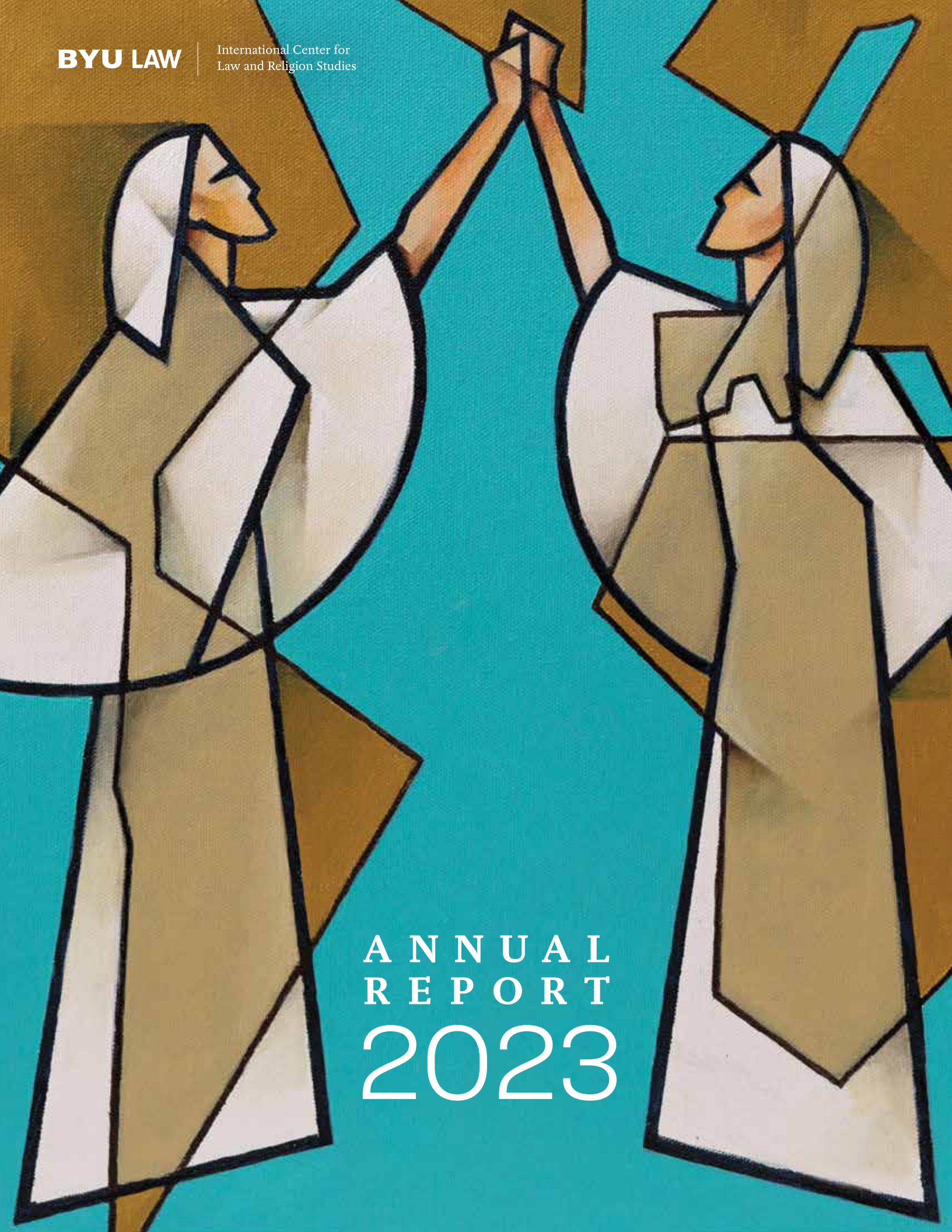


BYU LAW

International Center for
Law and Religion Studies



ANNUAL
REPORT
2023

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The International Center for Law and Religion Studies commissioned the cover image on this year's annual report to commemorate and celebrate the 30th Annual International Law and Religion Symposium, held at BYU Law School in October 2023. The painting is by the acclaimed artist Jorge Cocco, and the original is displayed prominently in the Center's office lobby. High-quality art prints were gifted to everyone who attended the 30th Annual Symposium.

The painting is entitled *Peacemakers Needed*, an echo of the magnificent general conference address by our prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, in April 2023. The painting is a cubist rendering of the continents of the world imagined as people, with their hands clasped together at the northernmost point. The image is intended to remind us that the world is made up of people and places and that its care and cultivation is up to us. We are the stewards of this earth; we each have a responsibility to be builders of peace, especially at times like these in which social and political divisions at home and abroad are perilously intense.

In his address "Peacemakers Needed," President Nelson urged us, as followers of Jesus Christ, to

become a true light on the hill—a light that "cannot be hid." Let us show that there is a peaceful, respectful way to resolve complex issues and an enlightened way to work out disagreements. As you demonstrate the charity that true followers of Jesus Christ manifest, the Lord will magnify your efforts beyond your loftiest imagination.

At the Center, our work is the work of peace—promoting human dignity and religious freedom and belief for all people in all places will help create a world that is peaceful. We believe that religious freedom and flourishing religious communities and families correlate with nearly every good thing that society has to offer.



In this report we summarize our work over the past year, with stewardship reports on our work with students as well as our global projects in places like Latin America, Asia, Southeast Asia, the Muslim World, Africa, and Europe. We highlight our human dignity initiatives and our support of G20 Interfaith 20 (IF20) work. We report on the growth and impact of our annual Oxford Workshop on Religion and the Rule of Law, including a book produced by a cohort of scholars who participated in the workshop in 2019. We also reproduce an important speech by Sister Camille M. Johnson, general president of the Relief Society, on the importance of protecting religious liberty in a rapidly changing society and remarks by former Utah governor Gary R. Herbert on building bridges and finding solutions in the political arena.

In President Nelson's words, "You have your agency to choose contention or reconciliation. I urge you to *choose* to be a peacemaker, now and always." The themes of our major events in 2024 will continue to build upon the themes of human dignity, religious freedom, and peacemaking. We hope you'll join us in the journey.

Gratefully, as always,

Brett G. Scharffs, Director

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OUR MISSION

It is the mission of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University to help secure the blessings of freedom of religion and belief for all people by

Expanding, deepening, and disseminating knowledge and expertise regarding the interrelationship of law and religion

Facilitating the growth of networks of scholars, experts, and policy makers involved in the field of religion and law

Contributing to law reform processes and broader implementation of principles of religious freedom worldwide



The Tripartite View

By Brett G. Scharffs

Adapted from a speech given 1 October 2023 at the 30th Annual International Law and Religion Symposium.

In 2023 we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Brigham Young University's Law School. The school is named after a former member of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, J. Reuben Clark Jr., who had a distinguished career as a lawyer and US ambassador to Mexico.

In the general conference of the Church when he was called to the First Presidency, President Clark gave a memorable address, "To Them of the Last Wagon," in which he talked about the Latter-day Saint pioneers who made the trek to Utah. He honored those who led the wagon train, but he also celebrated the efforts of those who were a little weaker, a little more tired, whose oxen might have been in distress. Those pioneers traveled in the dirt and filth stirred up by the wagons that preceded them and kept moving forward even though they didn't have a clear vision of what was ahead.

At the International Center for Law and Religion Studies, we are also committed to honoring and celebrating those of the last wagon—the people who are not in the lead and for whom the vision is not unobstructed blue sky.

One of my law school professors, Guido Calabresi, described the law as having tripartite gaze: a three-part view. He said the law must always look backward because we care deeply about precedent. We don't believe that the world is made anew each day. We believe that we must honor and listen to the lessons of the past.

But law is also focused on the future. Every time a judge decides a case, someone loses life, liberty, or property. That is a serious undertaking. We must think about the impact of our decisions because the choices we make today become precedent for the future.

The third part of the tripartite gaze is the here and now because judges are always deciding cases involving individuals who believe that their rights have been compromised or violated or who are being held to account by the law for something they have done.

At the ICLRS, we're very mindful of this tripartite gaze. We're looking backward. We're here today. And we're looking forward as well.

This year we are commemorating several very important anniversaries. The first is named in the title of our symposium—the

75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This declaration was a milestone in human history because with its adoption, international law ceased being just about states and the interaction of states with each other. It began to be about human beings.

The UDHR arose from the crucible of two world wars that had wreaked havoc upon the world. There were three things in particular that motivated the drafters. One was the atomic bomb, which brought an abrupt end to World War II. With this unfathomable power, the prospect that we as a world could actually destroy ourselves became not theory but reality. The second motivating factor was the increased awareness of what had happened in the Holocaust—the savage effort to exterminate an entire race of people. About one-third of all Jewish people in the world were killed in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany. In addition, there had been imperialism and occupation by Japan and other countries, and the world was yearning to be free.

It was actually the newly independent countries and the countries still striving for independence that were the motivating force behind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As Carlos Romulo, the UN delegate from the Philippines, said, "I became a nuisance, a gadfly, a pest. I prowled corridors, buttonholed delegates, cornered unwilling victims in hotel lobbies and men's rooms." His purpose was to remind those drafting and voting on the UDHR that the war had been fought for freedom, justice, and peace for nations throughout the world—for the rights and dignity of all people.

So in 1948 this major milestone—the UDHR—was adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly. It is fitting that we pause to commemorate the significance of that moment and the aspirations for which it stood.

But in addition to looking back, we should remember to look to the present and the future as well. Imagine the world 75 years from now. Will we still care about human rights the way the drafters of the UDHR cared about it 75 years ago? It is for us and our generation to ensure that those values and that vision do not disappear.



As I mentioned previously, 2023 is the 50th anniversary of BYU Law School. This is an important moment in the history of this institution. As we pause and look back, we also have an opportunity to imagine what this law school might look like 50 years from now. Will it still be true to its founding vision of being a faith-based law school where mind, heart, and intellect can work together in harmony? It is up to us to chart the path for what the next 50 years will look like.

This is our 30th annual symposium—another milestone. Think back to when you were 30 years old and to the ambition and the optimism you felt at that time of your life. I hope we can have that kind of vision and optimism at this moment in our history. And 30 years down the road, I hope this symposium will be even more valuable to the world than it is today.

We are also celebrating the fifth anniversary of the Punta del Este Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere.

This is important because human dignity is the foundational value that makes human rights possible. As we think five years down the road, will that global commitment to human dignity be stronger or weaker than it is today?

As we move forward in the cause of human dignity, I invite you to join us in this tripartite gaze. Think back 75 years to that rainy day in Paris when the nations of the world came together and unanimously adopted the UDHR as what the preamble calls "a common standard of achievement for all the world." Think back 50 years to the founding of this law school and 30 years to when we held the first Annual Law and Religion Symposium. Think of our current efforts to elevate all people, and then think of the future force for good that we can be in the world. Together, let us renew our commitment to champion the dignity of all people in all places and promote the work of human dignity and religious freedom for all people in all places at all times.



Painting Peace

NEW ARTWORK COMMISSIONED BY THE CENTER

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ declared with profound simplicity, “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9). Commissioned by the International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Jorge Cocco’s painting *Peacemakers Needed* is an invitation to everyone everywhere to strive to be peacemakers—in our families and other personal relationships, in our schools and neighborhoods, in our workplaces, and beyond. On the far side of our differences of place, nationality, religion,

and race, we are bound together as members of a single human family that shares this fragile blue orb we call earth.

Argentine artist Jorge Cocco was commissioned in early 2023 to create the painting. He had previously been commissioned in 2022 by a former BYU Law student, Jared Sine, and his wife, Ruth, to create a seven-panel polyptych for the Law School. The paintings reflect the seven law-related roles of the Savior invoked in the Law School’s mission statement: “We

are committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ and honor His many roles, including healer, mediator, counselor, peacemaker, advocate, lawgiver, and judge.” These panels hang permanently in the lobby outside the Law School’s moot courtroom.

With some rough sketch ideas from Brett Scharffs and the direction that this new painting should reflect the international scope of the Center’s work, its focus on human dignity, and a love of humankind, Cocco worked on several iterations of the painting over a

few months. Through angles and shifting perspectives, the painting illustrates deep connections between people and places as they strive to come together in peace.

Reflecting on his work, the artist said, “To transfer such an ample concept to a graphic image required numerous attempts and a lot of communication exchanges with the decision makers. I hope the image created will represent the high purpose of [the International Center for Law and Religion Studies].”

The Center named the artwork *Peacemakers Needed* in a nod to the important work of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to invite others to become bearers of peace. The painting’s title is taken from an address given by Russell M. Nelson,

president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in April 2023. “You have your agency to choose contention or reconciliation,” he said. “I urge you to choose to be a peacemaker, now and always.” In a direct plea to members of the Church, President Nelson also said, “As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be examples of how to interact with others—especially when we have differences of opinion. One of the easiest ways to identify a true follower of Jesus Christ is how compassionately that person treats other people.”¹

The painting was unveiled at the 30th Annual International Law and Religion Symposium and copies were shared with delegates. The Center plans to use the artwork in publications and other mediums,

and the hope is that the artwork will serve as an inspiration to all to be peacemakers. The original is displayed in the Center’s office space at the BYU Law School.

About the artist: A self-taught artist, Jorge Cocco Santángelo describes his artistic style as “sacro-cubism” because he employs the abstract structures of post-cubism art to illuminate sacred messages and themes. His artwork has been recognized and displayed throughout the world. Learn more at jorgecocco.com.

NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Peacemakers Needed,” *Liahona*, May 2023; emphasis in original.

Worshipping, Serving, and Learning Together

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

15 JUNE 2023 | PROVO, UTAH, USA

In 2020 the number of American adults affiliated with a church, synagogue, or mosque fell below 50 percent for the first time.¹ What is driving this departure from traditional religious communities? Is this a reaction to politicized religion? A result of increasing secularism? A move to a more eclectic or noninstitutional approach to religiosity? The 2023 Religious Freedom Annual Review examined these questions and more as speakers discussed the challenges and opportunities facing religious communities today.

More than 40 speakers from throughout the us gathered 15 June 2023 at the BYU Conference Center in Provo, Utah, USA, to address the theme “Religious Communities: Worshipping, Serving, and Learning Together.” Panelists discussed the role of religious organizations and what the implications would be if those organizations were no longer supported. What do we lose when we move away from communities of believers? How can those who are part of religious institutions be simultaneously true to their beliefs and welcoming to those who hold differing viewpoints or who are unsure of their faith?

In the opening session of the conference, Russell Moore, editor in chief of *Christianity Today*; Jonathan Rauch, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution; and Stephanie Summers, CEO of the Center for Public Justice, discussed the various challenges and opportunities for religious institutions. Rauch said that “the breakdown in the ability of religious institutions to transmit values, what you all call spiritual formation, is an underlying cause—if not the most important cause—of the political crisis we have.” Moore identified a rise in cynicism, especially among young people, as a core issue in this breakdown. Cynicism, he said, arises when people see instances in which religious conduct fails to align with religious teachings.

