

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY
Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies

Fall 2024 Newsletter

Dear Friends of the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies:

Registration is now open for the CCJS Eternal Light Award Dinner, which takes place on Sunday, November 17th. The event features the 20th recipient of the Eternal Light Award, Dr. Joseph Sievers, professor emeritus of Jewish history and literature of the Hellenistic period at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome.

The first academic book in the CCJS's history, *The Challenge of Catholic-Jewish Theological Dialogue*, will be published by The Catholic University of America Press this October. The volume of nineteen essays enriches and intensifies the theological dimension of Jewish-Catholic dialogue by facilitating a rigorous exchange between Jewish scholars and Catholic theologians on some of the most difficult questions in Jewish-Christian relations. On Tuesday, October 29th, the CCJS will host an online panel discussion on the book that features a select group of contributors to the volume.

You can also find details about other upcoming programs below, including a series of online lectures by Rabbi David Maayan, the Maureen and Douglas Cohn Visiting Chair in Jewish Thought, on Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira (1889–1943). Shapira has been referred to as “the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto,” since he continued to both teach Torah and write down his teachings in the Ghetto, and most of the writings that we have from him were found buried beneath the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto. His Holocaust writings are both unique and powerful.

Additionally, this newsletter includes a section on recent news and activities at the center.

Respectfully,

Matthew Tapie
Director, Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies
Associate Professor of Theology

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Church and Synagogue Visit

Many members of the local community have requested that the CCJS once again organize a church and synagogue visit program. The program, which ran for the first time in the fall of 2023, aims to build deeper appreciation of the religious life of our neighbors through organized visits to local places of worship.

This fall, the CCJS invites members of the Jewish community and others to visit St. Paul Catholic Church on **Monday, September 9th**.

Members of the Catholic community and others are invited to visit Congregation Kol Ami on **Monday, September 23rd**.

Please mark your calendars for both dates. During these visits, attendees will have the chance to learn about the distinctive liturgical traditions of each community. A question and answer time moderated by the CCJS will follow each session.

The CCJS would like to thank Fr. Craig Morley, of St. Paul Catholic Church, and Rabbi Rachel Blatt, of Kol Ami, for their hospitality.

These events are free, in-person, and open to the public, but space is limited.

To register you must use the buttons below.

NOTE: If you wish to attend both visits please RSVP for each event.



Catholic Church Visit

Monday, September 9th

7:00 - 8:00pm

St. Paul Catholic Church

12708 N Dale Mabry Highway

Tampa, FL 33618

[RSVP for Visit to St. Paul's Catholic Church](#)

Synagogue Visit

Monday, September 23

7:00 - 8:00pm

Congregation Kol Ami

3919 Moran Road

Tampa, FL 33618

RSVP for Visit to Congregation Kol Ami

CCJS Open House

Thursday, September 12th

1 - 2pm | Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies, St. Francis rm. 211



Members of the community are invited to the campus of Saint Leo University for the annual CCJS Open House.

During the Open House you can tour the center and find out more information about how to get involved in the CCJS's interreligious study and dialogue programs. Desserts will be served.

Faculty, staff, and students who cannot make the 1pm time are invited to stop by at 4pm. The CCJS is located in St. Francis Hall, room 211.

Members of the community can find detailed instructions on how to get to the Saint Leo University campus by clicking [here](#). A campus map is available [here](#).



Interreligious Mixer for Students

Thursday, September 26th

6:30 - 7:30pm | Student Activities Building rm. 117



Undergraduate and graduate Saint Leo students are invited to a social mixer event that facilitates dialogue between students of different religious backgrounds.

Students will learn about the CCJS mission and how to get involved in interreligious dialogue initiatives on campus. The event is co-sponsored by Saint Leo University Ministry. Light refreshments will be served. Please use the button below to register for the mixer.

Register for the Mixer

Interreligious Dialogue Group for Students

Monday, October 7

Monday, October 21

Monday, December 2

1 - 2pm | Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies, St. Francis rm. 211

Undergraduate and graduate Saint Leo students are invited to join an interreligious dialogue group that will meet this fall in the CCJS. The students will explore how the reading of scripture and possible interpretations can bring about a deeper understanding of the other, and one's own tradition.

