

RELIGIOUS CO-EXISTENCE:

EMBODIED INTERACTIONS IN SACRED SPACES AND FAITH PRACTICES

Exhibition – International Symposium – Publication

January / February 2025

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

Newcastle University

School of Architecture
Planning & Landscape



Event Overview

The International Symposium “Religious Coexistence: Embodied Interactions in Sacred Spaces and Faith Practices” was held at the School of Architecture Building of Newcastle University from 13 to 15 January, 2025. This three-day event explored the dynamics of coexistence among diverse communities and religious groups within shared sacred spaces. The exhibition stayed on campus until mid February.

Religions for Peace UK collaborated with Newcastle University to bring this symposium featuring the "Shared Sacred Sites" exhibition, a traveling interactive exhibit that has been showcased globally.

Opening remarks

Prof Chris Day, Vice-Chancellor and President, Newcastle University



Good afternoon everyone, and a very warm welcome to Newcastle University for this International Symposium on Religious Co-Existence.

Many of you I know have travelled a distance to be here, so on behalf of all my colleagues, welcome to Newcastle too. I hope you might have time to explore our city and region, where you can be assured of a welcome much warmer than our January weather!
As Vice-Chancellor, as you might expect, I'm regularly invited to open academic conferences and symposia in the University.

It is undoubtedly one of the most pleasurable aspects of my role, and I never fail to be impressed by the quality of the programmes and the amount of thought, planning and organisation that goes into hosting these important events.
They represent an invaluable opportunity for us to learn from one another, to share our knowledge and our passion for our individual areas of specialism.

This Symposium is certainly no exception. I am extremely proud of colleagues in our School of Architecture,Planning and Landscape and our Chaplaincy, particularly Dr Christos Kakalis and Dr George Tsourous, working in collaboration with Religions for Peace UK, whose endeavour has brought not only this Symposium, but also the accompanying Shared Sacred Sites exhibition to Newcastle.

This is the first time that this important touring exhibition has been hosted in the UK, after 10 years of being exhibited and developed around the world – starting in Marseilles in 2015 via Thessaloniki, Paris, New York and Marrakesh to Istanbul and most recently, Ankara in 2021.

As we are both a University and a City of Sanctuary, it is fitting that Newcastle is the first UK venue for the exhibition, and we are very honoured to be hosting it here.
Over the course of these three days, I know you will be exploring in greater detail the sharing of sacred spaces and faith practices and what we can learn from experiences all around the world.

In a world beset by conflict, it is more important than ever that we take time to consider what unites us, instead of what divides us.
We're also very proud that our University is a diverse and dynamic community of different nationalities, faiths and religions who enrich the life of our campus and our city.
As such, equality, diversity and inclusion are enshrined in our core values, and it is incumbent on all of us to speak and act accordingly.
One session in Wednesday morning's programme particularly caught my eye, because it's title is From Tolerance to Co-existence.

There is, I think, an important lesson for everyone here of the value of open-mindedness, mutual understanding and respect, of being interested in, and open to, one another's beliefs and cultures.

I have been really pleased to learn that, alongside the academic contributions and the exhibition, our third year students will be presenting posters on the topic, and as well that the exhibition includes and an installation created by St Cyprian's Primary School in London, as part of their curriculum for Religious Education.

These events also mark the beginning of a network project through which Christos, George and colleagues will be working in collaboration with local communities to further develop and enhance the ethics of understanding religious co-existence in our region.

This is music to my ears, because I truly believe that it is only by engaging with our community and working in partnership that we can bring about positive change to society.
So, I will look forward to hearing about the outcomes of the symposium and progress with the network project in due course, and certainly to seeing more of this wonderful exhibition.
Congratulations once again to Christos, George and everyone involved in this excellent endeavour. I wish you a successful and productive symposium. For me it is the very essence of what we mean when we say that we are from Newcastle, but we are for the World.

Thank you.

A CONTINUOUS EFFORT...

