



Exhibition Structure

- Overall Structure of Visit: From Friendship to Hope
- Exhibition Structure: Organization of Themes and Content

Overall Structure of Visit: From Friendship to Hope

The visitor's journey takes place in 5 stages, 3 of which form the core of the experience.

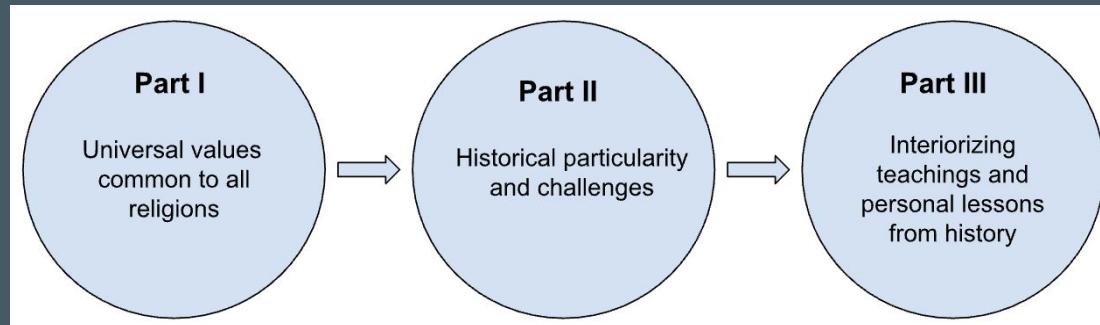
1. **Entry.** The entry engages the visitor where they are. It presents key ideas of the exhibition and asks the visitor to locate herself in relation to where they are, both in relation to Assisi and its message and in relation to the key ideas of the exhibition.
2. **Friendship.** The first gallery presents the theme of friendship across religions. Beginning with friendship provides a grounding in daily human experience. This is broadened to include friendship with members of other faiths. It is further broadened to spiritual dimensions of friendship. These spiritual dimensions point us to the next galleries.
3. **Religious geniuses and saints.** This gallery presents the finest exemplars of religion. These are the individuals who point the way to living religion in its highest form, rising above religious difference and offering a perspective of friendship and unity across religions.
4. **Prayer.** Prayer is the path to realizing the vision of the religious geniuses, to the practice of spiritual friendship and to the elevation of the individual and community. It is therefore the goal of the journey and the means of realizing it.
5. **Exit in hope.** The fruits of learning and experience translate to hope, which the visitor takes with him. Hope is what the world needs now and the various exhibition components provide multiple pathways to hope.

From Friendship to Hope



Exhibition Structure: Organization of Themes and Content

The following content organization and narrative movement is repeated within each of the three main galleries. A three-part cycle characterizes each.



The content-oriented presentations in this threefold cycle will be enhanced by emotionally-oriented artistic immersives, that appear at crucial points in the journey, and provide artistic-spiritual inspiration on themes of the exhibition. These immersives are created by world renowned video artist Massimiliano Siccardi (author of the Van Gogh travelling exhibit, that had about 7 million visits).

Exhibition Structure:

Part I – Universal values, common to all religions

Universal values. An integrated vision of the specific theme, bringing in voices of all religions. These create a harmonious collage and offer a unified understanding of the subject matter, seen from the perspective of multiple religions. Religions are appreciated in light of key values that serve educational and spiritual ideals.



Exhibition Structure:

Part II – Historical particularity and challenges

The particular in history. Illustrating the universal principles in the cases of specific religions and individuals. Particular historical contexts also show where religions fail in relation to their highest ideals, especially in relations between religions, and how these ideals can be restored. Individual cases.



Exhibition Structure:

Part III - Interiorizing teachings and personal lessons from history

Personal engagement. What has been learned becomes an invitation to personal interiorization and engagement. This engagement can take the form of prayer, action, outreach, relation to other and continuing commitment.



