



ICCJ member organisations gather in Warsaw

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24 July 2025 - ICCJ delegates from 23 countries came together in Warsaw to learn from each other in Jewish-Christian dialogue and to reaffirm their vision of global interreligious harmony.

Through a programme that balanced academic insight with practical engagement and cultural immersion, participants shared the challenges they face and explored new strategies to enhance their interfaith work, while honouring the complexity of the histories that shape it.

Sion sister and Vice President of the ICCJ (International Council of Christians and Jews) Kasia Kowalska organised the event with the Polish CCJ. She welcomed the opportunity to share her homeland's culture and history with representatives from ICCJ member organisations in a gathering characterised by attentive exchange and a communion of hearts.

A trailblazer in dialogue

The event opened with the presentation of the 2025 Seelisberg Prize to Professor Dr. Barbara U. Meyer of Tel Aviv University. Her keynote lecture, "Shabbat and Sunday – from disinheritance to recognition", offered rich theological and historical reflections on the relationship between Jewish and Christian observance and how these traditions have evolved over time.

Learning through practice

Participants had the opportunity to learn from one another through a series of workshops. Sr Kasia and Ben Kamine led a session on Scriptural Reasoning, a practice in which people from different religious backgrounds reflect together on sacred texts, to foster understanding and relationship without seeking agreement on theological issues. Some workshops focused on the situation in Israel and Palestine.

Sion associate Mark Walsh co-facilitated a session with Emmanuel Nathan (Australian Catholic University) on the deep listening approach that was central to the "Heads, Hearts and Hands" interfaith gathering in Melbourne earlier this year. They explored the method and the possibilities it offers for Jewish-Christian dialogue.

"Creating spaces where people can listen with open minds and open hearts, recognising the importance of each person's story, can open us to the possibility of change," explained Mark.

Tracing memory, honouring lives

The gathering was hosted in both Christian and Jewish venues across Warsaw, reflecting the city's interfaith landscape and the ICCJ's ecumenical and interreligious commitment.

As part of the cultural programme, participants visited museums, churches, synagogues and Jewish and Christian cemeteries. The group traced the remnants of the Warsaw Ghetto and other Holocaust-related sites, encountering the enduring memory of Poland's Jewish community.

Sr Cristiane dos Santos, NDS, from Brazil, commented: “Visiting the Polish History Museum and the Warsaw Ghetto brought me greater awareness of the history of Polish Jews during the Shoah: how much irrationality and sadness was caused by the architects of destruction.”

The strength of community in challenging times

Delegates returned home with new knowledge about how different faith communities grapple with history, and with a revived sense of purpose in their future work in interfaith dialogue.

“Grounding ourselves in community is a positive response to challenging times,” wrote ICCJ President Rabbi David Sandmel on the ICCJ website.

The ICCJ has composed a declaration of recommitment to the work of dialogue, including specific practices to enhance it. Individuals, organisations and institutions that cherish interreligious amity are invited to read and endorse the declaration on the [ICCJ website](#).

The next ICCJ conference will take place in Hanover, Germany, from 12 to 16 July, 2026.

Source: [Notre Dame de Sion](#).