Religions for Peace UK is most honoured to collaborate with Newcastle University in bringing the Religious Coexistence Symposium and Shared Sacred Sites Exhibition. This project reflects our core mission to foster dialogue, deepen understanding, and build bridges across communities through shared values and common goals.

We are especially proud to work alongside academic institutions and young people, whose insights and energy drive our efforts to create new avenues to lasting change and imbue fresh energies into facing stubborn stigma and deep-seated prejudices. By increasing religious literacy, connecting grassroots and academic perspectives, and encouraging collaboration through our PeaceBuilder Network, we aim to advance both conversation and action on civil and religious harmony.

This is a meaningful journey for a wide engagement of academia, community and education institutions. When we lift our spirits to embrace humanity, the wonder and awe of the transcendent shine through the diverse cultures and faith traditions showcased in this event. These ideas will continue to resonate as part of a growing movement for peace and understanding.

By nurturing open minds, we cultivate compassion and truly recognise the depth of infinite grace. It is our willingness to share the sacred within our hearts and fulfilment of our obligations to enlightenment that enriches us and sustains our hope for a harmonious world.



Cinde Lee
Chair, Religions for Peace UK

Religions for Peace UK

Religions for Peace UK is part of a global movement with over 90 chapters across six regions. Our worldwide movement is committed to promoting effective multi-religious responses to the world's pressing issues.

The global Religions for Peace movement strives to achieve objectives by aligning our efforts with shared global priorities based on advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. We hold the belief that peace is not a distant ideal but a reality we cultivate with every step we take.

Religions for Peace UK is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in the Foundation model. Our modus operandi follows our aim to reach people of faith and of none to bring inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-generational interactions in our society.

Our PeaceBuilders Network is a directory aiming to improve the visibility of change-makers and peace-builders. As individuals or as organisations, users can upload their individual or organisation name, contact details, description or synopsis of their work and areas of interest. Entries are submitted and managed by users and information can be kept updated by logging on with a password.



In a time when religions are often seen as the cause for atrocities and strife, when people of conviction and faith work together, we can bring on undeniable change. By aligning shared aspirations and goals across communities, we foster lasting, impactful change.


St Luke's Church, London


SRMD Spiritual Centre (Jain), Bushey


Et'hem Bey Mosque, Tirana


Central Mosque, Cambridge


Baktashi Teqe, Tirana


Cova de Sant Ignasi, Manresa


Resurrection of Christ Cathedral,Tirana


Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha, Birmingham


Mesquita Al Fath, Manresa


Buddhist Centre, London

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R*f*PUK SHARING SACRED SITES

Religions or Peace has been engaged with interfaith work amongst religious and non-religious people in the UK from the 1970s. We are an independent constituent of the global Religions for Peace Movement, one of over 90 national chapters worldwide.

Together with colleagues from all six regions, we work with a set of global priorities derived from periodical world assemblies, which in recent years have been planned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as we consider them to be practicable, measurable and elemental in bringing a safer and fairer world.

We recognise that religions are often seen as the cause of tensions and conflicts, particularly when societal frustrations are projected onto differences in religious beliefs.

However, Religions for Peace founders believed that faith and belief communities can find common ground to work together to bring positive impact to the world.

We believe that peace is a path and not a goal, and religious coexistence is one of the first steps on this choice path of understanding and compassion to embrace the richness of creation and spirituality, whether it is organised religions or personal and organisational conviction.

Religions for Peace UK invites all to make a choice to broaden our scope, enquire the unknown, respect the different and celebrate the other. This is a universal call to action that promotes harmony and understanding, essential in today's interconnected yet often divided world.


Ring of Peace, Lake Constance


Sagrada Familia, Barcelona


Basilica, Monserrat


St Dionysius Cathedral,Athens


Orthodox Shen Vlash Monastery, Durres


Notre Dame Cathedral, Lindau

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Our Work

Religions for Peace is a global movement, with over 90 chapters worldwide in 6 regions.





The World Conferences are convened amongst religious leaders to discuss hoe faith faith communities can contribute towards a peaceful society. National chapters will translate and develop national response, and put the directives into regional and local action.



