



ICCI Education Center  
43 Emek Refaim, Suite 22-23 POB 8771, Jerusalem 91086  
Tel: 972-2-561-1899, Fax: 972-2-563 4148  
E-mail: [communications@icci.org.il](mailto:communications@icci.org.il), Web: [www.icci.org.il](http://www.icci.org.il)

## **ICCI INSIGHTS & INFORMATION**

**May 11, 2010 | 27 Iyyar, 5770 | 27 Jumada Al-'Awwal, 1431**

Dear Friends,

As we approach the Jewish festival of Shavuot—which is celebrated in Israel and throughout the Jewish world next week—we are mindful that the Exodus from Egypt of the Jewish People in Biblical days would not have been complete without the receiving of the Torah at Sinai, in the desert, on the way to the Promised Land. We did not gain our freedom for its own sake, but in order to be a “holy people” guided by the values of the Torah.



A few weeks ago, I posted a “dvar torah”—a teaching based up our traditional Torah text—that emphasized how Torah values can be adapted to contemporary Israel. In that posting, I stressed that the obligation to love your neighbor as yourself applies also to “the stranger who lives in our midst,” i.e. the Arab minority in Israel. Please see the blog posting for the full “dvar torah”: <http://icciblog.wordpress.com/2010/03/25/pour-out-thy-wrath-at-the-pesach-seder-or-pour-out-thy-love>.

At this season of the year, as we complete the annual metaphorical journey from Egypt to Sinai and then on to the Promised Land, let us remember that we need to apply the best of the Jewish values inherent in our tradition into making Israel a truly Jewish and democratic society.

May I take this opportunity to wish our Jewish friends in Israel and around the world a Chag Sameach for Shavuot and our Christian friends a Happy Holiday for Pentecost.

L'shalom, in peace, salaam,

  
Dr. Ron Kronish, rabbi  
Director, ICCI

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **Annual General Meeting Announcement**

The 19<sup>th</sup> **Annual General Meeting** of the ICCI will take place on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, at the courtyard of the **Swedish Theological Institute** in Jerusalem (58 HaNevi'im St.), with the reception at 16:00, the program at 17:00 and the business meeting at 18:15-19:15. The speaker at the program portion of the meeting will be **Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Naomi Tzur** (right).



### ICCI Library Lecture: Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue, May 12, 2010



**Prof. Harold Kasimow** (left), the George Drake Professor of Religious Studies Emeritus at **Grinnell College** in Iowa, will give a library lecture on the topic of "**Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue**". Prof. Kasimow studied with Rabbi Heschel at the **Jewish Theological Seminary** in New York and has published numerous articles about Heschel and interreligious dialogue. He is co-editor, with Byron Sherwin, of "No Religion Is an Island: Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue". The Lecture will take place on May 12 at 17:00 at ICCI's Jerusalem Headquarters. **To register, please contact us at [communications@icci.org.il](mailto:communications@icci.org.il).**

### ICCI/JCJCR/Kahillat Yedidya: Study tour of the Old City, May 14, 2010

A second study tour of the Armenian and Christian Quarters of Jerusalem's Old City is planned for May 14, 2010, along similar lines to the highly successful April 30th "**Get to Know Your Christian Neighbors and the Problems They Face**". The program, like the previous tour and a recent study evening on a related topic, is jointly sponsored by **ICCI**, the **Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations (JCJCR)** and **Kehillat Yedidya**. The tour will be led by **Daniel Rossing**, Director of **JCJCR**, and the program is set to include visits to a variety of Christian institutions and meetings with Church leaders, notably the **Archbishop Aristarchos**, the **Chief Secretary of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem**, and **Archbishop Aris Shirvanian of the Armenian Patriarchate**. We thank Dr. Shalva Weil for the above picture of the view from the roof of the **Holy Sepulchre**, taken during the April 30<sup>th</sup> study tour.



### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### ICCI/JCJCR/Kahillat Yedidya: Study tour of the Old City, April 2010



On Friday April 30, a group of thirty Jewish Israelis took part in a unique study tour entitled, "Get to Know Your Christian Neighbors and the Problems they Face." The tour was led by **Daniel Rossing**, director of the **Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations (JCJCR)** and the former director of the **Department for Christian Relations** of the **Jerusalem Municipality**. Participants toured the Christian and Armenian Quarters of Jerusalem, met with **Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa OFM** (left, photographed by Evan Pelz), the **Franciscan Custos of the Holy Land** and **Archbishop Aris Shirvanian of the Armenian Patriarchate**, and visited the **St. Vincent de Paul Monastery**, near Mamilla. The tour, which was a collaboration between ICCI, JCJCR and Kehillat Yedidya, was a follow up to the highly successful study evening recently held at **Kehillat Yedidya** on the topic "Why Do Some Jews Spit on Christians?" More information about the tour can be found in the following

blog post by ICCI intern Jennie Grayson:

<http://icciblog.wordpress.com/2010/05/06/getting-to-know-our-christian-neighbors-a-different-part-of-jerusalem>. Due to the great demand, a similar tour, which is already oversubscribed, will take place on May 14.

### Galilee Religious Leaders Forum: Tolerance Day at Shfaram High School



On April 22, 2010, more than 30 religious leaders participated in an innovative day of interreligious coexistence education at the **Shfaram Comprehensive High School A**, led by veteran founder and principal, **Dr. Kamal Shofaniye**, a charismatic and compassionate educator. Rabbis, Imams, Priests and Druze religious leaders spoke together in classrooms of the upper division of the high school as well as participating in a school-wide assembly in the presence of

the mayor of the town.

ICCI expresses gratitude to Mr. **Yakov Salame** and the staff of the **Division of Religious Communities of Israel's Ministry of Interior** for their partnership with us in this program and to Dr. Shofaniye, for hosting the event and sending us these pictures.



### ONGOING PROGRAMS

#### Face to Face / Faith to Faith

The **Face to Face / Faith to Faith** group, made up of 13 Palestinian and Jewish high school students from Jerusalem and Abu Ghosh village, has been very active in recent months. At the beginning of March, the group participated in a workshop led by **Amy Kronish**, a film historian and blogger, about the way that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is depicted in Israeli film. The participants watched and discussed short clips of modern films about the conflict. After Passover, they met with **Ophir Yarden**, the director of ICCI's **Center for Interreligious Encounter with Israel**, for a presentation about the history of conflict in Jerusalem, from biblical times to the present. The students learned that, in such a complicated place, "facts" do not always lead to clear resolutions, as so many different groups can claim ownership over this land. During the week of Israeli Independence Day, the students used ICCI's workbook, "I am From There", to learn about Jewish and Arab experiences during the 1948 war. In the beginning of May, three participants from Beit Hanina, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem, led the group on a tour of their neighborhood. Participants visited the **Beit Hanina Community Center**, the Security Fence/Separation Wall, and a Face to Face member's home.

This program is a partnership between ICCI and the **Auburn Theological Seminary** in New York.

#### The Jerusalem Interreligious Young Adult Forum (JIYAF)

During the month of April, the 12 **JIYAF** participants took part in discussion programs about national holidays and commemorations. They devoted one meeting to Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, and talked about the relationship between the Holocaust, the Jewish people, and the State of Israel. They spent another meeting discussing "Al Nakba" or "The Catastrophe," and its significance to the Palestinian people. The participants also continued preparations for the joint Israeli-Palestinian cultural evening they are planning, to take place at the end of May, in Jerusalem.

This program is currently funded by grants from the **World Conference of Religions for Peace**, the **Pontifical Mission** and the **Embassies of the U.S.A. and the Netherlands**.