He encouraged religious people to practice on the public stage what is taught from the pulpit: a gospel of peace and reconciliation.

Thomas B. Griffith, former judge on the us Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, said that if religious institutions are to survive and thrive, they must be willing to compromise and to engage with people from a variety of backgrounds. “If we want to maintain the religious freedom that we enjoy so plentifully right now, we’d better start using it to unite people and not to divide people,” he said.

In a later session, Sharon Eubank, director of Latter-day Saint Charities, echoed the idea that we need to bring people together. She encouraged the audience to connect with someone from a different faith tradition. “I promise you [that] in 10 minutes you will have a significant experience,” she said. “For the times that are coming in this world, religion needs to give evidence that we are the solution. What we do is the solution to weave people back together.”

Elder Clark G. Gilbert, commissioner of the Church Educational System of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, closed the event. In his presentation, he focused on “the stewardship of our first freedom.” He encouraged those listening not to “hide nervously in the forest of faith and merely mumble the reason for the hope that is in us.” He said, “Our defense of religious freedom is always compelling when it preserves rights of conscience. But it is most inspiring when it moves us to articulate and act on our call to serve others, lift those who struggle, and shine a light to the world.”

Sessions of the 2023 Religious Freedom Annual Review and previous annual reviews may be viewed at iclrs.org/religious-freedom-annual-review.

NOTE

1. See Jeffrey M. Jones, “U.S. Church Membership Falls Below Majority for First Time,” *Politics*, Gallup, 29 March 2021, news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx.



NEW RELIGIOUS FREEDOM LIBRARY

A new religious freedom website was announced at the Religious Freedom Annual Review. The site features a collection of talks and statements about religious freedom by leaders from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and others.

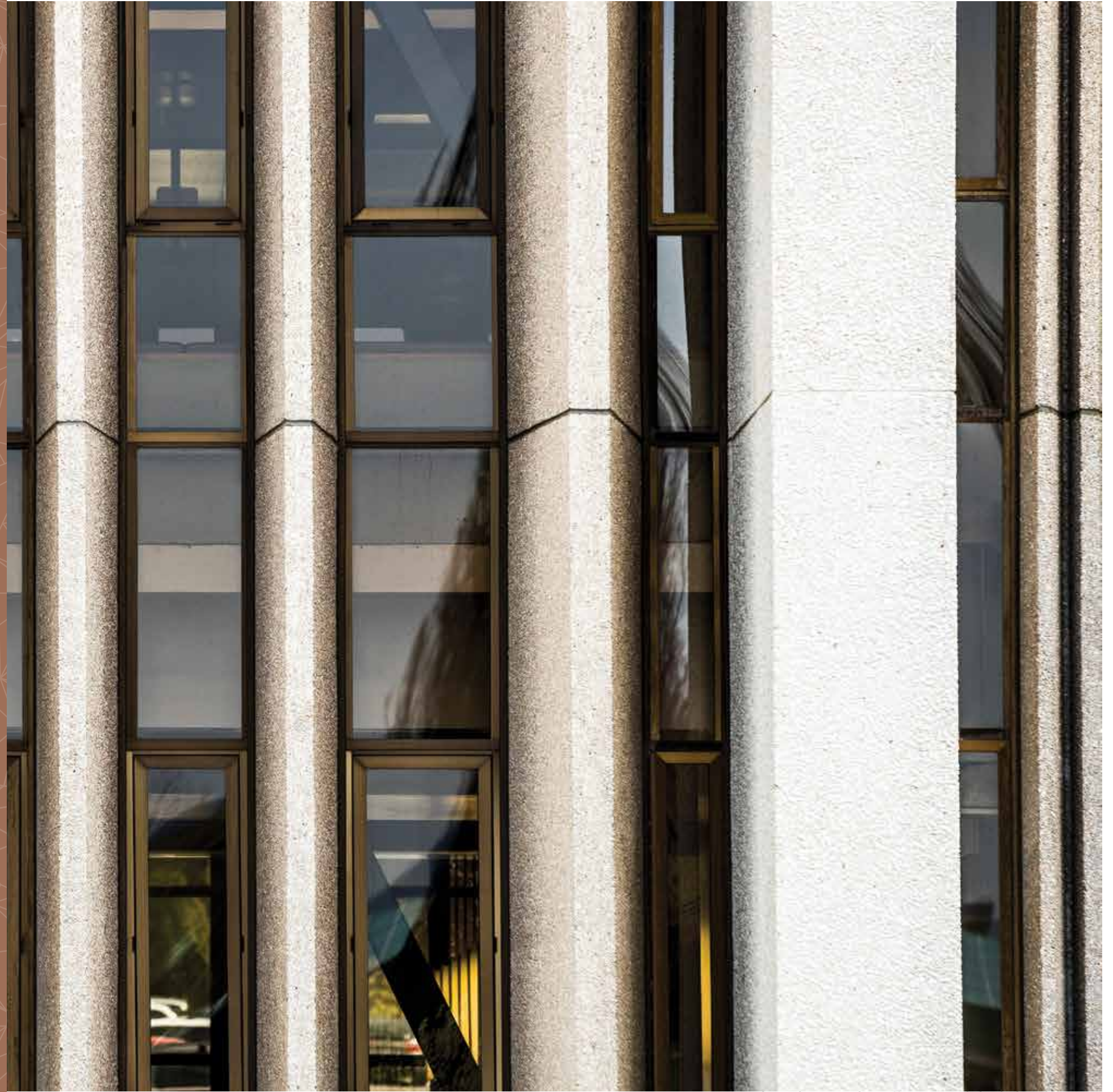
The website was created by the Center with the assistance of the Wheatley Institute at BYU. Articles may be searched by author or topic, and new articles will be added regularly. The home page includes featured articles that focus on fundamental principles of religious freedom for those who have limited time for study.

WEB EXTRA

Scan to visit the Religious Freedom Library.



SYMPOSIUM





30th Annual International Law and Religion Symposium

PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE, AND RELIGION:
75 YEARS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1-3 OCTOBER 2023 | BYU LAW SCHOOL, PROVO, UTAH, UNITED STATES

In 2023 the Annual International Law and Religion Symposium not only celebrated its 30th anniversary but also commemorated the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and its protections of thought, conscience, and religion. The UDHR serves as the cornerstone of contemporary international protections of human rights, including freedom of religion or belief. Its protections have been repeated numerous times in international and regional treaties and in national constitutions.

Despite its enormous impact, the UDHR and the rights it protects continue to face challenges. Some question the claim to universal rights, while populist movements seek to entrench protections only for majority religions. Others wonder if diverse religions can truly create a cohesive society or if they fight against robust understandings of freedom of religion or belief.

The 2023 symposium was one of the largest to date. As COVID-19 restrictions continued to lift throughout the world, more scholars, diplomats, judges, and government, civic, and religious leaders

than ever before attended: 135 delegates from 55 countries. Total attendance at the symposium was approximately 400 people, with sessions translated into 15 languages. Together delegates and attendees examined many issues regarding the Universal Declaration and human rights, such as:

- The role of religion and diplomacy in implementing the values of the UDHR
- How current religious leaders and movements understand the concept of human dignity and religious freedom
- The role of the rule of law in ensuring that the rights proclaimed in the UDHR are meaningful
- How the UDHR has impacted religious freedom in international tribunals and nations around the globe
- How diverse religions can create a unified society



This symposium also reinstated the judicial track. Typically held every other year, though not held since 2019 due to the pandemic, the judicial track highlights the impact the judiciary has on protecting freedom of religion or belief. At the symposium, judges from 13 countries attended, representing supreme courts, constitutional courts, and the European Court of Human Rights, among others. The track included a devoted plenary session as well as a series of breakout sessions in which the participants discussed the roles the judiciary has played in their regions and the crucial contribution of judges in preserving the rule of law. David G. Campbell, Senior United States District Judge, District of Arizona, United States, moderated the sessions.

At the closing of the symposium, Brett Scharffs thanked the delegates for their participation. “Thank you especially for moving beyond representation,” he said. “When you are the sole person from your country who comes to an international conference, there is almost always an overwhelming instinct to defend and represent your home country. And yet what we have seen here,

I believe, is an honest and fruitful conversation that has moved well beyond representation.”

Elizabeth Clark, program chair of the symposium, echoed Scharffs’s gratitude after issuing a challenge. “Will we give in to the cynicism of our age? Or will we choose to live in the truth?” she asked. “Thank you for your lives lived in your own communities and the examples and beacons that you are of life and truth, of integrity, of service, of goodness. My wish is that we may all leave here with more knowledge, with expanded friendships and relationships, and, above all, with a commitment to live in truth.”

The first conference of what would become the Annual International Law and Religion Symposium at Brigham Young University was the International Church-State Symposium in 1994. The symposium has become the Center’s signature event. As of 2023, nearly 1,400 people from 138 countries have participated. Sessions are regularly translated into as many as 16 languages, and video and audio recordings from most past years are available at the Center’s website, iclrs.org.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES



The 2023 Human Dignity Initiatives

Designated as the 2023 Human Dignity Initiatives, many of the events sponsored by the International Center for Law and Religion Studies last year commemorated two significant occasions: the 75th anniversary of the United Nations' unanimous adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 5th anniversary of the promulgation of the Punta del Este Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere. The Initiatives were an effort to enshrine 2023 as the year of human dignity by promoting and recognizing cultures of dignity around the world, broadening global perspectives on what human dignity means, magnifying the significance of human dignity as a universal human value, and exploring the implications of human dignity for human rights—especially the right of freedom of religion and belief for all people in all places.

The United Nations Charter, adopted in 1945, emphasizes human dignity. It notes in its preamble that the UN was created “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person.” The foundational nature of human dignity is also set forth in the UDHR and affirmed in the Punta del Este Declaration.

The planning, focus, and goal of the Human Dignity Initiatives were derived from language in the preamble of the UDHR, which states that the declaration is

a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance.

The Center's hope was that the 2023 Initiatives would not only amplify the United Nations' Human Rights Day on 10 December but also to help promote the adoption of a Human Dignity Day on 10 June. In addition, the Center wished to advocate for a culture of dignity for everyone everywhere, sponsor and partner with others on a series of conferences on themes involving human dignity, and produce several scholarly volumes documenting what was learned.

ASIAN PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY

17-18 APRIL 2023 | LAIE, HAWAII, USA (PAGE 24)

AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY

17 MAY 2023 | ABIDJAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE (PAGE 32)

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY

5-6 JULY 2023 | KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA (PAGE 30)

FOUNDATIONS AND FOUNDING FIGURES OF HUMAN DIGNITY

26 JULY 2023 | OXFORD, UK (PAGE 36)

CIVILIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY FOR EVERYONE EVERYWHERE

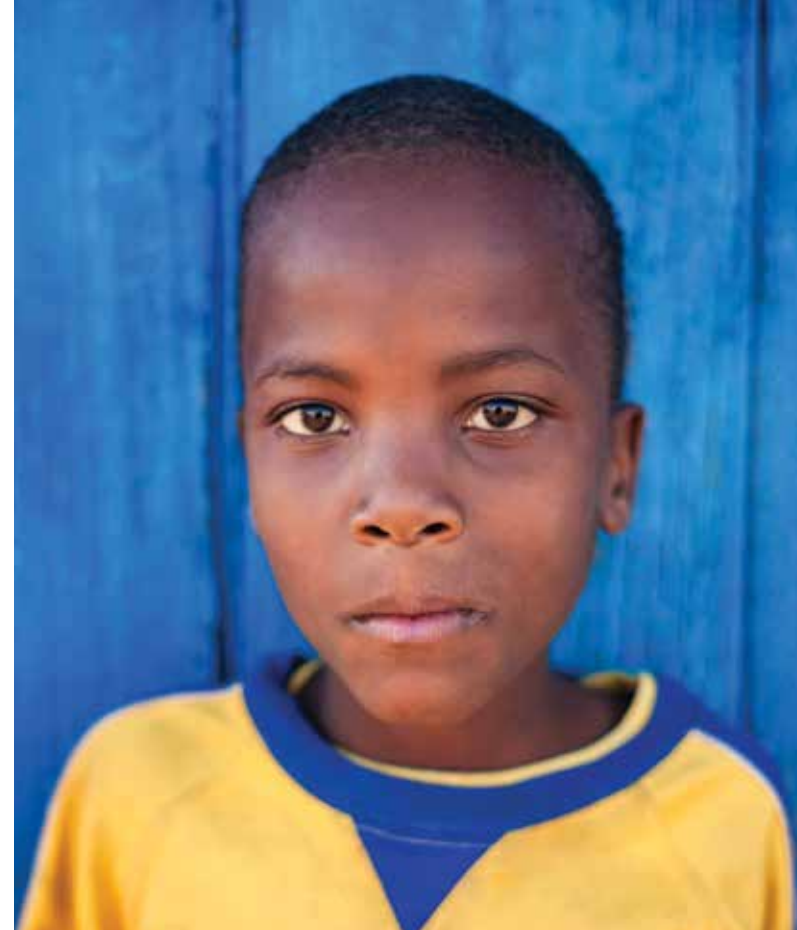
27-29 JULY 2023 | OXFORD, UK (PAGE 34)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CROSS-CULTURAL RELIGIOUS LITERACY

13-14 NOVEMBER 2023 | JAKARTA, INDONESIA (PAGE 26)

DOHA INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

13-14 DECEMBER 2023 | DOHA, QATAR (PAGE 30)



If you are interested in keeping up on the progress of the UN Human Dignity Day initiative, follow us on social media. You can post your support using [#UNHumanDignityDay](#) or [#dignityforeveryone](#).

We also invite you to share your human dignity stories using [#mydignitystory](#).

 facebook.com/dignityforeveryone

 X/Twitter: [@dignity4every1](https://twitter.com/dignity4every1)

 Instagram: [@dignityforeveryone](https://instagram.com/dignityforeveryone)



A Day Dedicated to Human Dignity

By Ewelina U. Ochab

Dr. Ewelina U. Ochab is a lawyer, human rights advocate, and author. She is a program lawyer with the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute and a cofounder of the Coalition for Genocide Response. Ochab, along with Brett Scharffs, Ján Figel', and Mark Hill, is spearheading the UN Human Dignity Day Initiative.

On 9 December 2023, we marked the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention). One day later we commemorated the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). These two important documents came into being as a direct response to the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s, which shook humanity to the core. The destruction of life and the denial of human dignity, as perpetrated during World War II and the years preceding it, required comprehensive responses, including responses that affirmed human rights and human dignity for all and that would prevent and punish the specific targeting of whole communities. The two documents were drafted at a time when the atrocities were still fresh in memory. However, as the memory fades, so does the feeling of urgency that the values affirmed in the documents require our constant affirmation and protection.