Through our UK Women of Faith Network and UK Interfaith Youth Network, we engage with and support faith communities across the UK.



We bring shared values of peace into action, by calling to attention important issues towards peace, providing opportunities for dialogue and by forming partnerships.



RfPUK acknowledges the UN Sustainable Development Goals to be elements of peace that we can use as guidelines to bring grassroots participation.



Our UK programmes follow global priorities as well as delivering tangible and measurable impact to communities of faith and belief.

The Concept



Dr Christos Kakalis



Dr George Tsourous

The Religious Co-existence Symposium was conceived as a response to ongoing interest in how sacred spaces - contested, shared, or co-inhabited - serve as sites of encounter between religious communities. Drawing together academic research, lived interfaith experience, creative expression, and school outreach, the event foregrounded coexistence as a relational, spatial, and sociocultural practice.

Christos, with his architectural expertise and research into the interconnection between religious architecture, embodied awareness, and human behaviour, brought a deep insight to how space influences religious coexistence. Wearing his anthropological hat, and drawing on past work exploring religious coexistence and shared sacred sites, George complemented this perspective by focusing on the lived and relational dimensions of shared sacred spaces.

It was this convergence of backgrounds that led us to join forces and design an initiative that would integrate spatial, sensory, and social approaches to religious coexistence.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Religious place-making is about coexistence through faith practices, emerging as a "corporeal reality" when a profound "space between" opens between different individuals seeking an embodied interaction with the divine. This conference seeks to explore religious landscapes from a vibrant, experiential perspective, acknowledging these spaces as places of co-existence where people from varied backgrounds can find common ground through faith. Sacred places, particularly those shared by diverse communities, can foster various forms of interaction. These can range from peaceful coexistence, with the potential for dialogue between different individuals and groups, to arenas of conflict, where resilience may be tested, depending on geopolitical and historical contexts.

Personal and collective subjectivities, group membership, and affiliation shape how individuals interact with their environments and encounter the divine. Challenging the clear dichotomy between the 'sacred' and the 'profane', the conference suggests a dialogical relationship between the two, as different (built and natural) things can be active receptacles of the sacred while remaining part of their profane surroundings. This perspective not only dissolves the boundaries between 'sacred' and 'profane' but also welcomes the stranger into religious locales, transforming these spaces into forums for dynamic interaction and potential encounters with the divine. By venturing beyond the traditional dichotomies and embracing a multidisciplinary approach, this conference aims to shed light on the nuanced ways in which sacred spaces serve as arenas/sites of faith, dialogue, and transformation.

The Symposium invites scholars to respond (but not limit themselves) to questions such as:

- How is religious identity expressed through material cultures of embodied topography?
- How can we design around the concept of interfaith dialogue?
- What is the role of mobility (relocating, dislocating, diaspora) in faith identity formation
- How are politics of religious identity expressed in and projected onto space?
- What is the role of modern technology in the experience and design of shared sacred spaces?
- How are issues of religious co-existence in space and time tackled by current pedagogies?

The Symposium aims to open an interdisciplinary dialogue on the examined theme,
to be further developed by events with education sector as well as the community.



