Pass It On®…

The Gathering of Nations at the G20 International Faith Forum: A Light to the World.

From the Choctaw Nation raising money for suffering families during the Irish Famine in 1847, to Herbert Hoover delivering 5 million tons of aid to a blockaded Belgium during WWI, to the COVID-19 vaccine diplomacy that opened up backdoor trade routes to deliver the vaccine to a pandemic-plagued world, people of every nation, tongue and culture have always stepped up in times of crisis.

As G20 nations form new alliances to balance power and politics and mitigate aggression, their counterparts in faith gather to discuss poverty and inequality, health and well-being, education, gender wage disparities and human trafficking, climate resilience, disaster relief, protecting children, creating peace and defending the freedom of religious belief. In short, solving the world's most pressing problems and seeking to alleviate suffering.

Utah Governor Spencer Cox opened the most recent G20 International Faith Forum, held in Salt Lake City in October 2026. Gov. Cox reiterated the convention theme of "Resilient Hope, Shared Future" by reminding each of us that changing the world begins by changing our individual communities.

"Don't stop talking, even when you disagree," he said. "The strength of a community is its ability to respect and serve each other."

Archbishop Gabriele G. Caccia said, "Each generation bears responsibility for shaping … the human person … to a more fraternal future."

The world leaders most poignantly agreed on this one aspect of life: We must seek peace with our individual neighbors. Hope is the basis for change. Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, the secretary-general of the Muslim World League, described his definitions of optimism and hope, saying that hope is not just a feeling but a "faith-based endeavor. Optimism waits for things to improve on their own. Hope, however, is a decision of people with a living conscience."

Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey also spoke, noting that the root Greek word for "share" is also the root for the words "community" and "communion." He said that we cannot commune with God if we are not a part of our community, working for the good of our neighbor.

Finding common ground in a world designed technologically and politically to divide us may seem like more of a challenge than many of us are up for. But consider that many of the religious leaders gathered at the first G20 Interfaith Forum held on American soil are from nations that have been decimated by war, poverty, civil unrest and racism. These religious leaders have been firsthand witnesses to the Gulf War, the Syrian civil war, climate disasters, the Civil Rights movement, geopolitical volatility and mass starvation. And yet they came together, filled with hope, to help write policy for change.

As Al-Issa admonished, "May our commitments become actions, and may our actions become occasions of healing, hope and transformation." Our differences, it turns out, are much smaller than the similarities in conscience and in desire for peace and progress we all share.

Resilient Hope, Shared Future…PassItOn.com

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