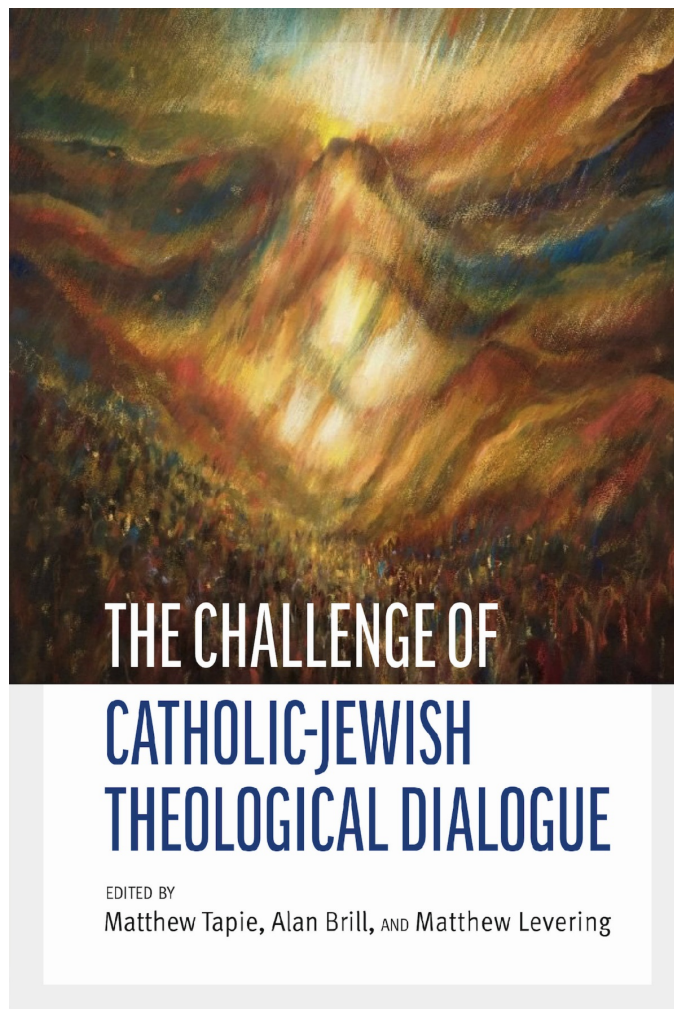
Interested students can email the CCJS Administrator of Programs and Events, Laurie Gens, at laurie.gens@saintleo.edu. No registration or RSVP is required.



The Challenge of Catholic-Jewish Theological Dialogue

Tuesday, October 29th

12pm - 1pm Eastern Time | Zoom Webinar Open to the Public



On Tuesday, October 29th, the CCJS will host a scholarly panel discussion on the first academic book in its history, *The Challenge of Catholic-Jewish Theological Dialogue* (The

Catholic University of America Press, 2024). The volume enriches and intensifies the theological dimension of Jewish-Catholic dialogue by facilitating a rigorous exchange between Jewish scholars and Catholic theologians on some of the most difficult questions in Jewish-Christian relations. The book contains essays by Clémence Boulouque, Bruce Marshall, Jennifer Hart Weed, Malka Z. Simkovich, Dennis McManus, Carol Bakhos, David Maayan, Pim Valkenberg, Reuven Firestone, Matthew Tapie, Shai Held, David Novak, Holly Taylor Coolman, Joel Kaminsky, Gavin D'Costa, Alan Brill, Matthew Levering, and Isaac Oliver/de Oliveira. You can read more about the volume [here](#).

The webinar includes remarks from a select group of contributors to the book: Matthew Tapie, Alan Brill, Jennifer Hart Weed, and David Maayan. The panelists will discuss various aspects of the volume, as well as summarize a few of the essays.



Alan Brill is the the Cooperman/Ross Endowed Chair in Jewish-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University. Brill authored several books including *Judaism and Other Religions* (Palgrave, 2010); *Judaism and World Religions* (Palgrave, 2012); and *Rabbi on the Ganges: A Jewish-Hindu Encounter* (Lexington, 2019). His forthcoming book is *A Jewish Trinity: Contemporary Christian Thought in a Jewish View* (Fortress, 2025).



David Maayan is the Maureen and Douglas Cohn Chair in Jewish Thought and Assistant Director of the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies. Rabbi Maayan received his rabbinic ordination from Rabbi Zalman N. Goldberg in Jerusalem, 2004. He is the author of scholarly articles and book chapters on Jewish religious thought (particularly mysticism and Hasidism), comparative theology, and Jewish-Christian dialogue.



Jennifer Hart Weed is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of New Brunswick. Her publications focus primarily on the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and Maimonides, as well as the dialogue between Christians and Jews. She has been a Visiting Fellow at the University of Leeds, the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven, and La Fondation Hardt in Switzerland.