Symposium Programme

13 January 2025	
Session 1: 1700 - 1930	*Interfaith Dialogue and Shared Sacred Spaces*
	Picturing Inter-religiosity and Shared Sacred Sites Keynote: **Manoël Pénicaud**
	Churches of Istanbul: Interreligious and Interdenominational Stories in Shared Spaces **Vanessa R. de Obaldía**
	Greek-Orthodox and Muslim Shared Sacredness in Late Ottoman Cappadocia **Aude Aylin de Tapia**
	Studying Material Traces and Local Legends of Shared Veneration Practices in Antakya through Ritual Infrastructure and Inter-rituality **Jens Kreinath**
	Shared Sacred Spaces and Interreligious Partnership: The Enduring Relationship Between St. Catherine's Monastery and the Jebelia Bedouins in Sinai **George Tsourous**
14 January 2025	
Session 2: 0900 - 1030	*Religious Spatial Negotiation/ co-existence and adaptation*
	Muslim holy sites and the politics of pluralism and anti-pluralism in Bosnia and Herzegovina Keynote: **David Henig**
	Between Separation and Unity: Mechitza at the Practice as a Case Study of Trialogical Negotiation Between Space, Religion, and Identity **Timea Crofony**
	What is Religious Coexistence a Sign of? Reflections on Case Studies from South Asia **Michael Boivin**
	A shrine that cannot be divided - further notes on mixed religious sites in post-conflict environments, the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina **Marko Barisic**
	Reimagining Urban Space: Waqf, Sect, and Intercommunal Life in Lebanon **Roxana Aras**
Session 3 : 1100-1230	*Shared Mobilities: Journey, Movement and Religious Identity*
	Navigating some theoretical conundrums surrounding shared sacred spaces Keynote: **Dionigi Albera**
	Gazing at the Other: Sharing Space at a Pilgrimage Shrine **John Eade**
	Malayali Egalitarian Spirit at Sabarimala Temple in Kerala **Sara Kuehn**
	Sacred infrastructures, multifaith space and embodied practices: The case of Shna Ndou (St. Anthony) Pilgrimage in Lac, Albania **Gianfranco Bria; Mariachiara Giorda**
	The "Woodstock of Pilgrimages": Spatial Dominance at the Nicula Monastery, Northern Romania **Giuseppe Tateo**
	Blurring the Spaces of Reception: Penumbras Porosities and Peripheralities **Simon Coleman**

Symposium Programme

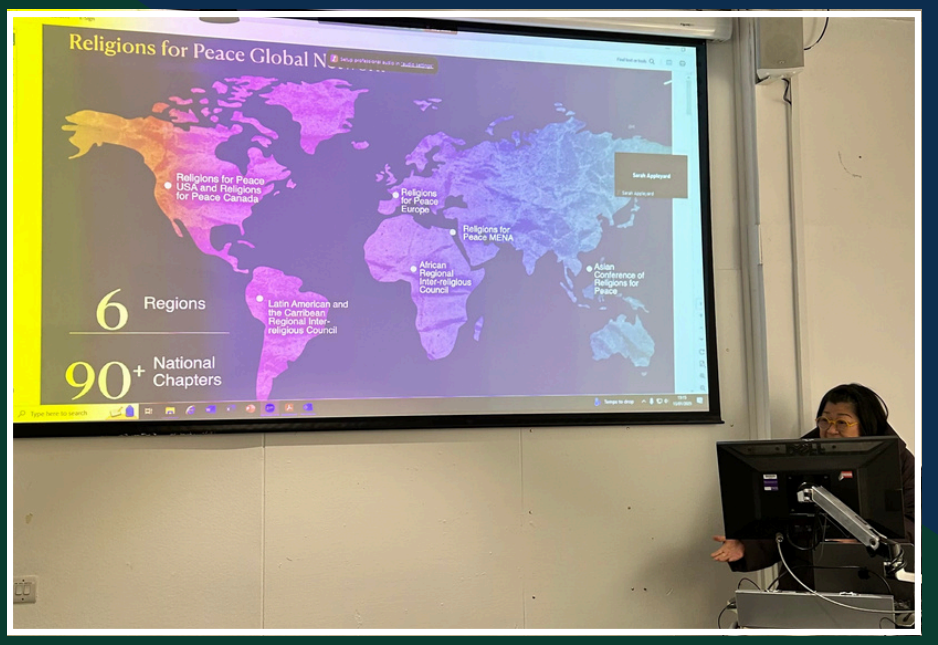
14 January 2025	
Session 4: 1445 - 1615	*Sharing Sacred Architectures* Chair: **Christos Kakalis**
	A Tapestry of Faith: The Evolution of Orthodox Places of Worship in London **Eugenia Anastassiou**
	Multifaith Spaces in the Hospital Environment in France **Isabelle Saint-Martin**
	Built Environment as a Tool of Coexistence **Daniele Campobenedetto**
	From Factories to Temples: Gurdwara Architecture in the Diaspora **Silvia Omenetto**
Session 5 : 1630 - 1800	Movie Screening: And the alley she whitewashed in light blue **Nili Portugali**
15 January 2025	
Session 6: 1700 - 1930	*From Tolerance to Co-existence* Chair: **George Tsourous**
	*W*hy do Religions Fail to Save Ethiopia from the Destructive War? **Aemro Worku Ayalew**
	Layers of Faith: The Religious Synthesis of Nilanchal Hill Complex in Assam, India **Abhimeet Nandi; Ritika Sahu**
	After Muslims Left: Making Sense of Sufi-Saint Veneration in a Non-Muslim Space **Yogesh Snehi**
Session 7 : 1430 – 1600	*Mobile Sacred Materialities*
	Terra (In)Firma: Incompatible Temporalities Sacred Landscapes of the Upper Euphrates Keynote: **Zeynab Kezer**
	On the Move: Wearing Ritual Artefacts as Sacred Spaces of Co-existence **Sandrine Welte**
	"It had a sort of chickeny taste": Meat, Manners, and Miracles in Early Modern Trave **Emily Price**
	Rethinking Sacredness Beyond Worship-designated Spaces: Soundscape as layers of co-existence **Omar Tahab**
	Between Ritual and Restoration: Remembering and Reclaiming Ionia's Religious Architectural Heritage **Kalliopi Amydalou**
	Spaces of Urban Religious Resilience: The Case of Edinburgh **Christos Kakalis**

ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOP: Interactive Discussion between participants, keynotes & organisers

At the event....



RfPUK exhibit sharing our encounters with sacred sites



RfPUK presenting its work to the Symposium



The curtors of Shared Sacred Sites presenting the exhibition



Newcastle University's multi faith sacred objects display



Paper presentation, discussion panels and workshops

Shared Sacred Sites Exhibition

How can a place be both holy and shared?

In the common understanding, a sanctuary can only be inhabited by one religion. This exclusivity seems all the more demanding in the case of the three monotheisms. Yet it is not uncommon for the faithful to temporarily cross religious boundaries and pray in a place belonging to another religion.

Without any desire to convert, they are in search of grace (healing, protection, salvation, childbirth, marriage, happiness...) and they visit common holy figures (Abraham, Mary, Saint George, the Seven Sleepers...). Less well known in Western Europe, this phenomenon is much more common on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, where the many branches of monotheism are intertwined. This is also the case in the Balkans, where the Ottoman Empire left a lasting imprint.

In the recent past, there has been an increasing scholarly interest in the exploration of sacred spaces that are shared among different groups. A significant portion of research has concentrated on documenting the complex phenomena that accompany the joint use of these sites. As a result, a new field of study has developed, federating the contributions of diverse specialists such as historians, anthropologists, geographers, and sociologists.

In an age of growing fear of the other and of the other's religion, the Shared Sacred Sites photographic exhibition offers a unusual and nuanced look at interreligious interactions around the Mediterranean. Looking beyond theological divergences and interreligious conflicts, the aim is to (re)familiarise visitors with the phenomenon of the same shrines being visited by followers of different religions, allowing them to discover certain sacred places where hospitality of the “Religious Other” is performed. However, these situations are fragile and constantly threatened by reactions of closure and hostility. Sharing then becomes synonymous with partition and separation.

Inviting everyone to take a step aside, the exhibition takes the form of a pictorial pilgrimage around aplural Mediterranean, moving from one holy place to another. The tour is divided into four parts: 1. Prophets and Saints 2. Mary the Christian, Mary the Muslim 3. Architectures 4. Actors and Go-betweens. These sections provide key insights into characteristics and features crucial to the cultivation of cultural and religiouscoxistence. This exhibition seeks to present the limitless possibility of courage and curiosity towards new discoveries, fresh exploration into uncharted contemplations, and heightened awe for the presence of the Divine.