### **Between Memory and Reconciliation**

The **Between Memory and Reconciliation** program, funded by the **Rissho Kosei-Kai** organization of Japan, brings together Jewish and Palestinian young adults—all Israeli citizens—for dialogue and action, including seminars with Japanese Buddhist students, in Israel and in Japan.



On April 16-17, 2010, the program participants went on a two-day weekend seminar in the North of Israel. The first part of the seminar, which involved visits to the destroyed Arab-Christian village of **Biram** and to **Acre**, was planned, organized and coordinated by three of the participants: Tareq, Sabra and Amir. First on the program was a tour of Biram village with Amir's grandfather, who was born and raised in the village and told the group about his personal story, his memories of his childhood in the village before he and his family fled from it in 1948, and the history of Biram

since then. Later that day, the group arrived at Acre, where they met **Yisrael Ben Ezra**, an **advisor to the Mayor of Acre**, who talked to them about the municipal and political realities of coexistence in a mixed city, including issues related to the Arab tenants in Acre whose houses were burned in the riots there a year and a half ago. The group also met with **Rim Hazan**, a political activist who's a resident of Acre, who talked about life in Acre from the Arab citizen's perspective (including the struggle of the residents of the Old City of Acre to remain in their protected lease apartments, despite plans for real estate development by entrepreneurs supported by the municipality). Following that meeting, the group watched the film **October's Cry**, a political documentary about the October 2000 Arab-Israeli riots, and conversed with the mother of one of the Arab-Israeli casualties. The second part of the seminar was organized by the program coordinators, **Avigail Moshe** and **Wasim Biroumi**, and took place in the Christian village of **Nes Ammim** in the Northern Galilee. During that time, the group participated in several workshops and worked on planning their joint project.

### **ICCI IN THE MEDIA**

The print/online magazine **Jewish Currents** (<http://jewishcurrents.org>) recently published an article entitled "Islam in Israel and Palestine" in its Spring 2010 issue. Rabbi Amy Klein writes about three conversations she held with **Dr. Mustafa Abu Sway**, Director of the **Islamic Research Center at al-Quds University**, **Ibrahim Amin**, Plant Manager of **Congregation Mevakshei Derekh** in Jerusalem, and **Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish**, Director of ICCI.

[http://icci.org.il/downloads/JewishCurrents-Islam\\_in\\_Israel.pdf](http://icci.org.il/downloads/JewishCurrents-Islam_in_Israel.pdf)

Additionally, Israeli newspaper **HaAretz** notified the public of ICCI/JCJCR/Kehillat Yedidya's April tour of the Old City, on April 23, 2010, featuring a brief interview with Dr. Kronish by Raphael Ahren.

### **VISITING GROUPS & FRIENDS**

On Saturday evening, May 8, 2010, ICCI Director Dr. Ron Kronish met with **Yachad** scholar, **Dr. Anna Lavelle**, of Australia, who was in Israel on a special visit organized by **Peter Adler**. On the following week, Dr. Kronish met **Nicky Wynne** of London, who was in Jerusalem for development work for the **St. John of**

**Jerusalem Eye Hospital** and visited the hospital in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem to discuss interreligious cooperation.

Additionally, on May 9, 2010, Dr. Kronish spoke to a group from the **Canadian Mennonite University**, led by the University's Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, **Dr. Gordon Matties**.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **ICCI blog updates**

The following is a list of recent updates to the ICCI blog (<http://icciblog.wordpress.com>):

- [Getting to Know Our Christian Neighbors: A Different Part of Jerusalem](#) by Jennie Grayson
- [Central Synagogue women from New York meet with Face to Face/Faith to Faith grads from Jerusalem](#) by Ron Kronish

We welcome your comments to postings on our blog, now and in the future.

**Support ICCI via PEF/NIF:**  
**<http://icci.org.il/support.html>**



**or online, via JGOODERS:**  
**ICCI's L'Chaim Campaign**  
**<http://www.jgooders.com//ProjectCard.asp?ProjectID=613>**