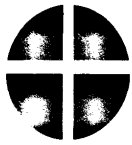


UNITED STATES  
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# NEWS

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## CHALLENGE OF BEING RELIGIOUS IS THEME FOR CHRISTIAN-JEWISH WORKSHOP

WASHINGTON--"Seeking God: The Challenge of Being Religious in America" is the theme for the 15th National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations.

The workshop will be held October 27-30 at the Stamford Sheraton Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut. More than 1,500 participants will include Christian and Jewish laity, teachers, priests, scholars, seminarians, students, pastors and rabbis.

"We are planning a conference in which Christians and Jews can meet, exchange ideas, discuss theology, study and worship together," said workshop executive director Deborah Goldberg. "Our goal is to create a celebration of both our diversity and our unity in an atmosphere that will deepen understanding through interfaith dialogue, enrich and broaden religious knowledge, and translate into practical programs for interfaith actions in our homes, churches and synagogues."

The conference will feature plenary sessions as well as individual workshops. Topics under discussion include ways to expand interfaith dialogue between Christians and Jews; models of interfaith programs; anti-Semitism and extremism; common interfaith issues; questions in education; historical research and archeological developments; women; ethical concerns; public policy; religion in the media; the Holocaust; and the search for God.

The four-day workshop will begin Sunday evening, October 27, with an address by Karen Armstrong, historian and author of the book, "The History of God."

more....

Page - Two

A plenary session entitled "Authenticity Without Demonization" will be presented by Dr. Anthony Saldarini of Boston College, Rabbi Neil Gillman of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Dr. Paul Van Buren of Temple University, and Dr. Mary C. Boys of Union Theological Seminary. The presenters will discuss ways to help Christians grow in understanding of the New Testament as regards its presentation of Jews and Judaism, as well as ways to help Jews broaden their acceptance of a Judaism which affirms that Christians are also the children of Abraham.

"The Search for Religious Identity" will be the subject of a plenary session conducted by Commonweal editor Margaret O'Brien Steinfels and Dr. Julius Lester, professor of African-American and Judaic Studies at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Rabbi Michael Cook of Hebrew Union College and Bishop Krister Stendahl, Bishop-Emeritus of Stockholm and Professor-Emeritus of Divinity, Harvard University, will discuss biblical texts of crucial importance to the relationship between Christians and Jews.

Rabbi David Saperstein of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and Reverend Cecil Murray of the 9,000 member First African Methodist Episcopal Church of Los Angeles will speak on "The Impact of Religion on Society" in another plenary session.

The final plenary session will be presented by Dr. Stephen Carter, professor of law at Yale University and author of "The Culture of Disbelief."

Other religious leaders and scholars who will present workshops include Rabbi Leon Klenicki of the Anti-Defamation League; Father Michael McGarry of the University of California; Rabbi A. James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee; Dr. Joan Campbell, Executive Director of the National Council of Churches; Dr. Nehama Aschkenasy of the University of Connecticut; and Rabbis Jack Bemporad and Joseph Ehrenkranz of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut.

Dr. Eugene Fisher, who chairs the national planning committee for the workshop and is Director of the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said "The national workshop has both reflected the cutting edge of the relationship between Christians and Jews and moved forward its agenda. Many, perhaps most, of the leading

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Page - Three

figures of Jewish-Christian dialogue, nationally and internationally, have addressed the workshop in its plenary or summer sessions."

One of the reasons for the success of the workshops, Dr. Fisher added, has been the ability to attract not only professionals in the field but also interested beginners from the local community. He also noted that local host communities participate equally with the national sponsoring and cooperating agencies in developing the program and the list of speakers.

The first National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations was held in November, 1973, in a retreat center outside Dayton. Subsequent workshops were held in Memphis (1975), Detroit (1977), Los Angeles (1978), Dallas (1980), Milwaukee (1981), Boston (1983), St. Louis (1984), Baltimore (1986), Minneapolis (1987), Charleston (1989), Chicago (1990), Pittsburgh (1992) and Tulsa (1994). Sponsorship has been enlarged to include Protestant and Orthodox Christians through the National Council of Churches and major Jewish agencies such as the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League, as well as both the Reform and Conservative branches of Judaism.

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