Exhibition Curators



Dr Manoël Pénicaud

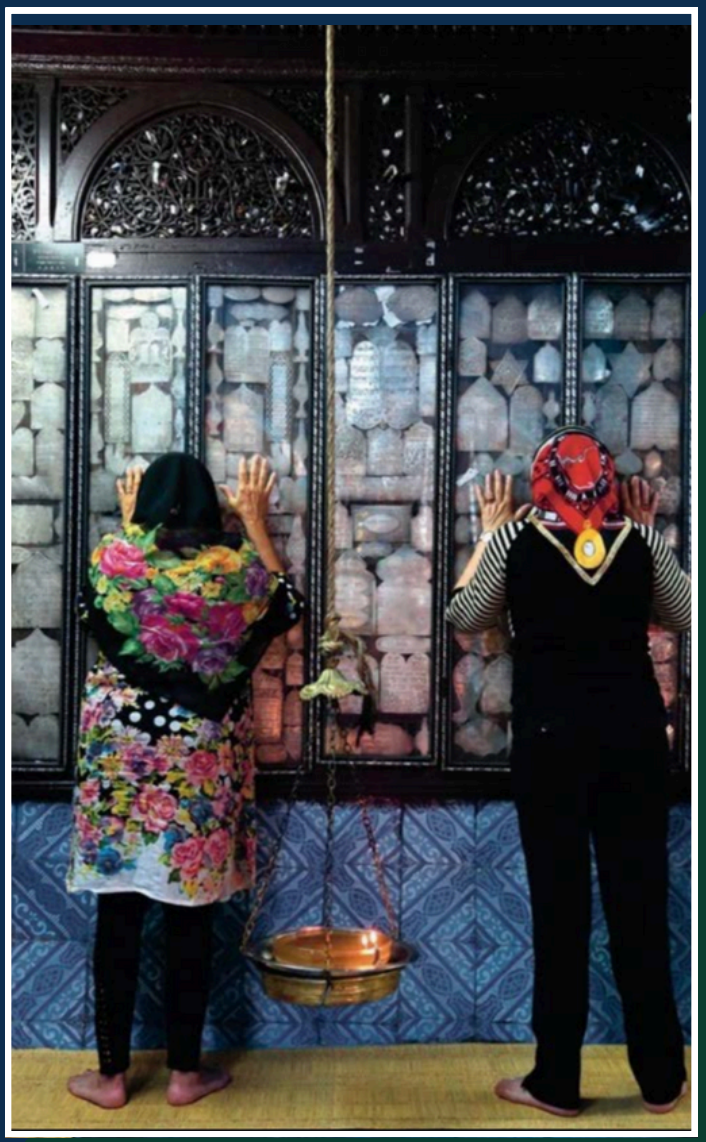
Anthropologist and research fellow at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), he is member of the Centre Jacques Berque in Rabat, Morocco. His main research interests are religious and pilgrimage studies, shared holy places and interreligious relations in the Mediterranean, visual anthropology and museography. He is also a photographer and documentarist. His photographs have been featured in other exhibitions, including Prier dans le lieu de l'autre in Morocco (2022-), Chrétiens d'Orient at the Institut du Monde Arabe (2017-2018), L'Oriente dei Sette Dormienti at the Institut Français Centre Saint-Louis (2011)



Dr Dionigi Albera

Anthropologist and Emeritus senior researcher at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), he is a member of the Institut d’ethnologie et d’anthropologie sociale (IDEAS, Aix-Marseille University) in Aix-en-Provence. He is a recognised specialist in “shared holy places” and mixed devotion between monotheistic religions. His books on this subject have been published in several languages. He has also curated numerous exhibitions around the world.

