



## Institute for Religious Tolerance, Peace and Justice

"Religions are different roads converging upon the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the same goal?"

— *Mahatma Gandhi*

"Worthless is the religious devotion that causes people to be crushed against their will."

— *St Crispina, African Christian martyr,  
beheaded Dec. 5, 304 CE.*

"Religious Tolerance is the key to the survival of the human race."

— *L. Arik Greenberg, PhD*

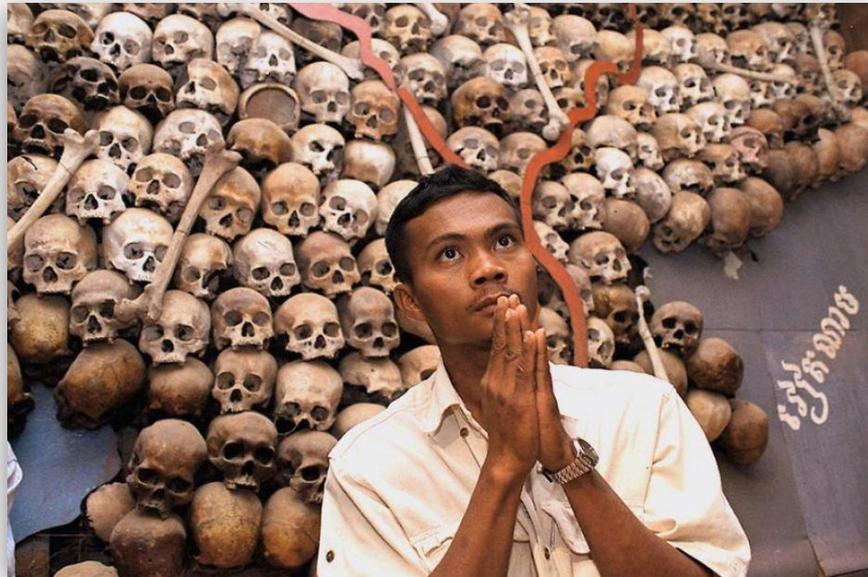
[InstituteforReligiousTolerance.org](http://InstituteforReligiousTolerance.org)

#IRTPJ @IRTPJ [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/IRTPJ)

**Our mission is to promote religious tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and education about religions of the world as a pathway to world peace.**



## Ignorance of others' religions can become an excuse for violence.



## We are leading a Call to Action.

Ignorance leads to hatred and intolerance. It is used as a justification for violence and warfare.

Almost every religion suffers from some type of intolerance somewhere in the world, and certain populations in the US are increasingly more vulnerable as well.

*Prejudice \* Repression \* Discrimination \* Homicide \* Mass Murder*

If we ignore the problem, the best case scenario is that there will continue to be pockets of religiously motivated violence all around the world, each fueling the other. In the worst case, the world will implode due to religiously fueled wars and conflicts. Either scenario is unacceptable.

If we address this problem head on, it will result in a decrease in violence, increased collaboration and understanding, and disparate religious systems working together with one another for common causes, to disarm common problems.

## **The effects of religious intolerance, distrust, and ignorance of other faiths and cultures occur on many levels.**

Undercurrent intolerance affects people in institutionalized ways, where individuals are discriminated against or made to feel unwelcome. There may be small pockets of violence that, while condemned by mainstream culture, are still allowed to persist.

We may see direct attacks on religious communities, such as synagogues and mosques.

And then there is the systematic genocide of minority religious cultures.



**It is up to us to educate people and sow the seeds of tolerance by breaking down barriers.**



**It's easy to hate nameless, faceless people. It is hard to hate people you have actually met face to face, shared a meal with, and talked with.**

It's not so easy for bigotry to hide in this globalized time. We strive to maximize awareness via the information superhighway by using social media, our website, the **ReligionMatters Show** webcasts, and blogs to spread positive messages, educational information, and promote upcoming events. Sometimes we'll utilize attention-grabbing stunts with a positive impact, and as such have produced and co-sponsored a major **Interfaith March** in Los Angeles, which has become an annual event. We share experiences and break bread together through our **Interfaith Ambassadors** program.

Through public lectures and talks open to everyone, through works of charity and compassion by our constituent members and organizations, we seek to demonstrate the humanity behind our religious traditions to those who had previously feared us and recoiled from us. We seek to make peace at a grass roots level, so that there will be nowhere for intolerance, hatred, and fear to hide. We partner with other interfaith professionals to find new ways to change minds and open hearts.