Matthew Tapie is Associate Professor of Theology and Director of the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies at Saint Leo University. He is the author or editor of numerous scholarly works on the thought of Thomas Aquinas and Judaism, and on Catholic-Jewish relations. His forthcoming book is *The Mortara Case and Thomas Aquinas's Defense of Jewish Parental Authority* (CUA Press, 2025).

The online program is free and open to the public but registration is required.

Register for the webinar

The Transformational Thought of Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira (1889–1943)

Thursday, September 19th
Thursday, November 14th

12pm - 1:00pm Eastern Time | A Two-Part Webinar Open to the Public



Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira (1889–1943) was a Hasidic Rabbi in Poland. He has been referred to as “the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto,” since Rabbi Shapira continued to both teach Torah and write down his teachings in the Ghetto, and most of the writings that we have from him were found buried beneath the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto. His Holocaust writings are both unique and powerful, taking on added significance for one familiar with his pre-war teachings. This fall, Rabbi David Maayan, the Cohn Visiting Chair in Jewish Thought will give two online lectures on the thought of Shapira. A question and answer session will follow both presentations.

The program is free and open to the public but registration is required.

Session One | Thursday, September 19th, 12–1pm

Rabbi Shapira was a traditionalist Hasidic leader for whom the development of a viable form of Hasidism for his contemporaries was an urgent matter requiring innovative pedagogy and spiritual technologies. At the heart of Rabbi Shapira’s vision is the need for each person to become a unique individual, to serve God with devotional service that is an irreducibly personal expression. The presentation will discuss Shapira’s writings and thought, looking closely at several texts which help to illuminate this “devotional individuation” which is a bedrock element of his teachings. Appreciating these texts enables one to see Rabbi Shapira’s Holocaust teachings in a new light, as a passionate advocate of personal human flourishing finds himself and his people in an environment constructed for the impersonal destruction of human persons.

[Register for Session One](#)

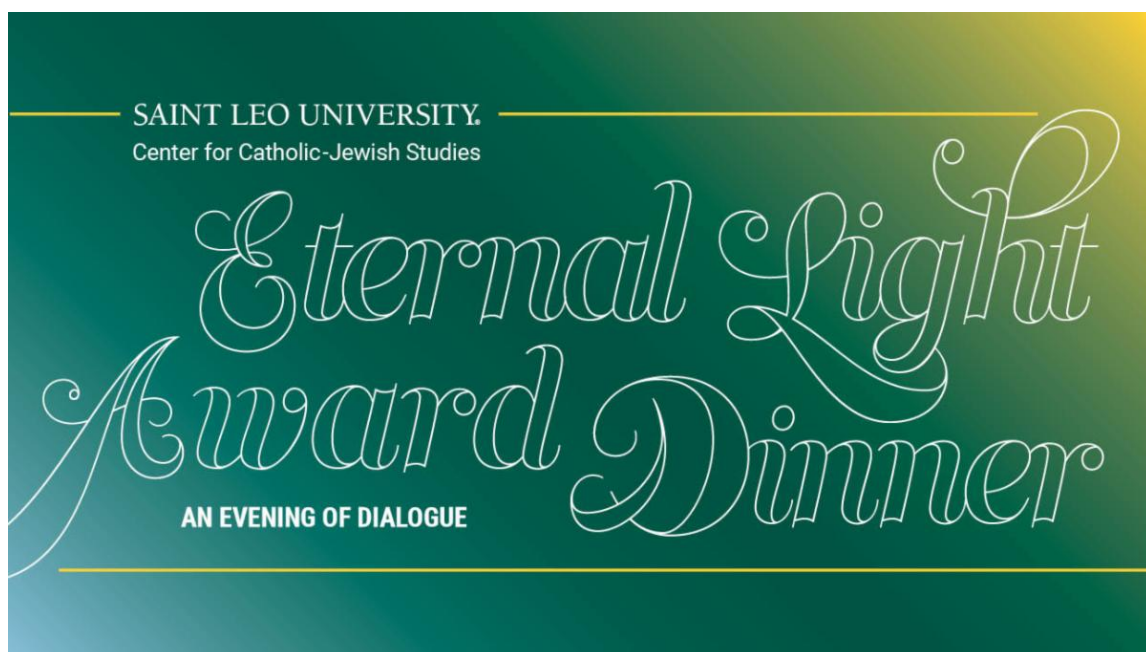
Session Two | Thursday, November 14th, 12–1pm