Shared Sacred Sites Exhibition



Prophets & Saints

Jewish and Muslim women praying side by side in the Ghriba Synagogue
Djerba, Tunisia

In North Africa, as in Morocco, the long-standing coexistence between Jews and Muslims has given rise to many interfaith encounters. It was not uncommon for followers of one religion to visit the sanctuary of the other in order to obtain a baraka (“grace” in Arabic). Although this phenomenon has often disappeared –due to the departure of Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian Jews in the 1950s and 1960s– it still exists in a fragile form on the island of Djerba. These two women –who are in no way distinguishable– are praying barefoot in front of the eastern wall of the synagogue, in the direction of Jerusalem. One is Jewish, the other Muslim. The Torah scrolls are kept behind wooden panels, decorated with votive offerings.



Votive sugar cubes
Büyükada, Turkey

According to tradition, fulfilled pilgrims return to give thanks and distribute sweets to other visitors as they leave the church. Faced with the abundance of votive materials circulating, some reuse them to express their own wishes. Here, Muslim pilgrims place sugar cubes in a wall of the Greek Orthodox monastery. Each represents a secret and anonymous wish. These votive reuses are characteristic of intense and effervescent ritual creativity.

Shared Sacred Sites Exhibition



Mary the Christian, Mary the Muslim

Muslim women in the crypt of the Basilica of the Nativity
Bethlehem, Palestine

In Islam, Mary embodies a model of feminine perfection as the mother of the prophet Jesus ('Isa). In fact, she is mentioned more often in the Qur'an (34 times) than in the New Testament (19 times). Many Marian churches across the Mediterranean are frequently visited by Muslims, mainly women. Such is the case of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Several historical accounts bear witness to interfaith mixing, so much so that until the Crusades, a prayer area was reserved for Muslims inside the basilica. Tradition also has it that the prophet Mohammed, on his celestial journey (Isrâ') to Jerusalem, stopped off where "his brother Jesus" was born. Today, not a day goes by without Muslims visiting the site for devotional and/or tourist purposes. Newborn babies are also ritually laid on thefourteen-pointed star in the crypt, which is supposed to indicate the place where Jesus was born.



Sufi women praying in the House of Mary
Ephesus, Turkey

At the end of the 19th century, French Catholic missionaries are said to have discovered the final resting place of the Virgin Mary on a mountaintop near the ancient city of Ephesus, after she left Jerusalem following the Apostle John. This modest site became a local pilgrimage site, and then an international one after the Assumption dogma was proclaimed in 1950. Very soon, large numbers of Muslim Turks got into the habit of coming here to pay their respects, which the Catholic clergy allowed to happen. Today, several hundred thousand pilgrims make the pilgrimage to the place where Mary is said to have ended her days. Muslims are ever more numerous. Here, two Sufi women (followers of Rûmî) pray and prepare to prostrate themselves in "Mary's room". The Franciscans who run this holy place have no problem with this, as long as peace and quiet are respected.

Shared Sacred Sites Exhibition

Architectures



Bell tower and minaret of St Nicholas Church
Chania, Greece

Since ancient times, the island of Crete has been occupied by many different people (Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Venetians, Ottomans), making it a crossroads of cultures and religions. After the Turkish conquest in the 17th century, many churches became mosques. Then, in the 19th century, they were (re)converted into Greek Orthodox churches. Some have even kept their minarets next to their bell towers, like the Church of St Nicholas in Chania. This type of architectural contiguity is quite common in Greece and the Balkans.



Tomb of John the Baptist in the Umayyad Mosque
Damascus, Syria

The Umayyad Mosque was built in the early 8th century on the site of the former Christian Basilica of St John the Baptist, itself built by the Byzantines on a temple dedicated to Jupiter. According to Arabchroniclers, just after t he Muslim conquest of Damascus in 635, the space was initially divided between Christians and Muslims, each praying on their own side. The Basilica was then destroyed to make way for the Great Mosque. This immense edifice contains the presumed reliquary of the head of John the Baptist/Sidi Yahyâ ibn Zakariya, who is also a prophet for Muslims. Taken in 2011, just before the war in Syria, this photograph shows the aedicula where devotees come to meditate. Shiite pilgrims, for their part, pray in an adjacent room (Mashhad al-Hussein) where the head of Hussein, son of Ali and grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, is believed to be.