Over the years we have seen some steps to ensure that the human rights of every person are protected. However, the actions taken are still far from what the drafters envisioned.

In preparing for the 70th anniversaries of the UDHR and the Genocide Convention in 2018, Brett Scharffs, Ján Figel', and W. Cole Durham, Jr. undertook the mission to revive the efforts of ensuring human rights for all by focusing on human dignity for everyone everywhere. Human dignity was an obvious choice as it was the very concept and value that the drafters of these foundational documents held dear. Indeed, when they first came

together, the drafters of the UDHR profoundly disagreed about the proposed content of the declaration and the definition of rights, but in human dignity they found a concept that was truly universal and that vividly expressed the worth of each human being. Human dignity became the lodestar that guided the Human Rights Commission through three years of discussions and drafting, and it became the organizing heart of the UDHR.

Seventy years later, in 2018, this is also how the Punta del Este Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere came into being: Experts from all over the world came together to explore how implementing the concepts of human dignity can help prevent and respond to persecution based on religion or belief. The declaration sets out 10 ways that the concept of human dignity can be used to revitalize and strengthen fundamental human rights.

Shortly after the Punta del Este Declaration was adopted, the world saw yet another challenge: a global pandemic that added another strain to the already long list of challenges faced globally. The pandemic forced us to rethink what else needs to happen to ensure that the topic of human dignity is not pushed to the side.

As we approached the 75th anniversaries of the UDHR and the Genocide Convention, we engaged in discussions with Brett Scharffs, Ján Figel', and Mark Hill to find proactive approaches for reviving the focus on human dignity. Among the proposals was to petition the UN to establish an annual day dedicated to human dignity on 10 June.

Our hope is that this international commemoration could be used to reaffirm and reiterate the fundamental importance of human rights and to promote the universal, unifying concept of human dignity—driven by the common understanding of the immeasurable value of every human being. The annual day could also provide an opportunity to explore the different aspects of human dignity and become a platform for sharing various human stories about vindications of human dignity as well as violations.





Latin America REGIONAL CONFERENCES

FIRST LATIN AMERICAN FORUM ON JOURNALISM AND RELIGION

23–24 MARCH 2023 | PROVO, UTAH, USA

Eighteen journalists from Latin America and several experts from the US gathered to participate in the first Latin American Forum on Journalism and Religion. The forum included a public day on 23 March where approximately 100 attendees, including BYU students, gathered for speeches and panel discussions.

The remainder of the forum was a private seminar for journalists, other communications professionals, and experts in religious and press freedoms. Discussion panels explored the challenges of religion reporting, the intersection between press freedoms and

religious freedom, journalism's role in raising religious literacy, and the pitfalls of reporting about religion in a political context. The event also featured activities to build relationships and bridges of understanding.

The forum was organized and sponsored by the Center, the BYU School of Communications, and the International Association of Religion Journalists. Sessions featured simultaneous English and Spanish translation.





INTERRELIGIOUS FORUM OF THE AMERICAS (FIDELA)

20 JUNE 2023 | WASHINGTON, DC, USA

“Promoting Human Dignity in the Americas in the Framework of the 53rd General Assembly of the Organization of the American States (OAS)” was the theme of this year’s FIDELA meeting. The event was timed to coincide with the annual assembly of the OAS, held 21-23 June in Washington, DC.

FIDELA’s daylong conference featured professors and thought leaders from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Leaders from the US State Department and the Organization of American States who deal with issues affecting religious freedom also participated.

The conference ended with an evening reception at the United States Institute of Peace. Organizers presented the FIDELA Award for Peace and Fellowship to the Pan American Development Fund (PADF), the OAS’s main humanitarian body. Over the past year, Latter-day Saint Charities has partnered with PADF on several projects, building closer ties with both PADF and the OAS.

The event was cosponsored by the Center, the G20 Interfaith Forum, Religions for Peace Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs at Georgetown University.



SECOND BRAZILIAN SYMPOSIUM ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

8–10 AUGUST 2023 | BRASILIA, BRAZIL

More than 120 invited experts gathered in Brasilia to participate in the Second Brazilian Symposium on Religious Freedom. In this age of polarization and societal division, the symposium addressed a timely theme: “Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers: The Role of Religious Freedom in Constructing a Free, Just, and Mutually Supportive Society.” The words in the theme that refer to building a better society come directly from Brazil’s constitution, and the symposium emphasized how commitment to religious freedom increases the chance of a better-functioning society and democracy.

Symposium participants included major figures from Brazil’s diverse religious communities, several judges, high-level government and civil society leaders, state and federal bar association leaders, and prominent academic experts. Additional experts represented Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Mozambique, the UAE, the UK, the US, and the UN.

The event was cosponsored by the Center and Centro Brasileiro de Estudos em Direito e Religião. The 2023 event followed the 2022 event in Rio de Janeiro; the goal is that this will become a regular series of symposia in Brazil.



LATIN AMERICAN SYMPOSIUM ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

7–9 MARCH 2023 | GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA

While not labeled a regional conference, events held in Guatemala City aimed to inform Guatemalan influencers as well as invited officials and legislators from neighboring countries about religious freedom.

Speakers included Guatemalan religious leaders, educators, and government officers as well as government leaders and scholars from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico and internationally important religious freedom scholars from Argentina, Chile, and the United States.

In addition to the symposium on 7 March, additional events held 8-9 March included a meeting for members of Congress and other invited government, community, and religious leaders; a luncheon with members of the judiciary and others; and a meeting with leaders of the bar association.

Events were organized by the Center in close cooperation with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ Central America and Mexico area offices, Mesa Multireligiosa, Estamos Unidos, and the Universidad Panamericana.



ASIAN PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY

17–18 APRIL 2023 | LAIE, HAWAII, USA

The Asia Regional Conference was the first of the Center’s 2023 human dignity events. Held on the campus of BYU–Hawaii, the conference brought together 24 scholars from Bangladesh, China (participating through Zoom), Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Vietnam. Each of the scholars presented a paper on an Asian perspective on human dignity, addressing topics such as how human dignity is understood in systems of thought including Daoism, Confucianism, Mohism, Buddhism, and Shintoism and how cultural and societal perspectives affect human dignity. The

conference also included discussions among the participants about the perspectives of human dignity that were raised in each presentation and the Human Dignity Day Initiative, an effort to persuade the United Nations to create a Human Dignity Day on 10 June.

The Asia Regional Conference was hosted by the Religious Freedom and Human Dignity Initiative at BYU–Hawaii in collaboration with the Center. Conference presentations will be compiled into a book.





Southeast Asia

REGIONAL CONFERENCE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CROSS-CULTURAL RELIGIOUS LITERACY

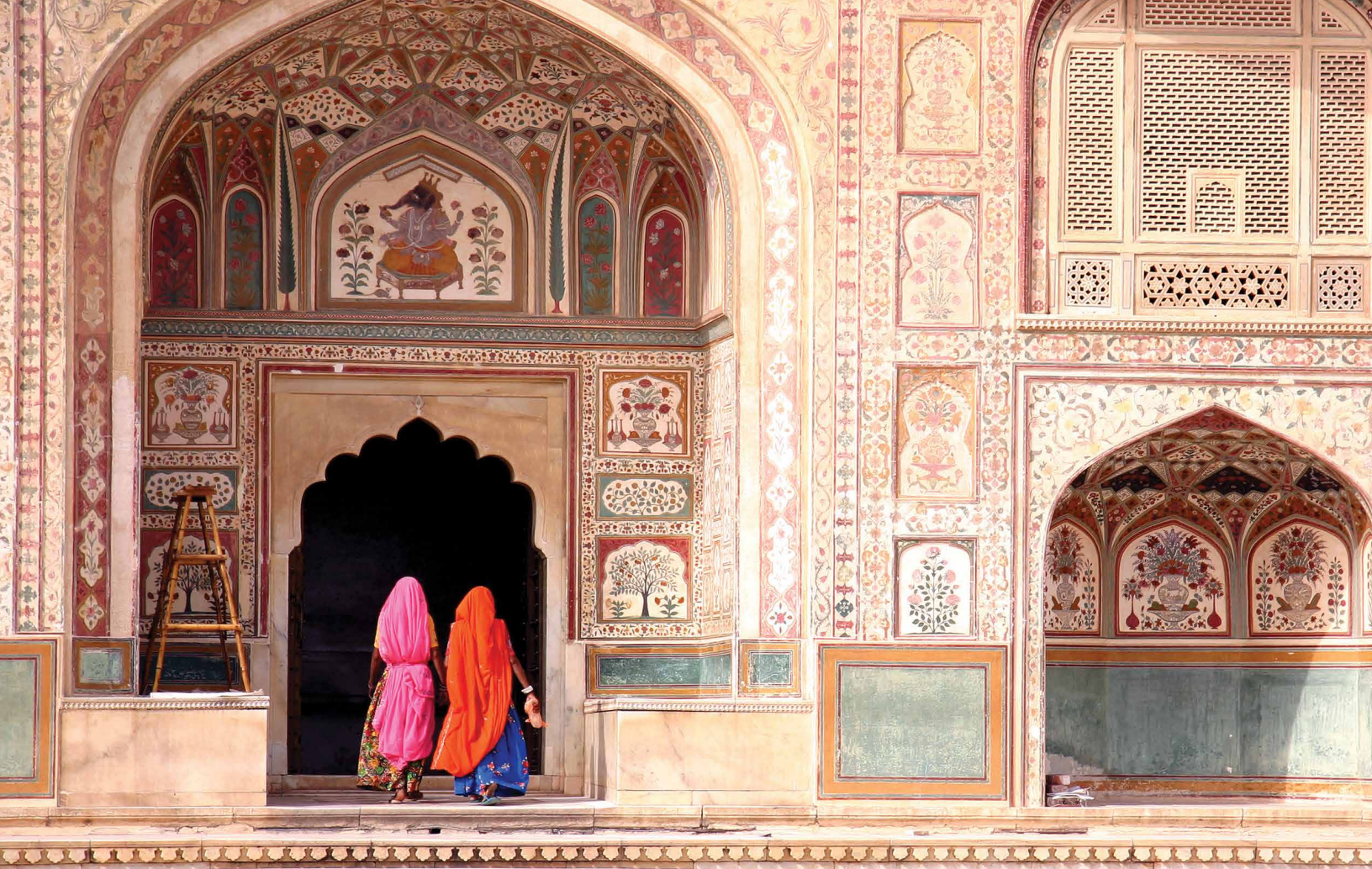
13-14 NOVEMBER 2023 | JAKARTA, INDONESIA

The Center, together with the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Leimena Institute, International Religious Freedom Secretariat, and Templeton Religion Trust, convened this conference with the theme “Human Dignity and Rule of Law for a Peaceful and Inclusive Society.” The conference emphasized human dignity as a key concept of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Forty-two speakers, most of whom represented countries in Southeast Asia, explored the following themes: understanding human dignity and the rule of law, using religious literacy

to promote human dignity in a multifaith society, recognizing the importance of equal citizenship in a multifaith society, building inclusive societies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations community, and drawing on religious engagement to face global challenges to human dignity.

Following the conference, Brett Scharffs, Cole Durham, and Hannah Smith met with Indonesia’s minister of law and human rights as well as the grand imam of Istiqlal Mosque.





G20 INTERFAITH FORUM

7-9 MAY 2023 | NEW DELHI, INDIA
 5-7 SEPTEMBER 2023 | PUNE, INDIA

The G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) held two forum events in 2023. The first, cohosted by the Bahá'í International Community in New Delhi, addressed the theme "Partnerships in Action: Towards 'One Earth, One Family, One Future.'" Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, chief coordinator of India's G20 presidency, spoke to participants, and attendees participated in plenary and breakout sessions on the theme.

The second and culminating IF20 event, in Pune, was attended by more than 3,000 people. Over 150 speakers from 20 countries addressed the forum.

Both events focused on the four Cs: children, climate, conflict and forced migration, and COVID-19. Panelists addressed issues relevant to the G20 process, including religion, ethics, and technology; the benefits of religions in the workplace; female empowerment; and social cohesion. They also discussed how to meet the education, food security, climate, and healthcare needs

of vulnerable communities. The importance of religious freedom was highlighted in many of the sessions.

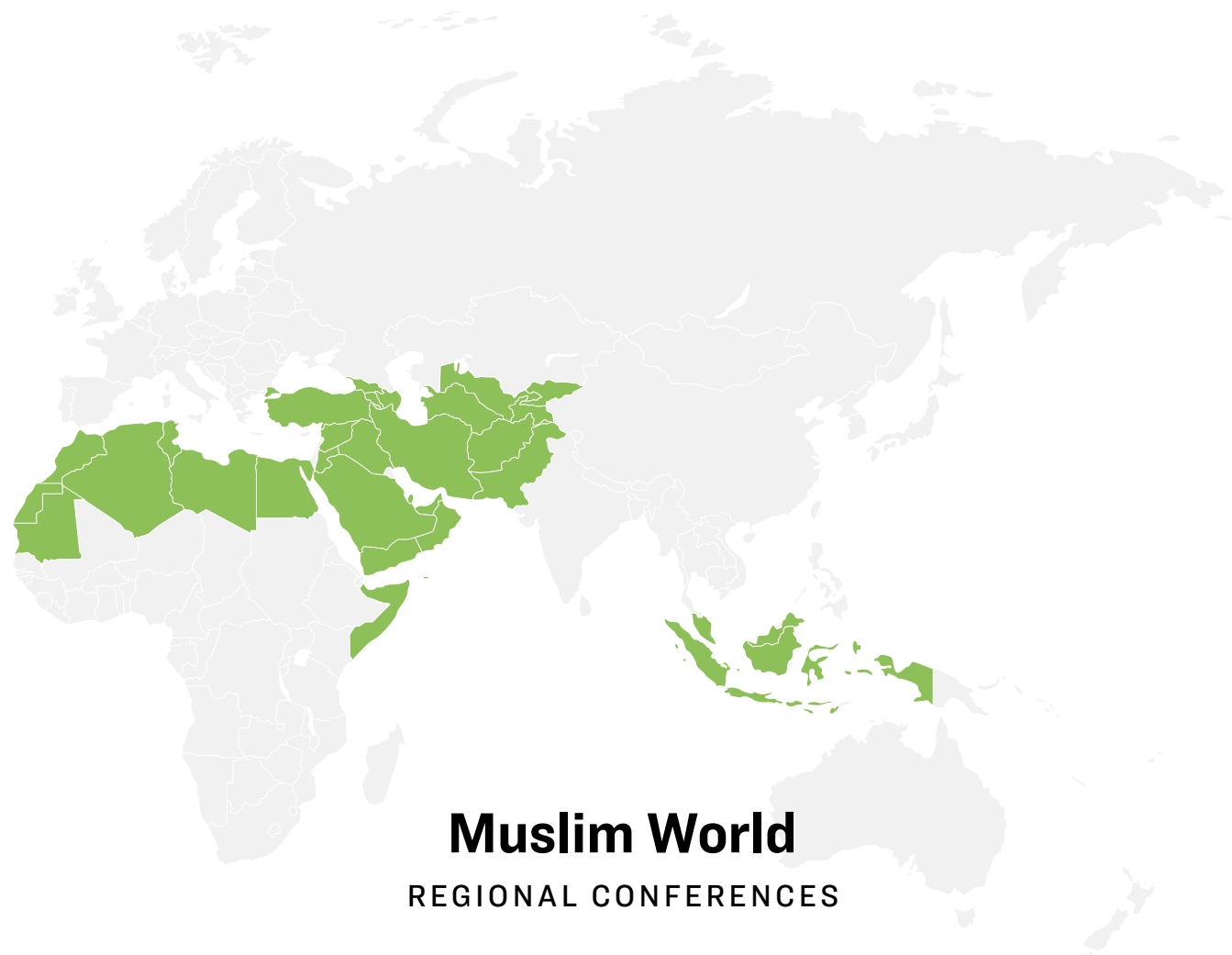
At the Pune forum, members adopted a final document, "To the G20 Leaders: An Interfaith Call to Action." It calls for an effective focus on those most affected by today's intertwined crises and advances specific recommendations regarding each of the four Cs.

