



ICCJ Press Release on the Film 'The Passion of the Christ'

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The Executive Board of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) is deeply concerned about the impact on Christian-Jewish relations of Mel Gibson's film, 'The Passion of the Christ'. The movie, set for release early in the year, is causing conflict and controversy because of its portrait of Jesus's fellow Jews as well as the degree of its violence. Reports from Jewish and some Christian leaders who have seen preliminary screenings or have read the shooting script indicate that the production perpetuates stereotypes of Jews that have inflamed antisemitic attitudes and actions across the centuries.

We sincerely hope that the occasion of this Hollywood release will not damage the positive Christian-Jewish dialogue that has developed across the last 60 years and the good relations derived therefrom.

Viewers need to be aware that the film does not reflect the current theological and historical perspective of Jews and Judaism held by most Christian bodies, Roman Catholic and Protestant.

The ICCJ represents Jewish-Christian dialogue organisations in 32 countries. Our member groups have played significant roles in defining and correcting the negative impact upon Jews of various passion plays in several cultures.

English language viewers of the 'Passion of the Christ' may wish to consult 'Facts, Faith, and Film-Making: Jesus' Passion and Its Portrayal' prepared by the Christian Scholars Group in the United States. This document can be found online at [?id=2169](#).