

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Archbishop Gabriele Caccia Brings Holy See Message to G20 Interfaith Forum, Urging That Progress Serve the Human Person

Salt Lake City, October 15, 2026 — His Excellency Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, delivered a message on behalf of the Holy See at the Opening Ceremony of the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) on Thursday evening, calling on faith leaders to help ensure that the progress G20 leaders pursue serves the human person. He spoke at the Historic Tabernacle at Temple Square to what the Church History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has confirmed is the largest gathering of interfaith leaders ever assembled in Utah, as the IF20 opened its first annual Forum held in the United States.

Caccia thanked the IF20 and its hosts for bringing so many traditions together around the Forum's theme, "Resilient Hope, Shared Future," and put a question to the assembly: what kind of human future are we building together?

"In December, G20 leaders will gather in Miami around economic growth, energy security, and AI," Caccia said. "These may appear to be very different subjects, but beneath them is one fundamental question: whether the progress we seek will serve the human person."

That is the question Pope Leo XIV takes up in his first encyclical, [*Magnifica humanitas*](#), on safeguarding the human person in the time of artificial intelligence. Each generation, Caccia said, is responsible for shaping its own time in service of the human person.

"The Holy Father warns us against imagining that everything, including the mystery of the human person, can be reduced to data and performance," Caccia said.

This, he argued, is where people of faith bring something technology cannot.

"Technology offers extraordinary possibilities, but it does not tell us what is good," Caccia said. "We still need to ask the questions of whom progress is serving and whether it is serving them well. This is where faith leaders have something to offer."

Faith leaders come to that conversation not because of technological expertise but because of their traditions, he said, adding that "if we know who we are and what we believe, we can meet each other more honestly."

"Perhaps that is what resilient hope means," Caccia said. "It's not optimism about the future — it's the decision to build that future together without losing sight of the human person at the center."

Caccia closed by reading a letter from the Holy See to the Forum.

President Dallin H. Oaks of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints hosted the ceremony, calling the assembly “the most prominent constellation of faith leaders that has ever gathered in Salt Lake City.” Michael O. Leavitt, President of The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, conducted.

Sheikh Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, Secretary General of the Muslim World League, delivered the opening keynote as guest of honor, describing hope in terms that echoed Caccia’s.

“Optimism waits for things to improve on their own,” Al-Issa said. “Hope, however, is a decision taken by people of living conscience and a willingness to do hard work for tomorrow.”

Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon, of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, called for a shared future that includes care for creation.

“A crisis with man’s relationship with God becomes a crisis with his relationship with creation,” the Metropolitan said.

Other speakers included IF20 President W. Cole Durham and Vice President Katherine Marshall, Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh, Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, Rabbi Mark Dratch and Dr. Francis Kuria Kagema, Secretary General of Religions for Peace. Bishop Alastair Redfern and Lord Russell Rook offered the opening and closing prayers, and The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square performed throughout.

The Opening Ceremony took place October 15, 2026, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. MDT. The Forum continues October 16–17 at the University of Utah under the theme “Resilient Hope, Shared Future,” ahead of the G20 Leaders’ Summit in Miami on December 14–15. The full program is available at g20interfaith.org/2026-forum-program.

Speakers included:

- **His Excellency Archbishop Gabriele Caccia (Message on Behalf of the Holy See)** — Apostolic Nuncio to the United States
- **Michael O. Leavitt (Conducting)** — President, The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square; former Governor of Utah and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services
- **President Dallin H. Oaks** — President, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- **Sheikh Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa (Guest of Honor and Opening Keynote)** — Secretary General, Muslim World League
- **Prof. W. Cole Durham** — President, G20 Interfaith Forum Association
- **Prof. Katherine Marshall** — Vice President, G20 Interfaith Forum Association
- **Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh** — Chairman, Caucasus Muslims Board
- **Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon** — Ecumenical Patriarchate
- **Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati** — Secretary-General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance

- **Rabbi Mark Dratch** — Chair, International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations
- **Dr. Francis Kuria Kagema** — Secretary General, Religions for Peace

Full speaker bios are available in the [2026 Forum Directory](#).

About the G20 Process

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing together the leaders of Earth's most prosperous economies. Collectively, G20 members represent around 80 percent of the world's economic output, two-thirds of the global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues as well as broader humanitarian issues targeted by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org.

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