Key co-organizers of the 2023 IF20 in Pune were the ICLRS; the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University; and the MIT World Peace University.

WEB EXTRA

Scan to learn more about IF20 and to read the recommendations to the G20.





Muslim World

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

DOHA INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

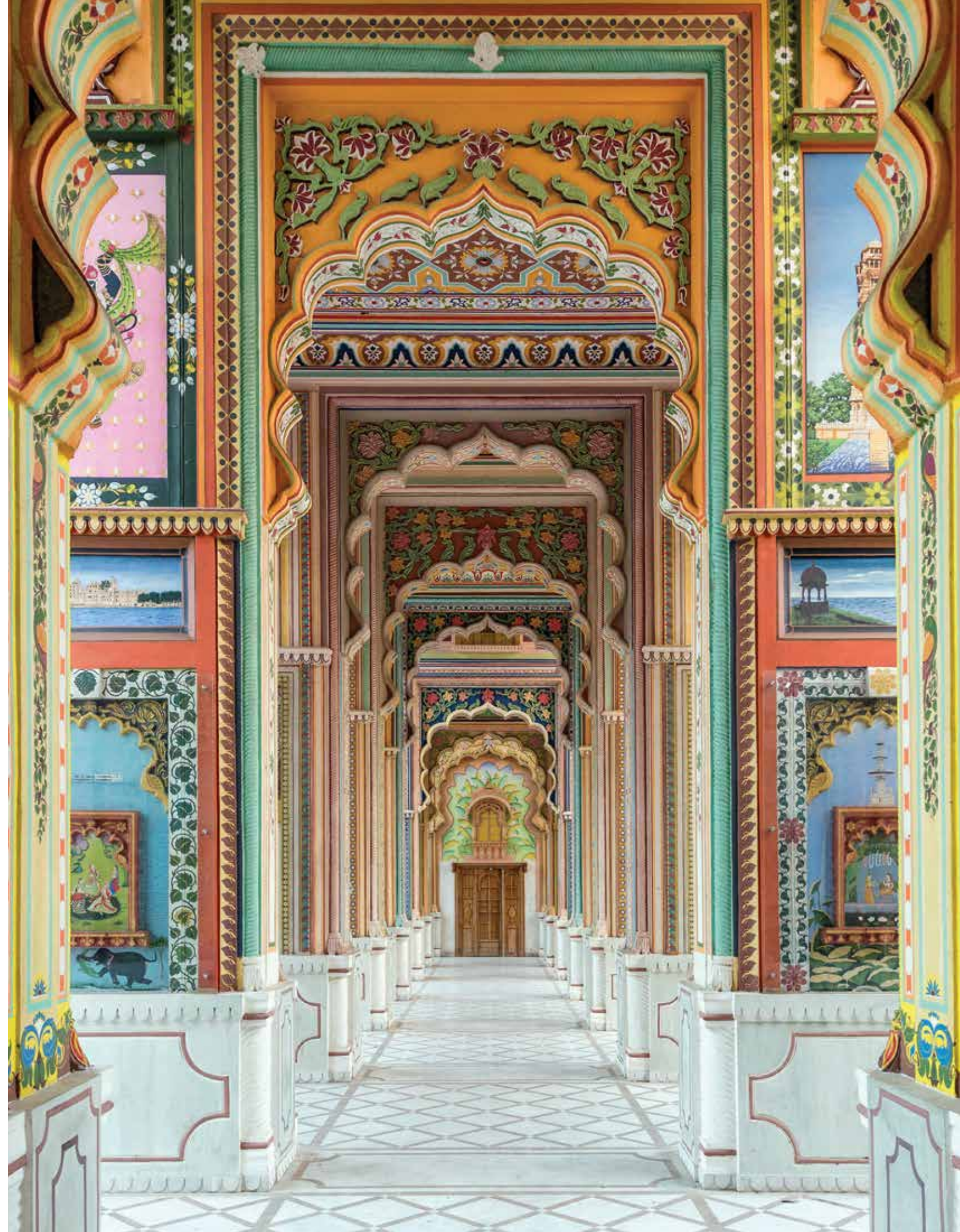
13-14 DECEMBER 2023 | DOHA, QATAR

The Center's 2023 Human Dignity Initiatives concluded with the Doha International Roundtable Discussions. The theme was "Islamic Perspectives on Human Dignity to Sustain Rights, Prosperity, and Coexistence: Integration of Theories and Contextualization of Traditions." This event was co-organized by Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue and the ICLRS. Although this conference was global in character, it had a particular focus on perspectives from Gulf-nation states.

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY

5-6 JULY 2023 | KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

This symposium was co-organized by the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia, the Center, UID-Sejahtera Malaysia, and Seminari Theoloji Malaysia. It was the culminating event that followed workshops organized by the same sponsors in January and March 2023 in Malaysia. All three workshops focused on the topic "Upholding Human Dignity for Peaceful Coexistence," but this conference focused in particular on perspectives from Southeast and South Asia.





Africa

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

AFRICAN CONSORTIUM FOR LAW AND RELIGION STUDIES 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

14–17 MAY 2023 | ABIDJAN, CÔTE D’IVOIRE

The theme of the 10th annual conference of the African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ACLARS) was “Law, Religion, and Reconciliation in Africa.” Approximately 80 participants from 21 African countries presented papers or otherwise addressed the conference. Presentations explored the role of law and religion in achieving reconciliation and creating peaceful societies in the context of serious social crises—including genocide and civil conflict—in the postcolonial period in Africa.

This was the first ACLARS conference held in a Francophone country, and at least 10 of the speakers represented Francophone Africa.

In addition, a plenary session of the conference featured traditional leaders from Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. These leaders are members of the newly formed West African Council of Traditional Leaders for Law and Religion Studies.

AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY

17 MAY 2023 | ABIDJAN, CÔTE D’IVOIRE

In connection with the ACLARS conference, editors and scholars met for a workshop on 17 May to finalize text for the book *African Conceptions of Human Dignity*. Ten African scholars each contributed a chapter to the book, which highlights 10 elements of the African Perspectives on Human Dignity. These elements were defined during the 2019 ACLARS conference in Botswana following discussions about the Punta del Este Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere. The book was published on 8 December, two days before the 75th anniversary of the UDHR.

WEB EXTRA

Scan to read the African Perspectives on Human Dignity document.





CIVILIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY FOR EVERYONE EVERYWHERE

27–29 JULY 2023 | OXFORD, UNITED KINGDOM

The Center and Notre Dame Law School’s Religious Liberty Initiative cosponsored a conference in Oxford that focused on the Human Dignity Day Initiative. More than 70 governmental and organizational representatives and leaders, UN ambassadors, faith leaders, and scholars from 27 countries participated in the conference. Presenters and participants largely focused on human dignity’s role in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the responsibility of academics, civil society, multilaterals, diplomats, and others to fulfill the goals of the conference.

By the end of the conference, more than 60 of the participants agreed to be signatories of a conference resolution, confirming the following actions:

- To create and foster initiatives throughout the world to promote human dignity alongside and in addition to the current human rights framework
- To encourage the General Assembly of the United Nations to adopt a resolution establishing an annual day affirming human dignity for everyone everywhere

Work continues on the Human Dignity Day Initiative, with growing support from governments, NGOs and other organizations, and individuals.





FOUNDATIONS AND FOUNDING FIGURES OF HUMAN DIGNITY

26 JULY 2023 | OXFORD, UNITED KINGDOM

A workshop was held in conjunction with the Civilizational Perspectives on Human Dignity Conference. There, 11 scholars from around the world discussed articles they were drafting for a special edition of the *Review of Faith & International Affairs* journal. The articles highlighted key figures involved in the drafting of the UDHR and presented different perspectives that influenced its formulation.

WEB EXTRA

Scan to read the articles.





YOUNG SCHOLARS FELLOWSHIP ON RELIGION AND THE RULE OF LAW

17 JULY–4 AUGUST 2023 | OXFORD, UNITED KINGDOM

The 2023 Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law hosted 18 scholars from Algeria, Brazil, Denmark, Estonia, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria, Serbia, South Africa, Ukraine, the United States, and Vietnam. Coursework for this annual program is centered on Cole Durham and Brett Scharffs’s casebook *Law & Religion: National, International, and Comparative Perspectives* (2nd edition).

Guest instructors this year included leaders in the field of freedom of religion or belief from eight countries. Additionally, BYU Law School writing instructors Jane Wise, Mary Jensen, and Catherine Bramble worked individually with each fellow to prepare an article for publication in an English-language law or academic journal. David H. Moore, former ICLRS associate director and current BYU Law dean, met with the group via Zoom to help them understand the academic publishing process in the United States. In the final days of the fellowship, the scholars presented the research they were developing for publication.

The fellows attended several ICLRS-sponsored side events while in Oxford: the International Sermon Studies Conference, the Polarized Constitutionalism Workshop, the Foundations and Founding Figures of Human Dignity Workshop, and the Civilizational Perspectives on Human Dignity Conference. The scholars also spent a day in London, where they met with Fiona Bruce, member of Parliament and the UK prime minister’s special envoy for freedom of religion or belief; toured the UK Supreme Court; visited Westminster Abbey and attended Evensong; and enjoyed dinner at the Inner Temple with Archbishop Angaelos, the first Coptic Orthodox archbishop of London.

In addition to a paper-in-progress, the fellows left Oxford with an international network of friends and scholars, a deeper understanding of international freedom of religion or belief, and a commitment to continue collaborating with each other, the guest instructors, and the Center.

AN OXFORD SCHOLARS BOOK PROJECT

Security, Religion, and the Rule of Law

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Edited by Tania Pagotto, Joshua M. Roose, and G. P. Marcar (Routledge, 2024.)

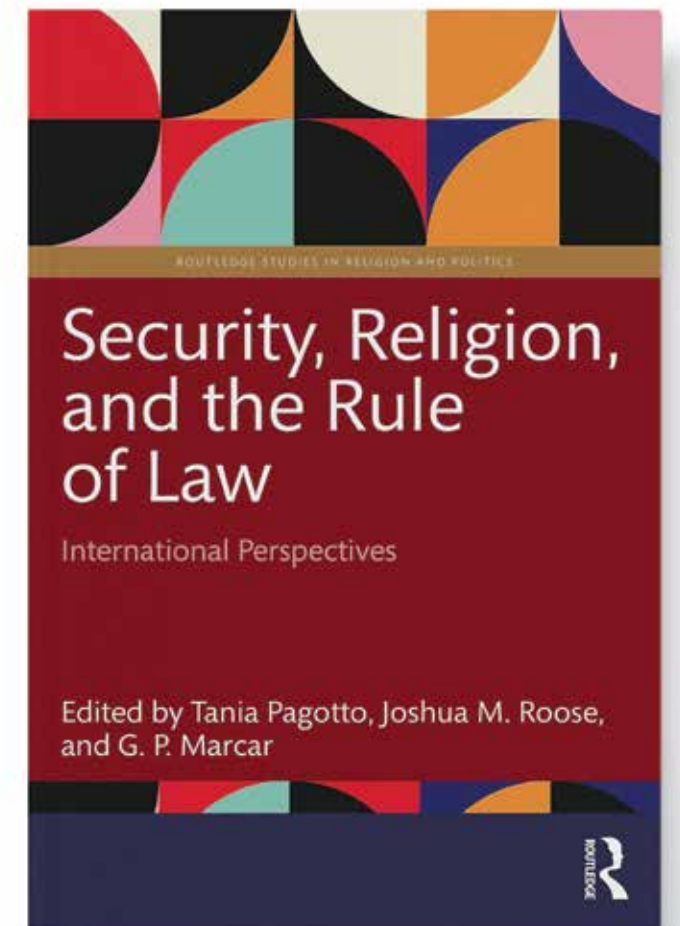
In addition to strengthening the upcoming generation of law and religion scholars, the Oxford Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law seeks to help young scholars form networks in the field and encourage one another in their scholarship. So when the 2019 scholars decided to create a collection of articles on religion and security, they had the Center’s full support.

Over the next three years, under the organization of Tania Pagotto, Joshua M. Roose, and Greg P. Marcar, Oxford scholars from 2018 and 2019 examined, reflected on, and wrote about a series of critical questions regarding some of the most pressing issues at the interface of religion and security today. The group also hosted an online conference titled “Religion and Security: Sharing Perspectives.”

The resulting book—*Security, Religion, and the Rule of Law: International Perspectives*—“underscores the imperative to promptly delineate freedom of religion or belief (FORB) against (re)emergent forms of authoritarianism, asserting that FORB should be delicately balanced with security rather than being obliterated in its name,” says Pagotto. According to the publisher, the book “argues that true, substantive, and sustainable national security is only possible through respect for the rule of law, human rights, and religious freedom.”

Reflecting on the project, Pagotto says, “The Oxford Young Scholars program sparked lasting friendships and intellectual vigor, inspiring a shared commitment to contribute to the international scientific community.”

The Center is proud of the work of the alumni of the Young Scholars program.



WEB EXTRA

Scan to learn more about the project.



