

2022 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize]

## **Through this Pair of Ears, We Build Tolerance**

(Original)

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Next to my house is a proper Christian family. At the end of each year, they look very happy because the Christmas celebration has arrived. Christmas is a very special Christian religious celebration for those who celebrate it. I saw that afternoon, that their family was active on the terrace while decorating the plants with beautiful lanterns. They also sing along to the strains of the Christmas spiritual songs they are playing. It has become a habit in my area. If there is a celebration of a religious holiday, then we and the neighbors send food to each other. For example, during Eid al-Fitr (Muslim holiday) we send each other Ketupat and Chicken Opor. And Muslims also always distribute buffalo meat during Eid al-Adha to all the people in my area regardless of their religion.

Well even at Christmas celebrations, my next-door neighbor who is a Christian, distributes cakes that are packaged beautifully and uniquely to all who pass in front of her house. We were also offered to stop by her house to eat a halal menu for Muslims. There was a voice from the terrace above her house, her father called the youngest children.

Laura...Laura....turn off the song! It's the Azan of Maghrib (call for praying)."

The Christmas songs that they played that afternoon were stopped immediately, replaced by the chanting of the Azan Maghrib from several mosques around my area. I hurried up to take wudhu (ablution) water to fulfill my obligation as a Muslim, namely maghrib prayer. While feeling the fresh splash of Wudu water wet my face, there was a sense of calmness entering my heart. I mumbled "This afternoon, two different voices have come in alternately to stop by my ears. Even though they are both with different beliefs, both of them of course with the same intention, namely to invite us all to goodness."

Twilight always brings beauty. Like this afternoon, it has taught me how twilight has

drowned the human ego and led me to understand the meaning of tolerance through our ears. Is tolerance important? Yes, tolerance for us who live in a country that has a lot of diversity in religion, culture, ethnicity, race, and different skin colors, makes tolerance something that is expensive. Because there is often friction in society because of differences that should not have happened. The church that was hit by the bomb during a religious ritual, the mosque that was burned, and religious leaders being threatened and injured are real examples that tolerance is still great hope for all of our people in Indonesia. For those who have bad intentions, taking advantage of the many diverse and differences in our country, Indonesia is used as a tool to incite and divide. And while our ego is rubbed off of wanting to win on its own and feels self-righteous, that is what will bring our nation was torn apart and hostile to each other.

But in our area, the generosity of the people can foster a spirit of tolerance. The differences in society in it have been transformed into a powerful energy that will grow eternal love for us neighbors and side by side for all time. Then, who is most responsible so that differences do not trigger conflict, and who will transmit the spirit of tolerance to the next generation? The answer is that all of our nation's people are hereditary and are continuous. And the big task of the current generation in the future is to pass on tolerance for any differences on this earth so that it will create a society in a peaceful world full of harmony. That's how we take care of the smallest things, through our ears so as not to be easily provoked by those who have an interest in destroying tolerance, and realize that it is this pair of ears that filters out differences to be beautiful to enjoy.