Retreat House
at the Community of St John Baptist
82 West Main St., Mendham, NJ 07045

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Compassion is a core belief in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. How do our traditions define compassion? How are we told to behave in order to live a life of compassion for ourselves and others? We will explore texts, stories and historical examples from our faith traditions that teach compassion and discuss how contemporary society presents challenges to us as we try to live a life of compassion. Join Sister Eleanor Francis, Rabbi Debra Smith and Dr. Shabiha Sheikh for an intriguing text study and discussion.

Sr. Eleanor Francis is the Superior of the Episcopal Order of St. John Baptist, which is located in Mendham, NJ. She is also an Episcopal priest. Her background is in an Eastern religion called Vedanta, which teaches that all the world religions are legitimate paths to God. She is particularly interested in interfaith work and belongs to the United Nations branch of United Religions. She regularly conducts workshops and classes on religious pluralism. Sr. Eleanor Francis received her M.Div from Drew Theological School in 2006.

Rabbi Debra Smith (Reb Deb) is the founding Rabbi of Or Ha Lev Jewish Renewal Congregation in Succasunna, N.J. She is also a clinical social worker and marriage and family therapist. She is co-leader, with Ms. Shabiha Sheikh, of the Morris County Chapter of the national organization, Sisterhood of Salaam-Shalom. Rabbi Debra is the Rabbi in Residence at the Drew Theological School. She is a frequent speaker in mosques and churches on the topic of multi-faith issues. She received rabbinic ordination from ALEPH: The Alliance for Jewish Renewal and a Masters in Jewish Studies from Gratz College in Philadelphia.

Dr. Shabiha Sheikh is a first-generation Muslim woman from Edison, NJ. She graduated from Rutgers University with a PharmD and works as a pharmacist in a veterans’ nursing home. She is the co-leader of the Morris County Chapter of Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom with Rabbi Debra Smith.