Protecting Religious Liberty in a Rapidly Evolving Society

Camille M. Johnson

Remarks delivered 13 July 2023 as part of the “Religious Responses to the Rise of Autocracy” panel at the 2023 Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, held at Inner Temple, London, United Kingdom.

I am grateful for the invitation to be here with you in London at the Inner Temple and in the shadow of Temple Church. This is a place where we are reminded of the importance of fundamental principles of the rule of law. What an appropriate setting for our discussion.

I bring the greetings and well-wishes of President Dallin H. Oaks of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who enjoyed his participation in the Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit in Rome last year. On that occasion, President Oaks emphasized that:

*we must unite and find common ground for defending and promoting religious liberty. This is not a call for doctrinal compromises, but rather a plea for unity and cooperation on strategy and advocacy toward our common goal of religious liberty for all.*¹

I echo President Oaks’s call for seeking common ground and raising united voices on behalf of religious liberty for all people in all places.



I also bring warm regards from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, who had hoped to be with us here today. I am familiar with some of the things Elder Holland loves most, and among those are this country and the people who live here.

Personal Introduction

I am a lawyer by profession, and I have practiced primarily civil litigation in the United States for nearly 30 years. I am a wife, a mother of three sons, and a grandmother to five grandchildren. But I speak to you today in my capacity as the president of the Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Introduction of the Relief Society

The Relief Society is one of the oldest and largest women’s organizations in the world, with more than seven million members in 188 countries. Organized in 1842 in Nauvoo, Illinois, United States, at a time of extreme poverty and persecution of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Relief Society was established to provide relief, both temporal and spiritual, to the early Saints and their neighbors.

The main body of Latter-day Saints, fleeing religious persecution that included an extermination order issued by the governor of Missouri, sought refuge outside

the boundaries of the United States. After a westward trek across America’s plains, the first Church members, including some of my beloved ancestors, arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Those pioneers made the desert bloom as they built homes, farms, and communities in the area which later became the state of Utah.

Picture with me women—in various degrees of deficiency and deprivation—trying to lift the burdens of other women, men, and children who were in similar degrees of scarcity and suffering.

But even in those early, difficult times, pioneer accounts were filled with rejoicing in the sisterhood and joy women found in serving each other. Indeed, in providing relief, the members of the Relief Society found their own divine relief.

Speaking to a global audience in the Church’s semiannual general conference, I recently said, “Our covenantal blessing is to partner with Jesus Christ in providing relief . . . to all of God’s children. We are a conduit through which He provides relief.” As we do this, we “find our own relief in Jesus Christ.”²

The purpose of Relief Society remains the same today as it was in pioneer times—to bring temporal and spiritual relief to women, men, and children, who we know to be our sisters and brothers, all children of God.

Member of the Relief Society exercise executive responsibility in planning, directing, and administering global humanitarian projects and in ministering to the needs of their neighbors. Relief Society members speak out, serving in government, education,



and community organizations and, most importantly, in their own homes. Motivated by their faith in God and the love of God and their neighbors, members of the Relief Society care for those in need. They teach in their congregations and at home. They courageously defend morality and families. The members of the Relief Society have always “expect[ed] extraordinary occasions and pressing calls.”³

Protecting religious liberty in a rapidly evolving society is surely an extraordinary occasion and a pressing call.⁴

The Church’s Approach

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a universalist movement in the sense that we believe we have a message and a mission for all people in all places.

The Church has congregations and members who live under many types of

government and who respond to a variety of legal structures that encompass religion and a life of faith. How does The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints respond in a rapidly evolving society that includes autocracies? Or, to put it metaphorically and scripturally, how do we try to act as light, salt, and leaven in a world beset by so many difficulties?

Let me begin by saying a few words about light, salt, and leaven.

Light, Salt, and Leaven

When it is darkest, even a small light can make a big difference. So we believe that the Savior’s injunction that His followers should be a light⁵ applies to us, especially in times of darkness. In latter-day scripture, 3 Nephi 18:24 says, “Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I [Jesus Christ] am the light which

ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do.”

In addition to asking followers to be a light, Jesus Christ compared His followers to salt, but with a warning. Matthew 5:13 says, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?”

And in one of His shortest parables, Jesus said, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”⁶

Salt and leaven can make a big difference in small doses, but only if they retain their distinctive character and savor.

Members of the Relief Society seek to be that light, salt, and leaven. We do so through our humanitarian efforts, including a global initiative focused on the needs of all young children and their mothers. That global initiative, in which the Relief Society takes a leading role, includes child nutrition, immunizations, maternal and newborn care, and primary education. We let our light shine globally and, like salt and leaven, seek to address the needs of those in need of relief who live in our own homes and neighborhoods.

Guiding Principles

I will highlight several principles that guide the Church’s work globally and that may guide the response of other religious organizations to autocratic rule:

- We believe in a universal right to “the free exercise of conscience”⁷ and believe all people and institutions should be able to express publicly their views on issues facing society.⁸
- The Church follows a “front-door” policy of operating in countries pursuant to law. Indeed, “honoring and sustaining the law” is one of the basic points of belief highlighted in the Church’s Articles of Faith.⁹ This includes acting pursuant to law even in places where severe limits are placed on the Church’s operations.

• The Church follows a policy of political neutrality and does not involve itself in electoral politics while reserving the right to speak out on important moral issues. In June 2023 the Church issued a statement reiterating this policy, stating in part:

*The Church does not seek to elect government officials, support or oppose political parties, or, generally, take sides in global conflicts. The Church is neutral in matters of politics within or between the world's many nations, lands and peoples. However, as an institution, it reserves the right to address issues it believes have significant moral consequences or that directly affect the mission, teachings or operations of the Church.*¹⁰

• The Church's mission of respect, care, and relief extends to all people in all circumstances regardless of their interest in the gospel, their political persuasion, or their membership in any specific faith, party, or tribe. Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, gave instructions to look after the poor. The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ describes our commitment in this way:

*And thus, in their prosperous circumstances, they did not send away any who were naked, or that were hungry, or that were athirst, or that were sick, or that had not been nourished; and they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need.*¹¹

Humanitarian Work

And so The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sponsors humanitarian service in extremely complex settings around the world, including places with autocratic rulers, failed governments, and countries controlled by factions. In these settings, like everywhere else, citizens and families are trying to do the best they can under their circumstances.

The Church's humanitarian aim is to relieve suffering and build social cohesion through shared efforts and volunteerism. This allows for faiths, political parties, universities, and communities to work together on local priorities at whatever level is possible. Principles of neutrality, independence, and impartiality guide the Church's humanitarian work.

In 2022 the Church's efforts to care for those in need included more than \$1 billion USD in expenditures, 6.3 million volunteer hours, and 3,692 humanitarian projects in 190 countries and territories, according to the Church's *Caring for Those in Need: 2022 Annual Report*.¹²

The motivation for our humanitarian work is the two great commandments found in the New Testament: to "love the Lord thy God" and to "love thy neighbour as thyself."¹³ The way we love our neighbors who are very different from us is evidence that we indeed love God. This is the first and most important principle of humanitarian work.

Humanitarian efforts and missionary zeal must be kept separate. As President Dallin H. Oaks has explained:

Church humanitarian aid is intended primarily for those who are not members of [the Church].

*It is distributed without any strings attached. . . . Humanitarian aid is not distributed by bishops or other local leaders, by proselyting missionaries, or through the Church's missionary organization. . . . It is separately administered by professional workers and by specially called humanitarian [service] missionaries.*¹⁴

Whenever possible, the Church seeks to work in collaboration with other organizations doing good work—collaborations that are both broad and deep.

For example, during the Christmas season, Light the World Giving Machines collected funds to buy food and other items for those in need in 28 different locations around the world. In 2022 alone, almost half a million individual donations totaled more than \$7 million USD, and 100 percent of the proceeds were distributed, involving a network of nearly 125 local and global nonprofits.¹⁵

In 2022 the Church donated \$32 million USD to the World Food Programme and \$5 million USD to UNICEF's global nutrition program, which helps malnourished children.¹⁶

A portion of the Church's humanitarian budget each year focuses on emergency relief to respond to disaster and crisis. In 2022 these relief efforts included aid to Ukrainian refugees; those affected by

drought in the horn of Africa; tsunami survivors in Tonga; storm victims in Kentucky, Florida, and South Africa; and victims of civil conflict in Africa and the Middle East.¹⁷

In addition to donating commodities and cash, the Church also sponsors volunteerism. JustServe.org is a free platform connecting volunteers with local opportunities. It currently operates in 14 countries, including the UK. Last year it facilitated 16,285 service projects.¹⁸

In recent years the Church has become more sensitive to environmental stewardship initiatives:

- More than 500 of our meetinghouses worldwide now have solar panels.¹⁹
- Deseret Industries, a network of Church-owned thrift shops, processes more than 73 million pounds of recycled goods in a year.²⁰
- Earlier this year, the Church donated 20,000 acre-feet of water to the Great Salt Lake in an effort to save this shrinking body of water.²¹

Since its humble beginnings in 1842, the Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has sought "to relieve the poor" and "to save souls."²² Established on that foundation, the Relief Society has increased in influence and impact around the world. I express my profound appreciation to all those who join with us in providing relief to our sisters and brothers.

Wherever we are in the world, religious believers should seek to be light, salt, and leaven. We should try to pursue principles of political neutrality and take care to protect our institutional independence and integrity. In our humanitarian work, we should endeavor to be guided by principles of love, focusing on those whose needs are most profound.



NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, "Pursuing Religious Liberty Worldwide," speech at the Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, 20 July 2022, religiousfreedom library.org; see also Oaks, "Pursuing Religious Liberty Worldwide," *International Center for Law and Religion Studies 2022 Annual Report*, 52.
2. Camille N. Johnson, "Jesus Christ Is Relief," *Liahona*, May 2023.
3. Emma Smith, in *Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book*, 17 March 1842, 12, Joseph Smith Papers, josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book/35.
4. The impression that democratic institutions are under incredible stress is bolstered by social science research that quantifies these pressures. For example, according to the *Economist's* 2022 Democracy Index, "almost half of the world's population live in a democracy of some sort (45.3%). Only 8% reside in a 'full democracy,' . . . [and] more than one-third of the world's population live under authoritarian rule (36.9%)" ("Democracy Index 2022: Frontline Democracy and the Battle for Ukraine," *Economist Intelligence Unit*, 2023, 3, eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2022).5. See Matthew 5:14-16.
6. Matthew 13:33.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 134:2.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 134:4 declares: "We believe that religion is instituted of God; and that men are amenable to him, and to him only, for the exercise of it, unless their religious opinions prompt them to infringe upon the rights and liberties of others."
9. The twelfth Article of Faith states: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law."
10. "Political Neutrality and Participation," News-room Topic, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, updated 1 June 2023, newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/official-statement/political-neutrality.

11. Alma 1:30.
12. *Caring for Those in Need: 2022 Annual Report*, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (2023), 4, assets.churchofjesuschrist.org/e1/cd/e1cd71b7b39511edbbe0eeecae1eab7e44942d10/welfare_caring_for_those_in_need_2022_annual_report.pdf.
13. Matthew 22:37, 39; Mark 12:30-31; see Luke 10:27.
14. Dallin H. Oaks, remarks at Enterprise Mentors International dinner, 27 October 2006; quoted in R. Scott Lloyd, "People-to-People: Serving the Needy While Preserving Self-Reliance," *Church News*, 11 November 2006; emphasis in original.
15. See "Bringing Light to the World, One Donation at a Time," Newsroom, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 21 March 2023, newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/light-the-world-giving-machines-donations-2022-recap; see also *Caring*, 20-21.
16. See *Caring*, 20.
17. See *Caring*, 22-29.
18. See *Caring*, 16.
19. See *Caring*, 34.
20. See *Caring*, 34.
21. "Church Donates Water to the State of Utah to Benefit Great Salt Lake," Utah Department of Natural Resources, 15 March 2023, naturalresources.utah.gov/dnr-newsfeed/church-donates-water-to-benefit-great-salt-lake.
22. Joseph Smith, in *Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book*, 9 June 1842, 63, Joseph Smith Papers, josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book/86.

STUDENTS





SUMMER RESEARCH FELLOWS

Students who had completed their first year of law school were selected to participate in an international externship at the Office of General Counsel at either the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City or one of the eight area legal counsel offices of the Church in countries around the world.

After completing their training with the Church’s legal counsel offices, fellows spent the rest of the summer doing research projects with the Center and assisting with conferences and other projects. They gained practical experience as well as significant research and writing experience that will be important for launching and sustaining their careers—all while working directly with global leaders in the field of religious freedom. At the same time, the fellows offered a vital service to the work of the Center and to the cause of religious freedom worldwide.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Chloe Atkins
<i>Nairobi, Kenya</i> | Nathanael Sederholm
<i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i> |
| Brenner Birth
<i>Manila, Philippines</i> | Ashley Whetten Soroa
<i>Mexico City, Mexico</i> |
| Tate Frodsham
<i>Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic</i> | Jennifer Trogden
<i>Buenos Aires, Argentina</i> |
| Connor Hansen
<i>Auckland, New Zealand</i> | Lydia Vergara
<i>Lima, Peru</i> |
| Taylor Jeanfreau
<i>Frankfurt, Germany</i> | Lauren Allen Warner
<i>Tokyo, Japan</i> |
| McKell McIntyre
<i>Accra, Ghana</i> | Tyson Wilson
<i>Johannesburg, South Africa</i> |
| Stacy Runia
<i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i> | Trevor Zellweger
<i>Frankfurt, Germany</i> |



One of the best things about my BYU experience was the possibility to interact and share experiences with people from different backgrounds and different religions. Law we can learn in books. But people were the biggest blessing in my life during this time.

—Alcenir de Souza



MASTER OF LAWS (LLM) STUDENTS

Each fall, BYU Law welcomes a group of international LLM students. These students are usually lawyers and judges in their own countries who come to BYU to gain experience in US law, broaden their skills, and further their influence at home. While at BYU Law, LLM students volunteer with the Center on various projects. Some students are sponsored by the Stirling Foundation, the Sorenson Legacy Foundation, the Gary and Lynn Anderson LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund, the Martin and Allyson Egbert LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund, the Neil and Denise Lindberg LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund, and the David A. and Linda C. Nearon LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund.

Anderson Fellow
Yatyr Cesar Neto
Brazil

Egbert Fellow
Sadusunder Pedely
India

Lindberg Fellow
Lucas Guerreiro
Brazil

Sorenson Fellow
Alcenir de Souza
Brazil

Stirling Fellows
Fabio Nascimento
Brazil

Christine Oduor
Kenya

Others
Eliza Arts
Netherlands

Annum Naeem
Pakistan

Abed Alhasat
Jordan

Muntaser Omoush
Jordan



SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL MOOT COURT COMPETITION

The International Moot Court Competition in Law and Religion, sponsored by the International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ICLARS), has become an annual event for BYU Law students. This year, the Center sponsored two teams at the event held 18-19 September 2023 at the University of Milan in Italy.