Shared Sacred Sites Exhibition

Actors &
Go-Betweens



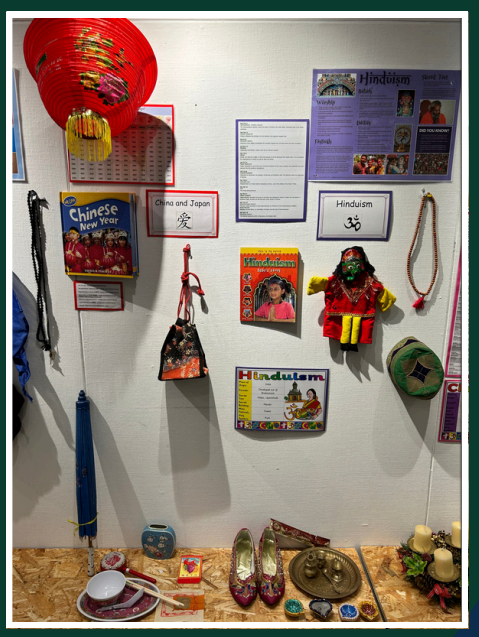
Crypt-dolmen of the Seven Sleepers Christian-Muslim pilgrimage in Brittany
Les Sept-Saints, France

In 1954, the French Catholic Islamologist Louis Massignon (1883-1962) founded a Christian-Muslim pilgrimage in Brittany under the banner of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, saints venerated in both Christianity and Islam. This spiritual gathering also had a political dimension, advocating a “serene peace” in North Africa in the context of decolonisation. This pilgrimage, one of the first interfaith initiatives in France, is still active and takes place every July in the hamlet of Les Sept-Saints, in the hinterland of the Côtes d'Armor region. The Catholic chapel rises above a Neolithic dolmen that recalls
the distant Ephesian cave of the Seven Sleepers. Roger, the caretaker of the site, lights seven candles from a boat given as an ex-voto by Louis Massignon, in reference to the Islamic interpretation of the miracle of the Companions of the Cave who, according to the Qur’an, slept for 309 years.

Translating Coexistence Research







Newcastle University School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape is pioneering efforts to translate academic research results into practical classroom tools that help children develop respectful mindset through learning about world religions. At this critical time of social division, this translation initiative aims to empower researchers to transform interfaith studies into school resources that nurture curiosity and diversity.

This innovative approach - exemplified by St. Cyprian School's multi-Faith display at the Symposium - converts complex research findings into interactive lessons using storytelling, shared values and expressive exploration of young minds, culminating in the consistent encouragement to nurture children's natural curiosity about religious diversity while building critical thinking skills to counter prejudice.

By integrating university research into the design of elementary education tools, scholarly work can help lay the foundation for a safer and fairer society. Through age-appropriate teaching of religious coexistence and social cohesion, these efforts plant early seeds for a more harmonious multi-faith future.

Looking Forward

Building on the success of the Religious Co-existence Symposium, we are entering a dynamic new phase of growth, outreach, and collaboration. Key developments include an upcoming edited publication, the expansion of our educational initiatives, and a major partnership with the University of Edinburgh for a curated exhibition and roundtable in Autumn 2025. We are also establishing regional collaborations with institutions across the UK and Ireland, working toward a national framework for academic and interfaith engagement.

A central aim moving forward is to actively engage young people, including those in primary and secondary education, recognising early education as a vital space for cultivating understanding, empathy, and coexistence. This effort will be driven by both academic leadership and grassroots involvement, ensuring the next generation is equipped to navigate religious and cultural diversity with thoughtfulness and respect.

We warmly invite collaboration from schools, universities, and educational organisations interested in interfaith learning, shared sacred spaces, and inclusive public engagement. By working together, we can strengthen the reach and impact of this initiative—creating meaningful opportunities for dialogue, reflection, and shared purpose across generations and communities.