One of the unique documents that we have from the Polish Hasidic leader Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira (1889–1943) is his guide for personal spiritual growth in the context of a small, dedicated group. This privately distributed booklet, composed in the 1920s, contains advice for the personal development of one seeking sincerity and depth of feeling in the service of one's Creator, in the context of an intimate support group of fellow devotees. In addition to the innovative practices and meditations included in the work, the writing itself employs literary techniques designed to make it an instrument of profound personal change and not merely a source of information. This session will look at some of these in detail, noting the tensions reflected with both wider European society of his time, and even trends within Hasidism itself, which Rabbi Shapira views as potentially threatening to the human flourishing that he seeks to inspire.

[Register for Session Two](#)



Rabbi David Maayan is the Maureen and Douglas Cohn Chair in Jewish Thought and Assistant Director of the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies. Rabbi Maayan received his rabbinic ordination from Rabbi Zalman N. Goldberg in Jerusalem, 2004. He is the author of scholarly articles and book chapters on Jewish religious thought (particularly mysticism and Hasidism), comparative theology, and Jewish-Christian dialogue.



"How Encounters with Jews and Jewish History Changed My

Life as a Catholic Christian"

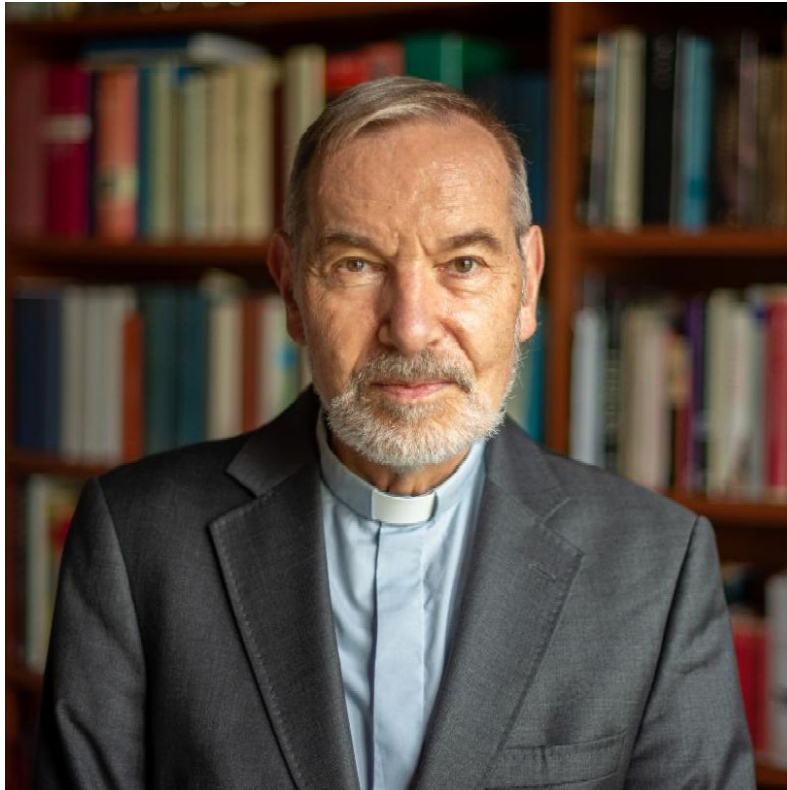
Thursday, November 17th | 6 - 9pm

Higgins Hall at St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 5225 N. Himes Ave., Tampa

featuring

Dr. Joseph Sievers

Professor Emeritus of Jewish History and Literature of the Hellenistic period at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, and the 20th recipient of the Eternal Light Award



with remarks by



Dr. Amy-Jill Levine

The Rabbi Stanley M. Kessler Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace, and University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies Emerita at Vanderbilt

Location:

Higgins Hall

St. Lawrence Catholic Church
5225 N. Himes Ave. Tampa, FL 33614



Dinner Chairs:

Fr. Len Plazewski
Pastor, Christ the King Catholic Church

Rabbi Joel Simon
Senior Rabbi, Congregation Schaarai Zedek

5 pm | Major Gifts Reception: Meet & Greet with Speakers
(for Visionary and Leader levels)

6 pm | General Reception

7 pm | Program

This in-person event is open to the public but space is limited.
You can read more about the event [here](#).

The Eternal Light Award is presented to a scholar who has made significant contributions to Catholic-Jewish studies. A list of previous recipients can be found [here](#).