Anna Hubbard, Elyse Slabaugh, Sarah Johns, Juliette Green, Ryan Cheney, Jorden Truman, Trevor Zellweger, and Gianna Patchett represented BYU Law. Zellweger was awarded Best Oralist.

Teams argued a hypothetical case before either the European Court of Human Rights or the Supreme Court of the United States. Preeminent scholars and actual judges from the two jurisdictions sat as judges of the two courts. Teams were required to draft two briefs—one for the petitioner and one for the respondent—in a case that blended religious freedom, freedom of speech, and green transition. Based on the content and quality of their briefs, teams were selected to argue orally for either the petitioner or the respondent. In addition to the teams from BYU Law, teams from the University of Notre Dame (United States), Bocconi University (Italy), University of Milan (Italy), University of Macerata (Italy), and the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple (United Kingdom) participated in the competition.



Competing in the ICLARS Moot Court Competition in Milan brought me closer to my colleagues, helped me gain a mentor in Professor Craig Galli, and allowed me to sharpen my litigating skills in a subject I am passionate about: religious freedom.

—Trevor Zellweger



OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS

At the conclusion of each academic school year, the International Center for Law and Religion Studies recognizes graduating BYU Law students who have served at the Center throughout their time in law school.

- Aaron Anderson**
- Dallas Bates**
- Oswald Buhendwa**
- Ryan Cheney**
- Kekai Cram**
- Erin Cranor**
- Anastasia Jespersen**
- Dillan Passmore**
- Madison Wilson**

STUDENT MANAGEMENT BOARD

Members of the Student Management Board were chosen based on their interest in law and religion and their skills in writing, research, editing, and languages. Throughout the school year, board members participated in research, writing, and editing projects; conferences; and other assignments with the Center.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Camille Anjewierden | Allie King |
| Dallas Bates | Nicholas Loosle |
| Brooklyn Bird | Alec Monson |
| Anna Bryner | Dillan Passmore |
| Oswald Buhendwa | Gianna Patchett |
| Ryan Cheney | Nathan Phair |
| Kekai Cram | Dailyah Rudek |
| Juliette Green | Elyse Slabaugh |
| Anna Hubbard | Jorden Truman |
| Anastasia Jespersen | Clayton Varvel |
| Sarah Johns | Madison Wilson |

SYMPOSIUM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The 2023 Annual International Law and Religion Symposium was the largest in scale since the event's beginning. Under the direction of Elizabeth Clark, the Symposium Executive Committee spent weeks planning for and coordinating logistical aspects of the conference. During the symposium, students assisted delegates, coordinated volunteers, and kept things running smoothly.

This year, a team of volunteers from BYU-Hawaii came to assist the committee during the event. Several LLM students also volunteered.

The Student Executive Committee was divided into subcommittees:

Master Schedule
Camille Anjewierden
Lydia Vergara

Assistant to Elizabeth Clark
Jarin Jensen

Judges Coordinator
Anastasia Jespersen

Concierge
Gianna Patchett
Kara Reed
Jennifer Trogden
Sara Williams

Documents, Interpretation, and Media

Ryan Cheney
Dallin Everton
Juliette Green
Margaret Jarvis
Jorden Truman

Recruiting and Supervising Volunteers

Rachel Howden
McKell McIntyre

Transportation

Chloe Atkins
Tate Frodsham
Jinhee Nelson
Ryan Quade

As a student working on the symposium executive committee, the most powerful takeaway for me was to see the commitment that attendees have to their faith and to ensuring the protection of the rights of others to exercise their faith.

—Camille Anjewierden

My fellowship has taught me that human rights must not be taken for granted. Freedoms of thought, conscience, expression, and association are necessary in promoting liberties and improving quality of life.

—Chloe Atkins

A vibrant tropical landscape featuring a clear turquoise lagoon in the foreground, lush green palm trees, and distant mountains under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The scene is captured from an elevated perspective, showing the water's clarity and the surrounding vegetation.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL



IAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Heidi Shipp
David Colton, *immediate past chair*
Lynn Fehser Anderson
Bill Benac
Craig A. Cardon
David Christensen
Jim Cook
Sandy Cook

Allyson Egbert
Martin Egbert
David Harden
Jennifer Harden
David Nearon
Linda Nearon
Bryce Wade
Athelia Woolley
Ken Woolley

We are grateful for the support of the members of the International Advisory Council (IAC). Their contributions of time, talents, and other resources are critical to the success of the Center in promoting freedom of religion or belief worldwide.



Belinda Evans Romney



Bianca Palmieri Lisonbee

IN MEMORIAM

The Center mourns the passing of two IAC members in 2023: **Belinda Evans Romney** and **Bianca Palmieri Lisonbee**. We are grateful for their service to and support of the Center.

IAC MEMBERS

Allen and Denise Alexander
 Wilford W. and Kathleen Andersen
 Lynn Fehser Anderson
 Scott and Jesselie Anderson
 Brent and Cheri Andrus
 William and Ann Atkin
 Fred and Robyn Axelgard
 Linda Bang
 Gary and Marilyn Baughman
 Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley
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 Robert and Lonnie Bradley
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 Mac and Christeena Brubaker
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 Greg and Julie Cook
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 Eric and Kaye Jackson
 Heber Jacobsen and Christine Lake
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 Mark and Christi Jensen
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 Dan and Elaine Jorgensen
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 Dennis T. and Cynthia Juárez Lange
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 Jim and Allyson Larkins
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 David and Linda Nearon
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 David and Laurea Stirling
 Joel and Shannon Sybrowsky
 Roy and Tanya Syme
 Dallas and Krista Tanner
 Sondra Taylor
 Wayne and Patrice Tew
 Tom and Leslie Thomas
 Lonny and Lori Townsend
 Bryce and Peggy Wade
 Stephen and Marcia Wade
 Blake and Leslie Walker
 Bruce and Linda Wardle
 Kristine Whitesides
 Lance and Patricia Wickman
 Jennifer Wilcox
 Gerald and Claudia Williams
 Kim Wilson and Gail Miller
 Larry and Lynda Wilson
 Mark and Carol Wolfert
 Ken and Athelia Woolley
 Tim and Teresa Wright
 Koo and Patricia Yuen

2023 IAC Trip

Members of the International Advisory Council participated in a study tour of New Zealand and Fiji from 18 February to 4 March 2023.





ENDOWMENTS

Endowments—together with generous support from Brigham Young University, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and individual members of the International Advisory Council—provide the financial means for the Center to accomplish its work. Unlike other methods of funding, endowments are long-term financial tools that assist the Center in planning for the future. The individuals who create endowments for the Center

establish a family legacy supporting religious freedom, and they can direct the focus of the Center’s work to global areas that are of particular interest to them.

Many of the endowments were created as a base for others to contribute to areas of special interest, and the Center hopes to establish endowments in more areas. Please contact Sandy Stephenson if you would like to discuss personal options.

CURRENT ENDOWMENTS

The **International Advisory Council Cornerstone Endowment** (2000) was the first endowment to fund the Center and its ongoing work.

Founding Contributors:

David S. and Mary L. Christensen
Richard P. and Christena H. Durham
Duane L. and Erlyn G. Madsen
David A. and Linda C. Nearon

The **Sterling and Eleanor Colton Chair in Law and Religion** (2008) provides support for a wide range of the Center’s work, including supplemental support for BYU Law faculty. The chair is currently held by David H. Moore, dean of BYU Law and a former associate director of the Center.

The **S. David and Julie Colton Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2013) supports the work of the Center in Europe.

The **David S. and Mary L. Christensen Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2014) provides for the work of the Center in the UK, with a focus on growing the connections between the Center and Oxford.

The **W. George and Helen Lowe Johnson Research Fellowship** (2014) focuses on legal scholarship, with an emphasis on freedom of religion and belief.

The **Edward Joseph Leon and Helen Hall Leon Endowed Fund for Law and Religion Studies** (2014) supports the work of the Center in the Middle East.

The **Jean and Frank, Barbara and Wayne Friendship FORB** (2016) supports the work of the Center in Europe.

The **Gregory P. and Julie L. Cook Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2017) supports the critical work of the Center in China.

The **Andrus African Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2018) provides for the critical work of the Center in Africa, including support of the growing number of religious liberty scholars in the region.

Founding Contributors:

Brent and Cheri Andrus

The **Gary and Lynn Anderson LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund** (2018) provides learning opportunities to enhance BYU Law students’ experiences as they work with the Center.

The **Southeast Asia Endowed Fund** (2018)

Founding Contributors:

Milton and Heidi Shipp

The **Latin American Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2020)

Founding Contributors:

James F. and Allyson L. Larkins

The **H. Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley Oxford Young Scholars Endowed Fund** (2020) provides support and funding for Oxford programs and participants.

The **William and Barbara Benac us Alliance for Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2021) offers funding and support for the establishment and operation of us religious freedom alliances.

The **Martin and Allyson Egbert LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund** (2021) helps to pay expenses of international students to earn a master of law degree at BYU in comparative and us law.

The **Mark and Christi Jensen us Alliance for Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2021) offers funding and support for the establishment and operation of us religious freedom alliances.

The **Neil and Denise Lindberg LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund** (2021) helps to pay expenses of international students to earn a master of law degree at BYU in comparative and us law.

The **David A. and Linda C. Nearon LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund** (2021) helps to pay expenses of international students to earn a master of law degree at BYU in comparative and us law.

The **Gene and Martha Schaerr Endowed Fund** (2022) is used for purposes relating to religious freedom advocacy of the Center.

The **Lee Family Brazil Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2023) provides support for the Center’s work in Brazil.

Building Bridges and Finding Solutions in the Political Arena

By Gary R. Herbert

Founder of the Herbert Institute for Public Policy
at Utah Valley University

Adapted from a speech Gary R. Herbert, governor of Utah from 2009 to 2021,
delivered 30 March 2023 at the spring meeting of the ICLRS International Advisory Council.

In the political arena, building bridges and finding common solutions is something that almost everyone talks about, but in reality, these actions are about as rare as a bigfoot sighting. Unfortunately, many of those who try to compromise or to collaborate are often criticized for the attempt and are called “sellouts,” “rhinos,” “dinos,” and “flip-flopers.”

In my experience, our current tendency to exclude opposing voices is not the best way to lead. It leads to public distrust and ultimately results in bad policy.

Bringing Togetherness in the Political Arena

One example of successfully bridging the divide happened during my nearly 12 years as governor. In Utah’s 2015 legislative session, we passed Senate Bill 296—also known as the “Utah Compromise.”¹

We could not have had more differing opinions from people on each side of this issue. We had the LGBTQ community on one side and those advocating for protecting religious freedom on



the other side. Trying to find common ground and compromise on this issue was very difficult. As Stephen R. Covey taught us, we needed to find a win/win solution.² We needed a mutually beneficial policy that supported both sides of the issue.

After a great deal of deliberation and advice from my staff, I instructed both sides, “If you bring me separate bills that protect only your interests, I will veto them. If you bring me a bill where both sides have come together in support, that is the bill I will sign.”

And that is what happened. What a tremendous bill signing ceremony we had! Over 1,000 individuals from all sides of the issue came to celebrate this historic bridging of political divides.

The bill’s passing invited national coverage from the *New York Times*³ and commendations from political figures such as President Barack Obama and former Florida governor Jeb Bush. We also saw coverage from the *Wall Street Journal*,⁴ the *Washington Post*,⁵ *Time* magazine,⁶ and the First Amendment Center,⁷ to name a few. I received calls from governors around the country who wondered how we accomplished such a feat, especially in a highly religious, politically conservative state.

Strive for Better Communication

In his book *Love Your Enemies*, Harvard professor and social scientist Arthur Brooks doesn’t argue for eliminating disagreement; instead, he teaches that we need to disagree better, not less.⁸ That means that in this country and around the world, we need a higher caliber of intellectual debate and a vibrant competition of ideas.

Brooks believes that the contempt we have for others and their opinions is what is keeping us from greater success and progress as a society. This “culture of contempt”⁹ leads to an aversion for differing opinions. This is a toxic combination. When we categorically dismiss people who have different points of view, we don’t give them the opportunity to reconsider their views or give ourselves the chance to be persuaded by their arguments. In addition, assuming that we know the motives of the other side too often becomes an automatic dismissal of their opinion.

Good communication is difficult. Whether it is husbands speaking to wives, parents speaking to children, neighbors speaking to neighbors, or politicians speaking to constituents, accurate communication is a challenge. What someone says and what another person hears can be totally different.

Ironically, the rise of communication platforms in today’s world of technology—cable news, TV, and social media—and the demise of traditional journalism have made communication even more difficult. I would propose that in order to have better communication, we ought to take the following steps (and this list is not exhaustive):

1. Engage in good faith; be genuine and honest.
2. Always look for the positive first.

3. Stand up for those who are not in the room. Remember those who do not have a voice and are underserved.
4. Be thoughtful and careful in what you say and how you say it. Be slow to give offense and be equally slow to take offense.
5. Use your principles as a gift, not a weapon.

Forgo Anger and Hatred

In a world that is dominated by social media, we must be especially vigilant. We have groups of people who post some of the most vile, mean-spirited, and false statements to create contention, all while remaining anonymous. In the Book of Mormon, Jesus taught, “He that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.”¹⁰



When we get angry and emotional, rational thought is the first casualty. We see it in today’s cancel culture. We can disagree on public policy, and that is okay, but we should not make it personal and disagree based solely on national origin, ethnicity, religious persuasion, sexual orientation, or political thought.

President Dallin H. Oaks has taught:

*In a democratic government we will always have differences over proposed candidates and policies. However, as followers of Christ we must forgo the anger and hatred with which political choices are debated or denounced in many settings.*¹¹

It is easy to anonymously troll those who we disagree with on social media. It is a harder but much more worthwhile endeavor to learn about those we disagree with, to gain greater empathy, and to try to understand their backgrounds. President Russell M. Nelson has taught us to “expand our circle of love to embrace the whole human family.”¹²

Love Your Neighbor

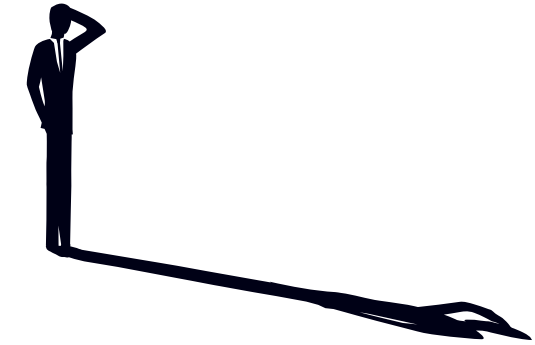
In politics today, many have adopted an “us versus them” mentality, where “them” is always the enemy. No wonder we have problems coming together and bridging political divides.