Like shadows illumined by the light of dawn, we seek to abolish these enemies gently but swiftly. We seek to replace them with love, understanding, and cooperation.

We seek to bring this message of universal coexistence to all those who might not have heard of it, or experienced its lovely tones.

*We cannot do it without you.*

# OUR PROGRAMS

**IRTPJ creates venues through which people will recognize each other's humanity.**



The Institute's **Interfaith Ambassador** program brings people of various faith traditions out into the community, visiting other houses of worship, and traveling to impoverished communities to do "good works", fostering an understanding of others' humanity.

Our **webcast**, the **ReligionMatters Show**, is a periodic presentation of interviews and documentation of fun, educational events.

We sponsor and pioneer **Interfaith Solidarity Marches** and other events, to galvanize and unify people of disparate ideologies and belief systems.

The **Our Muslim Neighbors Forum** seeks to deconstruct Islamophobia, featuring a panel of Muslim speakers presenting about their faith and candidly answering questions from the general public.

We sponsor **Panel Discussions** with scholars and leaders of different religious groups, making a point to include youth, the future peacemakers of the world.

We advocate for justice, **partnering** with worldwide NGOs on solutions to world problems that create obstacles in achieving peace.

# Interfaith Solidarity Marches

2016, 2017, 2018

#InterfaithMarchLA



In the Spring of 2016, 2017, and 2018, organized by a highly engaged and committed planning committee, enlisting the help of numerous interfaith and religious organizations, we successfully led interfaith marches in mid-Wilshire Los Angeles. The goal of this free program has been to promote unity between all people, calling on the support and encouragement of all faiths, and peace-loving advocates of justice. A program of highly respected and engaging speakers is included at each destination.

Several hundred marchers have joined us each year on our 1.1 mile march, which stopped at four houses of worship along the way for a unique prayer service at each one. Speakers have included Dr. Reza Aslan, Dep. Chief Dennis Kato of the LAPD, Daniel Tamm of the LA Mayor's office, Ron Galperin the LA City Controller, and many others.

Our sister march in the San Fernando Valley took place in the Fall of 2017.



PLEASE JOIN US ON THE THIRD ANNUAL

# INTERFAITH SOLIDARITY MARCH

STRENGTHENING DIVERSITY, PLURALITY, UNITY

SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2018, 2-6PM



#InterfaithMarchLA  
InstituteForReligiousTolerance.org  
<https://www.facebook.com/IRTPJ/>



To all people of every

## FAITH. PHILOSOPHY. CREED

As a symbol of our solidarity with our neighbors and colleagues, we invite you to march with us between several select houses of worship, representing the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as together we lead the way toward peace and unity among all people.

The theme of this march is that we reject all hatred and oppression in the name of religion, both at home and abroad:

And in light of the rise in politically motivated hate crimes, and the persistence of genocides, we support the most vulnerable of religious communities against Islamophobia, Anti-Semitism, and all forms of religious or ideological extremism, as we stand in support of every person's right to freedom of worship or belief, and the right to live peacefully.

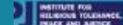
At exactly 1.1 miles, from start to finish, the march begins at Wilshire Boulevard Temple (3663 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles) Incorporates brief stops at St. Basil Roman Catholic Church, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, and arrives at The Islamic Center of Southern California (434 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles)

For more info, contact: [interfaithMarchLA@gmail.com](mailto:interfaithMarchLA@gmail.com) (323) 454-0557

ORGANIZED BY

THE INSTITUTE FOR RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE, PEACE AND JUSTICE, A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT. OUR PARTNERS INCLUDE MANY RELIGIOUS AND INTERFAITH GROUPS, INCLUDING WILSHIRE BLVD TEMPLE, ST. BASIL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ISLAMIC CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA, NEW GROUND: A MUSLIM-JEWISH PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE, MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMITTEE FOR A PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS, ACTIVE FAITH GROUP, AND STAR POWER OFFERING PEACE AND PROSPERITY, AMONG OTHERS.

GRAPHIC DESIGN BY DANIELLE DAGAMONT



CREATE THE TRAVELS OF OUR FATHER ABRAHAM, PEOPLE OF THE THREE GREAT RELIGIONS: JUDAISM AND ISLAM.



