The ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic are continuing to test the limits of human compassion and solidarity within and between societies. One of Bussola’s key programmes, explores the fundamental social and cultural elements that have an impact on the EU-GCC relationship, with an emphasis on issues promoting greater inter-religious dialogue, cross-cultural awareness and mutual understanding. A key aspect of this programme is to provide a framework in which the dynamics of people’s faith, religion and societal change can best be understood in order to enhance tolerance, diversity and inclusion.

The fundamental principles enshrined in the historic document on “Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together”, signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar in Abu Dhabi in February 2019, call for enhanced cooperation and solidarity in advancing a culture of greater understanding and mutual respect. This Bussola Institute virtual roundtable will examine the importance of inter-religious dialogue and exchange between Christians and Muslims, particularly at this time of global crisis, when discontent, isolation and uncertainty are fuelling exclusionary narratives and spreading animosity towards ‘others’. The event will also explore the scope for new initiatives that might be developed in response to the call for the Human Fraternity principles to be translated into policies, decisions and concrete initiatives.