But Jesus taught:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.*¹³

That is the way Democrats should treat Republicans and Republicans should treat Democrats. That is the way everyone should



treat friends of other faiths. And it is simply the way we should treat each other, no matter our station, belief system, or position in life.

I would add that the easiest way to love your enemies is to not have any enemies. Live the Golden Rule and do unto others as you would have them do unto you.¹⁴ You should never consider those who have different opinions from yours to be your enemies.

We are all members of the same race—the human race—and, more importantly, we are all children of God. That means we are all brothers and sisters and should love and support each other despite our differences. If we could all believe in the truth of the fatherhood of God—and therefore the sisterhood and brotherhood of mankind—we would naturally show more love and respect for each other.

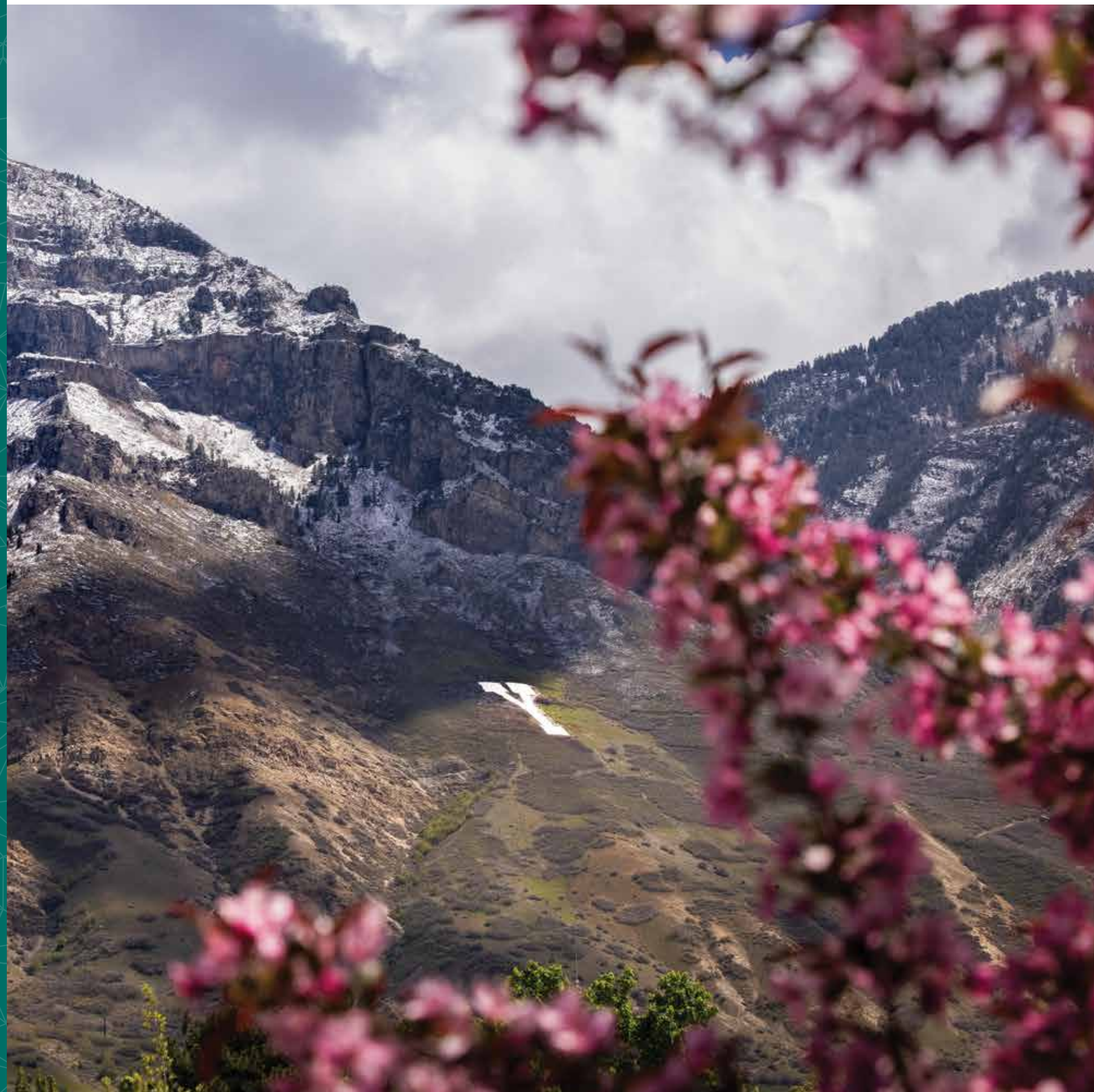
I believe that this is the great formula for success: collaboration, cooperation, mutual respect, and open-mindedness. The combination of listening and learning will help us bridge the political divide and enable us to accomplish meaningful positive change as we move forward together, addressing the challenges in the country today.

NOTES

1. See S.B. 296, Antidiscrimination and Religious Freedom Amendments (2015), le.utah.gov/~2015/bills/static/sb0296.html.
2. See Stephen R. Covey, Habit 4: “Think Win/Win,” *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 204–34.
3. See Laurie Goodstein, “Utah Passes Antidiscrimination Bill Backed by Mormon Leaders,” *New York Times*, 12 March 2015, nytimes.com/2015/03/12/us/politics/utah-passes-antidiscrimination-bill-backed-by-mormon-leaders.html.
4. See William A. Galston, “Opinion: Utah Shows the Way on Gay Rights,” *Wall Street Journal*, 17 March 2015, wsj.com/articles/william-a-galston-utah-shows-the-way-on-gay-rights-1426633856.
5. See Lindsey Bever, “Utah—Yes, Utah—Passes Landmark LGBT Rights Bill,” *Washington Post*, 12 March 2015, washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/03/12/utah-legislature-passes-landmark-lgbt-anti-discrimination-bill-backed-by-mormon-church.

6. See Orrin G. Hatch, “Tolerance Has Become Intolerant. But There Is a Cure,” *Time*, 11 September 2018, time.com/5392510/pluralism-religion-democracy-lgbt.
7. See Charles C. Haynes, “LGBT Rights, Religious Freedom and the Utah Miracle,” *Green Bay Press Gazette*, 25 March 2015, greenbaypressgazette.com/story/opinion/columnists/2015/03/25/lgbt-rights-religious-freedom-utah-miracle/70447834.
8. See Arthur C. Brooks, *Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt* (New York: Broadside Books, 2019), 175–200.
9. Brooks, *Love Your Enemies*, 22, 202.
10. 3 Nephi 11:29.
11. Dallin H. Oaks, “Love Your Enemies,” *Ensign*, November 2020.
12. Russell M. Nelson, “Blessed Are the Peacemakers,” *Ensign*, November 2002.
13. Matthew 5:43–44.
14. See Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31.

ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD, FELLOWS & STAFF





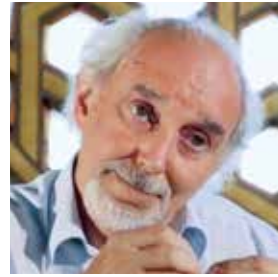
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Vice Chancellor and President, Griffith University Queensland, Australia



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L. Whitney Clayton



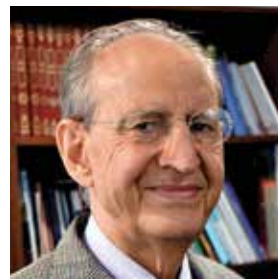
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Ján Figel
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Tahir Mahmood
Founder-President, South Asia Consortium for Religion and Law Studies Professor and Chairman, Amity Institute of Advanced Legal Studies New Delhi, India



David M. Kirkham



Cynthia Juárez Lange



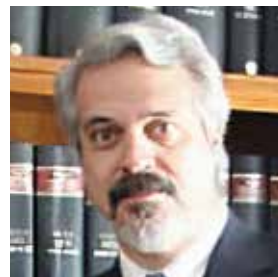
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Professor, Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina Buenos Aires, Argentina



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Neil A. Lindberg



Douglas E. McAllister



Janet Matthews Nelson



Jeff V. Nelson



Rik Torfs
Professor, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Leuven, Belgium



Adesina J. Olukanni



Erlend D. "Pete" Peterson



Ruth Lybbert Renlund



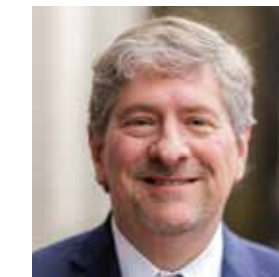
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Gary B. Doxey
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Paul E. Kerry
Associate Director



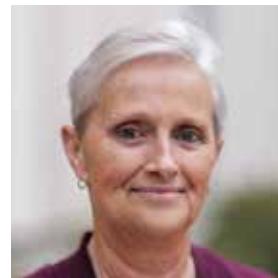
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Center Coordinator and Executive Assistant



Milton P. Shipp
International Advisory Council Chair



Sherie J. Rogde
Conference Liaison



Blythe M. Shupe
Communications Specialist



Sandy L. Stephenson
International Advisory Council Liaison

CENTER STAFF APPOINTMENT



DAVID H. MOORE NAMED DEAN OF BYU LAW

On 1 July 2023, David H. Moore became the new dean of the J. Reuben Clark Law School at Brigham Young University.

Moore, who joined BYU Law in 2008, replaced D. Gordon Smith, who has served as dean of the law school since 2016.

Moore holds the Sterling and Eleanor Colton Endowed Chair in Law and Religion and was an associate director of the ICLRS from 2018 to 2023. He joined the Center in 2018 after returning from a two-year assignment as acting deputy administrator and general counsel at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the government organization responsible for providing foreign aid to the developing world. In 2020, Moore served a brief term on the UN Human Rights Committee. He is a scholar of foreign relations law, international law, international human rights, and international development.

“David has a strong vision for the positive impact that BYU Law can have on BYU and for the future of our students both in and out of the classroom,” says BYU president C. Shane Reese. “His academic and legal credentials are outstanding, but I am most impressed with his commitment to the spiritual mission of the university and his keen understanding of BYU Law’s unique approach to legal education.”

Moore will be missed in the day-to-day activities of the Center, but we look forward to working with him to continue building BYU Law and the ICLRS.

2023 Center Achievements

ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Bassett, William W., W. Cole Durham, Jr., Mark A. Goldfeder, and Robert T. Smith, eds. *Religious Organizations and the Law*. 2nd rev. ed. 4 vols. Eagan, Minnesota: Thomson Reuters, 2023.

Clark, Elizabeth A. “Enemies and Brothers.” *Talk About: Law and Religion* (blog). International Center for Law and Religion Studies, 27 January 2023. talkabout.iclrs.org/2023/01/27/enemies-and-brothers.

Durham, W. Cole, Jr. “The Role of Religious Freedom Rights in Building a Free, Just, and Mutually Supportive Society.” *Talk About: Law and Religion* (blog). International Center for Law and Religion Studies, 18 October 2023. talkabout.iclrs.org/2023/10/18/the-role-of-religious-freedom-rights-in-building.

Durham, W. Cole, Jr., Brett G. Scharffs, and Đỗ Quang Hùng. *Religion and Rule of Law in Vietnam and Southeast Asia*. Hanoi, Vietnam: Gioi Publishers, 2023.

Scharffs, Brett G. “Introduction: Faith and the Founding Figures of Human Dignity.” *Review of Faith and International Affairs* 21, no. 4 (11 December 2023): 1–5. doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2023.2272439.

Scharffs, Brett G. “Opinion: The Web Designer Case Is a Free Speech Decision That Protects Everyone, Gay and Straight.” *Deseret News*, 1 July 2023. deseret.com/opinion/2023/7/1/23781404/303-creative-web-designer-case-is-a-free-speech-decision-that-protects-lgbtq-and-straight-people.

Scharffs, Brett G., Leah Blake, Kimberley Farnsworth, Holly Hinckley Lesan, and Marianna Richardson. “The Loveliness Men Hide: Eleanor Roosevelt on Human Dignity.” *Review of Faith and International Affairs* 21, no. 4 (11 December 2023): 6–14. doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2023.2272440.

Scharffs, Brett G., M. Christian Green, and Simeon O. Ilesanmi, eds. *African Conceptions of Human Dignity*. Stellenbosch, South Africa: African Sun Media, 2023.

MEDIA

Elizabeth Clark was interviewed for a podcast of *Y Magazine* titled “Religious Freedom with Elizabeth Clark.” The podcast can be found at omny.fm/shows/y-magazine-podcast/religious-freedom-with-elizabeth-clark.

Elizabeth Clark was interviewed for a piece about the Center’s Annual International Law and Religion Symposium that was broadcast on national television in Portugal. She was also interviewed for a documentary on the 25th anniversary of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Gary Doxey was interviewed by the media in Guatemala while participating in the Latin American Symposium on Religious Freedom in March.

David Moore was interviewed by *Y Magazine*. The interview, titled “Religious Liberty for All,” was published in the Fall 2023 issue.

Brett Scharffs was interviewed about the Supreme Court decision on *303 Creative v. Elenis* for two National Public Radio podcasts. The amicus brief on the case, which was joined by Scharffs, was cited by the Supreme Court. Scharffs’ first interview was with Nina Totenberg for the story “Supreme Court Says 1st Amendment Entitles Web Designer to Refuse Same-Sex Wedding Work” on *All Things Considered*, 30 June 2023. The second was an interview with Jen White titled “1A Remaking America: The First Amendment and LGBTQ Rights,” which was released 13 July 2023.

LAW REFORM IN 2023

Elizabeth Clark advised us government officials on a draft law in Kyrgyzstan.

W. Cole Durham, Jr., David Moore, Denise Lindberg, Scott Isaacson, and Alexander Dushku submitted a response to the call for input on a report by Victor Madrigal-Borloz, UN independent expert, on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). The text of that

response can be found on the Center’s blog, *Talk About: Law and Religion*. The independent expert’s final report, which was released in June, addresses how SOGI rights can coexist alongside rights to freedom of religion or belief (FORB). The final report quotes the response submitted by Durham and his colleagues as well as a previous publication by Durham—a sign of respect for Durham and for the Center’s approach to seemingly conflicting rights, which advocates optimizing dignity protections for all.

Gary Doxey and ICLRS senior fellow **Scott Isaacson** have been engaged in legislative reform efforts in Chile. Over two and a half years, the two have participated in meetings and other events and have offered drafts, technical commentaries, and other assistance to key influencers working on the draft constitution for Chile. The draft contains good protections for religious freedom and religious organizations. It was voted on by the citizens of Chile in December 2023.