Please join us on the second

# Interfaith Solidarity

## 2017

Strengthening Diversity, Plurality, and Unity

SUNDAY | APRIL 2, 2017 | 1-4 P.M.



Beginning at

Ending at



For more info contact:

[INTERFAITHMARCHLA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:INTERFAITHMARCHLA@GMAIL.COM)

# IN THE PATH OF THE PROPHET ABRAHAM

AN INTERFAITH MARCH IN SOLIDARITY WITH OUR MUSLIM BROTHERS AND SISTERS

SUNDAY, MARCH 6th, 2016

1:00 PM TO 4:00 PM



FOR MORE INFO CONTACT: [ABRAHAMICMARCH@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ABRAHAMICMARCH@GMAIL.COM)



## Our Muslim Neighbors Forum



The Our Muslim Neighbors Forum is a series of forums where Muslims from different walks of life share basic information about their faith to a general audience, fielding questions by audience members, aiming to establish common ground. These forums are geared toward everyone, particularly those who might be skeptical about Islam, and groups which the interfaith community has historically been unable to successfully reach out to. These forums will provide answers to their questions in a respectful and non-confrontational manner, and will conclude with collaborative discussion on how all of us can proactively address the violence that affects our communities, including gang violence, racially and religiously motivated violence, and terrorism of all forms.

# The ReligionMatters Show

- **An innovative, Web-based talk show**
  - Educates about religion in the world
    - Promotes religious tolerance
- Increases understanding and appreciation of the role religion plays in people's lives and in the world
- Inspires and encourages people to devote themselves to a higher purpose; to deepen their faith in whatever their tradition



*"How can we get people to stop killing each other, particularly over religion? I thank you for that effort, and for thinking that it can be done. If you think it can be done, it probably can. I don't know how long it will take... look how screwed up we are... it's gonna take a while... Thank you for initiating this thing."*

--Legendary rock musician, Grace Slick, who was interviewed in 2012 on the ReligionMatters show

## Reflections from Catholic students at Loyola Marymount University, who have participated in site visits to Islamic houses of worship

*"Throughout my entire experience and reflection after, I realized the vast amount of information that I was unaware of and how misperceived Islam truly is. I am very glad that I was able to attend this service and grow closer with my long time Muslim friend who I was fortunate enough to attend the service with. Very proudly, I can now say that I am enlightened and have cultured myself to another religion and am eager to continue to do so with other religions."*

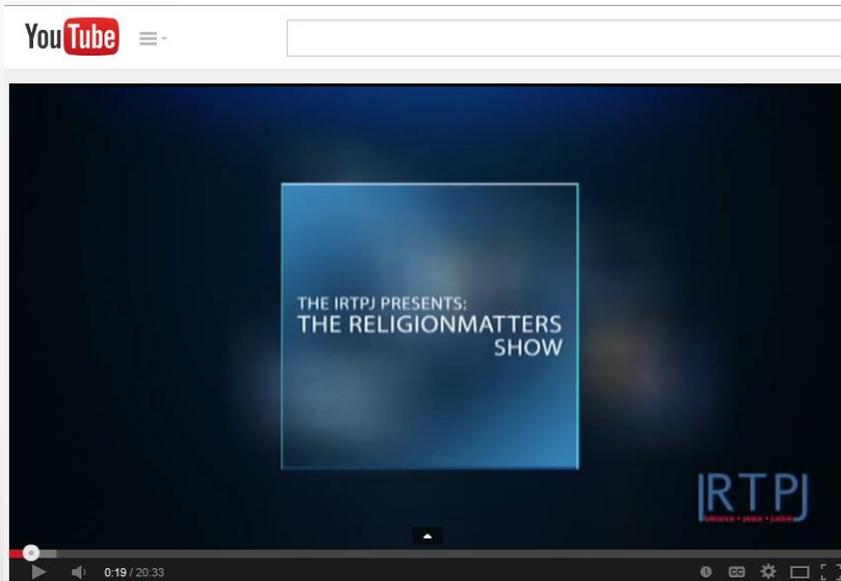
--Erica C.

