



## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS (ICCJ)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE – BRATISLAVA 2020

BILINGUAL ENGLISH - SLOVAKIAN

June 28 – July 1, 2020

### *Stories We Live By: Relating to the Self and Other*

IN COOPERATION WITH

**Association of Christians and Jews in Slovakia**

### **CALL FOR WORKSHOPS**

In addition to plenary sessions, keynote papers, and visits to local sites, the ICCJ also puts a great emphasis on the interactive workshops that occur during its annual conferences.

The ICCJ invites proposals for workshops touching on the topics of and issues related to the annual conference theme (see below). Additionally, proposals for workshops on the current state of Jewish-Christian, and Jewish-Christian-Muslim, dialogue on the international or local scenes are also invited.

Proposals of no more than 250 words are due by January 31, 2020 and are to be sent to: Petra Grünewald-Stangl ([gruenewald-stangl@iccj.org](mailto:gruenewald-stangl@iccj.org)). Applicants will be notified of the status of their proposals by March 2, 2020.

#### **Guidelines for preparing workshop proposals:**

1. Workshops are expected to be interactive, involving the participants as much as possible; they are not meant to be lectures or academic papers delivered to passive audiences. They can be panel presentations, in which case having Jews and Christians (and Muslims) as discussants is preferred.
2. Workshops are to be conducted in the languages of the conference (i.e., English and/or Slovak).
3. Workshop presenters are expected to respect the given time frame (90 minutes).
4. If relevant and/or possible, workshop presenters are encouraged to provide handouts to participants.
5. Workshop presenters are kindly asked to cover their expenses related to the conference as no bursaries are available. Thank you for your understanding.

There is a limited number of workshop slots available. The conference program committee will select from the proposals it receives on the basis of their relevance to the conference theme and/or the significance of the topics proposed. Proposals on related topics may be grouped together.

## CONFERENCE THEME

European societies today are in deep search for answers and understanding related to existential and ethical challenges. Different traditions meet, and occasionally clash. This is particularly visible in contemporary Europe due to increased movement of people across borders. It can be seen in the tensions between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, especially triggered by the recent arrivals to Europe. To foster better communication and provide a basis for common understanding and tolerance, we aim to offer a platform for wide-ranging discussion and Jewish and Christian (and Muslim) voices to contribute to the contemporary quest for responses to existential, social, and ethical issues.

Human life can be rendered as a story. Story represents a means that helps construct human identity. Each one of us, both individually and communally, has their own particular story. In many fields, in both academic and more practice-oriented contexts, story has proven to be a helpful tool to reflect on various areas of human existence. It is a teaching tool with a powerful explanatory potential. But story's primary strength lies in its structural resemblance with human life. Such reflection, however, should not end up with reinforcing what can become just another cliché.

Rather, the narrative approach to human existence ought to lead us to asking serious questions about the nature of being human:

- How does "my" own story relate to the stories of other members of my social/religious/ethnic/cultural group?
- In what ways do the founding story/stories of a certain community enable or disable relationships between that community and others who do not share the same story?
- How does one's transformed self-understanding change the way one tells and relates to the other's story?
- How can we avoid lethal stories and, instead, nurture life-affirming ones?
- What positive role(s) can stories play in conflict resolution and the building of interreligious and intercultural relations?

The 2020 ICCJ conference will be devoted to engaging such questions.