RSVP by Friday November 1, 2024.

For more information about the event contact
Ms. Laurie Gens, the CCJS Administrator of Programs and Events,
at laurie.gens@saintleo.edu or call 352-588-7711.
Discounted tickets are available for students.

[Purchase tickets or sponsor a table](#)

RECENT NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Video recording of "New Questions, New Findings from the Recently Opened Archives of Pope Pius XII," now available



The video recording of "Catholics and the Rescue of Jews During the Holocaust: New Questions, New Findings from the Recently Opened Archives of Pope Pius XII," featuring Dr. Robert Ventresca, is now available.

You can access the recording on the CCJS YouTube channel by clicking [here](#).

Interreligious Dialogue Fellows Program Update



Each year, the CCJS selects two to three undergraduate students to serve as CCJS Interreligious Dialogue Fellows. The Fellows receive a partial tuition scholarship and help lead the CCJS Student Interreligious Dialogue Group meetings, as well as attend CCJS events and programs.

We are happy to announce that the Fellows for the 2024-2025 academic year are Lili Kozlowski and Grace Cornell. Lili Kozlowski is a senior in the Honors Program at Saint Leo University pursuing a bachelor's degree in Religious Studies. Grace Cornell is a senior pursuing a bachelor's degree in Psychology as well as double-minoring in Criminal Justice and Gender Studies.

Previous Fellows have gone on to study at the Bea Centre for Judaic Studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, as well as the Russell Berrie program in Interreligious Studies at the John Paul II Center for Interreligious Dialogue, Rome. The CCJS Interreligious Dialogue Fellows program began in 2015 and has benefited numerous students. The program is funded in-part by the Cohn-Whiting Endowment for Catholic-Jewish Studies.

Gail and Paul Whiting recognized with Builders Award



On June 17th, Dr. Tapie and Rabbi Maayan were among the several hundred people, religious leaders, civic and government officials, and friends gathered at the Shanna and Bryan Glazer Jewish Community Center in Tampa to honor Paul and Gail Whiting for their generosity and service in the Tampa Bay area. The Whitings received the Tampa Jewish Federation Maureen and Doug Cohn Builders Award in recognition of the impact that they have had in their work and support of the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies. The Whitings have long supported the work of the CCJS.

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Tapie participates in USCCB dialogues



Earlier this year, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops invited Dr. Tapie to present a talk entitled "Catholic Perspectives on the State of Israel" at the May 7th USCCB dialogue with the National Council of Synagogues. The meeting was chaired by Cardinal Gregory Wilton and took place at the USCCB headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Additionally, Dr. Tapie will participate in the USCCB dialogue with the Orthodox Union and Rabbinical

Council of America set to take place on September 16th, in New York.

Rabbi Maayan to participate in comparative theology conference in Rome

Rabbi David Maayan, the Maureen and Douglas Cohn Visiting Chair in Jewish Thought and Assistant Director of the CCJS, will be presenting about aspects of a Jewish theology of religions at a conference at the Gregorian University in Rome on September 30 through October 2. This is the second annual in-person gathering of the Comparative Theology of Religions Group (CTRG) of which Rabbi Maayan is a member. This is a project sponsored by a partnership of interreligious programs at the University of Bonn and the Gregorian University, together with the John Paul II Center for Interreligious Dialogue at the University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum). You can find information about the

Dr. Tapie to deliver lectures at academic conferences in Milan and Rome

Dr. Tapie has been invited by the Association of the Italian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to deliver a lecture at a November 20th conference entitled "Stolen Children, Disputed Children: Forced Baptisms in the Modern and Contemporary Age," held at the Shoah Memorial Foundation, in Milan. The program includes presentations by the Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center Foundation, and the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Riccardo Di Segni.

Additionally, the Bea Centre for Judaic Studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and the Angelicum, invited Dr. Tapie to speak at a November 28th academic conference focused on his forthcoming book, *The Mortara Case and Thomas Aquinas's Defense of Jewish Parental Authority*. The book will be published in February 2025.

SUPPORT THE CCJS

For over 25 years, the CCJS has worked to build bridges of mutual understanding and respect between Catholics and Jews, and all people of good will. Your gift helps us advance scholarship in Catholic-Jewish studies, and provides interreligious education to thousands of students, religious leaders, and members of the public.

Support the work of the CCJS



Friar Henry Fulmer, O.F.M., shares why he values interreligious dialogue at a CCJS public event.
Congregation Schaarai Zedek, Tampa, November, 2022.

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