*"This was one of the most culturally eye opening experiences I have had in my life. Please do not take this as an exaggeration as I am sincere in my comments and reflection. Unfortunate to say, my life has been limited in cultural and religious diversity. I let myself fall victim to the preconceived notions shaped by the media, and opinions of others around me. Till this point, reading or watching television about religion has been my only education and thus limited. Taking a trip to the mosque was not only informative about Islam, but has broadened my view and wish to limit my naivety."*

--Phil B. (who subsequently disarmed his  
roommate's hatred toward Muslims)



**By bringing the sentiments of religious tolerance and interfaith dialogue and collaboration — already known to those in academia — to the general lay public, together we can combat injustice and solidify peaceful coexistence as neighbors and ambassadors from our own religions to each other's.**



## Our Board

**Dr. L Arik Greenberg** (PhD, President) is a scholar of Christian Origins and Religions of Greco-Roman Antiquity and a consultant in the non-profit field. He is a passionate advocate of religious tolerance and of the ecumenical movement. The founding of the Institute for Religious Tolerance, Peace and Justice is the culmination of his vision, the realization of his dreams, and his life's work in the years to come.

**Dr. James A Sanders** (PhD) is an internationally recognized don of the Hebrew Bible and of the Dead Sea Scrolls. He lectures, teaches, and preaches at colleges, seminaries, churches, and pastors' schools (Protestant, Catholic and Jewish) around the country. Even after retirement from his illustrious career he continued to teach by invitation at Union Theological Seminary, Yale University Divinity School and the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

**Dr. Daniel Smith-Christopher** (PhD) is a scholar of Hebrew Bible and a leader in the field of Peace Studies. He is Professor of Theological Studies and Director of Peace Studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Though a Protestant, he is a Permanent Consultant to the Theological Commission of the Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

**Mr. Mohammed Akber Khan** is the founder and Executive Director of S.T.O.P.P., the Society to Offer Prosperity and Peace, and formerly the Director of Interfaith, Youth Initiatives and Outreach at the King Fahad Mosque in Culver City, California. Born in South Africa during the apartheid era, he is involved in economics reform, peace building, and poverty alleviation in Africa, and has 30 years of experience working in youth development, interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution in the US and beyond.

**Our Collaborators have** included Active Faith Group, CA Sikh Council, Claremont Lincoln University, The Guibord Center, Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple, Khalsa Care Foundation, Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Global Truth Center LA, Holy Nativity Episcopal Church, King Fahad Mosque, Islamic Center of Southern California, Muslim Christian Interfaith Families, Muslim Public Affairs Council, LAPD, LA Sheriff's Dept., SCCPWR, New Ground, St. Basil Catholic Church, St. James' in the City Episcopal Church, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Islamic Center of Reseda, Temple Akiba, Temple Judea, The Sikh Coalition, Temple Beth Hillel, Muslims for Progressive Values, Unitarian Universalists' Peace & Justice Team, [and many others](#). We continually seek partnerships with churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other religious organizations and centers of worship and religious expression, hoping to rally the forces of tolerance, peace and justice, to combat the unseen enemies – apathy, hatred, misunderstanding, and fear.

## **We vow to do the impossible by truly making a difference globally.**

Over the next several years, by partnering with other established as well as growing organizations, we will target the communities that need the most assistance and education, hoping to broker peace and friendly relations between communities, nationally and internationally.

Our long-term strategies include producing an annual festival to promote intercultural and interfaith sharing, regularly produced and released educational webcasts, conferences and panel discussions, as well as goodwill and peace tours and visits to a variety of different countries, including war-torn zones touched by religious conflict. Promoting our founder Dr. Greenberg as a “mouthpeace” for justice and a Religious Entrepreneur, he will give talks and moderate discussions. His talent for asking the right questions helps to present a framework so congregational leaders can effectively communicate to and educate their constituents.

## **How will your donation make a difference today?**

We have been utilizing the generous and goodwill efforts of a variety of passionate volunteers, including our founders and board members. With increased funding, we will be able to hire people to do the work of the organization in a regularized and timely manner, increase the reach of our programs, and be able to carry our discussions to other countries and other shores where they would not otherwise be carried.

## **What are the benefits to donors and volunteers?**

- Regular invitations to and inclusions in discussions and events
- The opportunity to meet people of varied and diverse cultural and religious traditions
- Higher levels of donorship will be rewarded with introductions to major religious thinkers, scholars, and leaders, whenever possible
- The knowledge that your funding and efforts are contributing to disarming hateful and violent interactions between disparate religions at home and abroad

***Thank you for being an important part of the solution.***