Gary Doxey and **Scott Isaacson** shared expert comments on a bill pending in Congress in the Dominican Republic (DR). The two have been involved in consultation on laws in DR for many years. Additionally, in 2023 the two advised on pending legislation in Costa Rica and Guatemala.

Visiting scholar **Lutforahman Saeed** was invited to Geneva, Switzerland, to work on constitutional reform in Afghanistan.

APPOINTMENTS AND AWARDS

Elizabeth Clark was selected as the chair-elect of the Association of American Law Schools’ Section on Law and Religion. She continues to serve as a member of the executive committee of the BYU International Society, a member of the Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and a member of the intergovernmental US-Kazakhstan Religious Freedom Committee.

David Moore was given the Wesley P. Lloyd Award for Distinction in Graduate Education by Brigham Young University. This award pays tribute to a faculty member who shows exemplary performance in teaching, research/creative work, and citizenship in graduate education.

Brett Scharffs was appointed to the Council of Experts of the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance, a governmental organization comprising 37 countries with a shared commitment to religious freedom. He joins Cole Durham, who has participated on the council for several years.

TALK ABOUT: LAW AND RELIGION

The Center’s blog, *Talk About: Law and Religion*, continues to feature diverse academic voices on current issues related to law and religion. The blog serves as a forum for prominent and upcoming academics from around the globe to offer their views and/or current research on timely topics, either in stand-alone posts or in conversation with one another.

“Conversations” are special series that feature posts from multiple authors with individual, distinct viewpoints on a single topic. In 2023 the blog featured conversations on current issues such as the intersection of artificial intelligence and religion, the Russia-Ukraine war, Israel’s judicial reform crisis, and religious liberty rights in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity rights.

The blog also features video and print interviews with prominent scholars discussing recent US and international court cases affecting religious exercise, as well as other timely topics. For an academic blog focused on a relatively niche topic, *Talk About* continues to reach an impressive readership, with 29,670 viewers and 65,369 visits in 2023.

Talk About is edited by Dmytro Vovk, an alum of the Center’s Young Scholars Fellowship at Oxford and a Ukrainian law and religion professor currently teaching at the Cardozo School of Law in New York City. Coeditor is ICLRS associate director Amy Lynn Andrus.

HEADLINES

For many years the Center has compiled daily lists of headlines related to law and religion that are searchable by country and by topic. A digest of top headlines, curated by Jordan Pendergrass, is sent via email to headlines subscribers, who currently number more than 9,600. These headlines average almost 7,000 daily views. Headline digests are also shared on X (formerly Twitter) @headlines_iclrs. To subscribe to headlines emails or to see daily headlines, visit religlaw.org/headlines.

JANUARY

4 “Religion, Law, and the Russian War Against Ukraine” panel, Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, San Diego, California, USA

4–7 EuroSeminar for Young Latter-day Saint Scholars, BYU London Centre, UK

18 Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) Focus Group Discussion, Malaysia

20 Azerbaijan visitors, BYU Law School, Provo, Utah, USA

31 January–1 February International Religious Freedom Summit, Washington, DC, USA

FEBRUARY

9 “Human Dignity on the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” lecture, J. M. Dawson Center of Church-State Studies, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, USA

10 “ACWAY and the IF20: The Role of Youth in the G20 Interfaith Process,” presentation, Global Youth Interfaith and Intercultural Forum, Doha, Qatar

16 Presentation, NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion or Belief, via Zoom

18 February–4 March IAC Study Tour, Fiji and New Zealand

20 “International Human Rights Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief: Emerging Challenges,” presentation, Religion and Rule of Law Conference, Stellenbosch, South Africa

20–22 Religious freedom and rule of law certificate training program, cosponsored with Institute for Global Engagement, Cape Town, South Africa

24 Interfaith dinner with Elder Ulisses Soares of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Dallas-Fort Worth Alliance for Religious Freedom, Dallas, Texas, USA

28 “The Role of Religious Communities in Africa: Advancing Peace, Human Dignity, Preservation of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Freedom of Religion or Belief,” sponsored by the African Union (AU), coorganized by the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia, the United Religions Initiative-Africa, the G20 Interfaith Forum, and the Africa Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

MARCH

2 Visit of Haji Allahshükür Hummat Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam, and delegation, and Khazar Ibrahim, Azeri ambassador to the US, BYU Law School, Provo, Utah, USA

7–9 Latin American Symposium on Religious Freedom, cosponsored by the president’s commissioner for religious freedom for Guatemala, the ICLRS, Guatemala’s Interfaith Council, and Universidad Panamericana, Guatemala City, Guatemala

8 UN Human Rights side event featuring UN special rapporteur on FORB, cosponsored by ICLRS and the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20), Geneva, Switzerland

13 “You, the Other, and What We Can Do Together: Engaging Across Differences for the Common Good,” 2023 Summit on Religious Freedom, Central Florida Commission on Religious Freedom, Orlando, Florida, USA

13 “Conflict, Children, Climate, and COVID,” IF20 webinar in Geneva, Switzerland

14 Book launch and discussion of *State Responses to Crimes of Genocide: What Went Wrong and How to Change It* by Ewelina Ochab and Lord David Alton, Notre Dame London Global Gateway, London, UK

15–16 “Islamophobia as a Specific Form of Racism and Discrimination: New Global and Transnational Challenges,” International Conference on Islamophobia, Baku International Multiculturalism Center, Baku, Azerbaijan

23–24 Latin America Regional Conference I: First Latin American Forum on Journalism and Religion, cosponsored by ICLRS, the BYU School of Communications, and the International Association of Religion Journalists, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

23 “Dignity in Diversity: Why Religious Freedom and Human Dignity Matter,” Las Vegas Alliance for Religious Freedom and Human Dignity symposium, William S. Boyd School of Law, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA

30–31 IAC Annual Spring Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

APRIL

3 “Seismic Shifts in the Global Landscape,” International Society Annual Conference, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

13 Induction of The Honorable Reverend Dr. Suzan Denise Johnson Cook into the Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia, USA

13 Gandhi-King-Mandela Peace Prize presentation to Russell M. Nelson, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia, USA

17–18 Asia Regional Conference: “Asian Perspectives on Human Dignity,” cosponsored by ICLRS and the Religious Freedom and Human Dignity Initiative at BYU-Hawaii, Laie, Hawaii, USA

MAY

5 Inaugural meeting of the Religious Freedom Alliance Council, via Zoom

7–9 “Partnerships in Action: ‘Towards One Earth, One Family, One Future,’” G20 Interfaith Forum, New Delhi, India

9–11 “From Religious Freedom to Religious Responsibility (Building Communities of Advocacy and Action),” Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) and the Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, Doha, Qatar

14–17 Africa Regional Conference: “Law, Religion, and Reconciliation in Africa,” African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ACLARS) conference, Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire

17 “African Perspectives on Human Dignity: Commemorating the 4th Anniversary of the African Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere,” book workshop, Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire

22 Visit of Nguyen Quoc Dzung, Vietnamese ambassador to the US, and a delegation from the United States Institute of Peace, BYU Law School, Provo, Utah, USA

JUNE

1 “Religious Liberty and Human Dignity: The Promise of American Pluralism,” Charlotte, North Carolina Religious Freedom Alliance, Queens University of Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

6–7 “Countering Persecution and Forced Migration—What’s Next?” AMAR Foundation Windsor Dialogue workshop, London, UK

15 “Religious Communities: Worshipping, Serving, and Learning Together,” Religious Freedom Annual Review, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

16 “Bridging the Religious Divide,” conference organized by Bellwether International and Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

20 Latin America Regional Conference II: Interreligious Forum of the Americas (FIDELA), Washington, DC, USA

19–22 “Building Living Bridges Across Divides,” presentation at Selah by the Sea 2023, Black Women in Ministry retreat, Miami, Florida, USA

21 Third Virtual Seminar on “Global Governance and Growth in Freedom,” a program of the Democratic Initiative of Spain and the Americas (IDEA), Miami Dade College, Miami, Florida, USA

19–23 Sixth Annual Conference of the European Academy of Religion, St. Andrews, Scotland, UK

23 Fifth Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Workshop Training for Civil Servants, online presentation, Gadau, Nigeria

26 Religious and human rights master course, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

26–30 Religion and the rule of law training program, cosponsored by the Georgian State Committee on Religious Affairs and the Institute for Global Engagement (IGE), Tbilisi, Georgia

29 OSCE workshop on interfaith dialogue and comprehensive security, sponsored by the Advisory Panel for Freedom of Religion or Belief, ODHR, OSCE, and University of Foggia’s Center for Religion and Comprehensive Security in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, Foggia, Italy

JULY

5–6 Muslim World Regional Conference: Islamic Perspectives on Human Dignity, organized by ICLRS and the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

7 “Partnerships in Action: Towards ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future,’” regional G20 Interfaith Forum event, Manila, Philippines

11–13 “Protecting Religious Liberty in a Rapidly Evolving Society,” Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, London, UK

17 July–4 August Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law, Christ Church, Oxford, UK

21–22 “Sermons and Human Dignity,” International Sermon Studies Association conference, Christ Church, Oxford, UK

21–23 Oxford visit by BYU students studying Christian-Jewish-Muslim relations at University of Cambridge’s Woolf Institute, Christ Church, Oxford, UK

24 “From Religious Freedom and Responsibility to Peace and Prosperity: A Religious Freedom Roundtable Discussion,” International Religious Freedom Secretariat Roundtable, Clearwater, Florida, USA

24–25 “Polarized Constitutionalism,” research workshop, Christ Church, Oxford, UK

25 International Religious Freedom Roundtable on Capitol Hill, sponsored by International Religious Freedom Secretariat, Washington, DC, USA

26 “Foundations and Founding Figures of Human Dignity,” publication workshop, Christ Church, Oxford, UK

27–29 Europe Regional Conference: “Civilizational Perspectives on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere,” UN Human Dignity Day Conference, Oxford, UK

AUGUST

7–11 Certificate Training Program on religion and the rule of law, cosponsored by Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, IGE, ICLRS, and Vietnam-USA Society, Vinh, Vietnam

8–10 “Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers: The Role of Religious Freedom in the Construction of a Free, Just, and Mutually Supportive Society,” Second Brazilian Symposium on Religious Freedom, promoted by the Brazilian Center for Studies in Law and Religion and ICLRS, Brasilia, Brazil

14–18 Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) 2023 Bergen Exchanges, Bergen, Norway

21–23 International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA) 9th World Congress and Board of Experts meeting, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA

22 “Global Perspectives on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,” International Webinar Cross-Cultural Literacy Series, hosted by the embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Indonesia and the Leimena Institute, supported by Templeton Religion Trust, Jakarta, Indonesia

23 International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit luncheon, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

SEPTEMBER

5-7 “Shaping World Peace and Sustainable Development through Interfaith Harmony,” G20 Interfaith Forum, Puna, India

16-17 “The Middle East Security and Development in the Global Context,” presentation at the 8th International Forum on Asia and the Middle East, Middle East Studies Institute, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, People’s Republic of China

18 Human dignity lecture at China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing, People’s Republic of China

18-19 International Moot Court Competition in Law and Religion, Milan, Italy

25 Presentation to the Texas Dallas Chapter of the J. Reuben Clark Society, Dallas, Texas, USA

26 2023 Bill and Barbara Benac Human Dignity for All Lecture, Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, Dallas, Texas, USA

OCTOBER

1-3 “Protecting the Right to Freedom of Thought, Conscience, and Religion: 75 Years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” 30th International Law and Religion Symposium, BYU Law School, Provo, Utah, USA

3 6th Annual Summit for Religious Freedom by the DFW Alliance for Religious Freedom, Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, Dallas, Texas, USA

11-13 “The Impact of Political Decisions on the Exercise of Religious Liberty,” 22nd Colloquium of the Latin American Consortium of Religious Freedom, University of Talca, Chile

12-14 “Contemporary State-Church Law,” conference jointly organized by the Institute of Comparative Law in Belgrade, Serbia, and the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Budva, Montenegro

17-19 Annual forum organized by the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (IPARD), Berlin, Germany

19 “In Defense of Strictly Scrutinizing Religious Rights,” fall interfaith event, Institute for Religious Liberty, Thomas More University, Crestview Hills, Kentucky, USA

19-20 “Toward a Future of FORB for All,” Global Youth Summit for Freedom of Religion or Belief, event held via Zoom

30 Tolerance Means Dialogues event, coconvened by ICLRS and the University of Utah, Utah State Capitol, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

31 “International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) at 25: A Look at Its Legacies and Future Implications for Global Peace and Security,” hosted by the United States Institute of Peace and sponsored by the United States Department of State, Washington, DC, USA

NOVEMBER

7-8 “Human Dignity in Times of Crisis and War,” lecture at International Graduate Students and Scholars’ Conference, Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

9 Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony with ICLRS, IGE, and Vietnam-USA Society to continue Religion and Rule of Law certificate training programs in cooperation with Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, Hanoi, Vietnam

9 “Religious Freedom for All: Building Bridges and Breaking Bread Together,” Central Florida Commission on Religious Freedom event, Seminole State College of Florida, Sanford, Florida, USA

10 “Human Dignity in Religious Traditions: Foundations for Ethics and Human Rights,” Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

13 Visit of Sheik Chérif Ousmane Madani Haïdara, president of the High Islamic Council in Mali, BYU Law School, Provo, Utah, USA

13-14 “Human Dignity and Rule of Law for a Peaceful and Inclusive Society,” International Conference on Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy, sponsored by the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Leimena Institute, ICLRS, International Religious Freedom Secretariat, and Templeton Religion Trust, Jakarta, Indonesia

14-17 Lectures at the University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta and the Istiqlal Mosque, Jakarta, Indonesia, and at Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia

18 “Actualizing Mercy to All Creation Through Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy: The Roles of Faith-Based Organizations in Addressing Global Issues,” lecture at Hasyim Asy’ari University, Jombang, East Java, Indonesia

18 Memorandum of Understanding signed between ICLRS and University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM); lecture at UMM, Malang City, East Java, Indonesia

20 Workshop, Udayana University, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

28-30 “Freedom of Religion or Belief Under Authoritarian Regimes,” Ministerial Conference of the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance, Prague, Czechia

DECEMBER

6 “75th Anniversary Commemoration of the UDHR: Freedom of Religion or Belief Going Forward,” held by the APPG FORB, Parliament, London, UK

8 Religious Freedom Alliance Council meeting addressing subject of fostering participation of the rising generation in local religious freedom events, via Zoom

13-14 “Islamic Perspectives on Human Dignity to Sustain Rights, Prosperity, and Coexistence,” Doha International Roundtable Discussions, cosponsored by Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) and ICLRS, Lusail, Qatar

14 “Religious Engagement, Justice, and Sustainable Development: Contributions to the G20,” presentation to International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief (IPPFORB), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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