Exhibition Walkthrough

- I. Entry
- II. Friendship - The Path to Wholeness
- III. Saints and Religious Geniuses - Guides, Models and Sources of Transformation
- IV. Prayer
- V. Exit
- VI. The Annex – A Prayer Space for All

I. Entry

Welcome Friends

The Immersive

The visitors' journey begins with an immersive multimedia experience. This is the first of three artistic-inspirational immersives created by Massimiliano Siccardi, that sets the emotional tone and provides inspiration for the visit to the Global House. It will echo the three main themes in a dynamic way, that transports the visitor out of common space and provides a liminal- imaginative space, through which the visitor is transported to a different reality, of learning, feeling and prayer in the Global House.

The Reflective

Having been transported out of oneself through this immersive, the visitor is invited to return to herself, in a movement of taking stock of initial assumptions and orientations, as the visitor enters the Global House experience. Visitors will take stock of where they are, both in relation to Assisi and its message and in relation to the key ideas of the exhibition. Using personal devices, a personal and personalized dynamic of learning, connecting and transformative journey will be established, that will carry the visitor through the entire exhibit



II. Friendship

A sculptural, arching portal, laden with images and written phrases referencing both everyday friendship between individuals and the more elevated and broadly reaching friendship among religions, nations, ethnicities and other groups is presented here, without explanatory text.

The Universal Values of Friendship

Small portals will be devoted each to a quality of dimension of friendship. Inspiration will be drawn from the resources of all faiths, highlighting the universality of these values. The impact of friendship will be featured as it ranges from individual, to community, to the world at large and beyond. Friendship will be featured both as a human value and as a value with particular spiritual dimensions, thus possessing both horizontal and vertical significance. Resources will include contemporary statements and teachings by premier faith leaders, as these have been collected for the "Make Friends" initiative, and in support of the Friendship Declaration, that will be enshrined as a common "scriptural" reference point for all faiths, at the center of these portals.

Visitors will be invited to create their own list of values and to prioritize them, thereby relating their own personal experience to the collective wisdom of faiths (either prior to or following visiting this station, at their discretion). This also allows them to imagine their present self and to compare it to the person they would aspire to be.



II. Friendship

(cont'd)

A Friend of Nature is the theme of this free-standing pavilion, evoking the beauty, majesty and timeless qualities of the natural world that all peoples so revere, and some actually worship. A scenographic, three dimensional simulated sense of “paradise” will evoke a sense of “nature”, and invite the visitor to consider applying the values encountered in the previous station toward nature. St. Francis’ example, and similar testimonies, will be evoked. Appreciation for the gift of nature is supported by the opportunity to drill down into a compendium of efforts, large and small, and worldwide, to protect, nourish and promote this magnificent treasure, in all its splendor and glory. The visitor will be able to express friendship directly on site, through tree planting efforts, in several chosen locations.



II. Friendship

Historical Obstacles and Precedents

History provides ample testimony to enmity among religions and to religious justification for such enmity. It also offers remarkable testimonies of friendship, that have the potential to heal and transform relations among faiths today. This station will place the visitor squarely in the middle of the tensions, setbacks, and challenges that have perennially stood in the way of friendship and fomented distrust, hatred and wars, in the name of religion. This station will prompt the visitor to contemplate the lengths to which the absence of friendship has dehumanized the “other” and the tragic consequences resultant therein.

Religion can also be applied towards friendship and peace, and offers us ideals of compassion and non-violence that inspire models of collaboration and friendship across religions.

II. Friendship

(cont'd)

Assisi plays an important symbolic role in featuring the friendship-face of religion. The encounter between St. Francis and Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil, in 1219, serves as contemporary inspiration for interfaith friendship. Prayer and mutual respect are the spiritual currency that enabled this friendship to be forged.

The story is narrated against the background of the crusades, thereby pointing to the tension between historical difficulties and tensions and the healing work of religious geniuses and prayer as offering models for today's world.

Similar relationships from pairs of friends from other faiths will be presented, to provide models for interfaith friendship.

Relatedly, Assisi has served as a magnet and anchor for the convening of religious leaders. Videos and other materials will communicate the successive convenings of religious leaders in Assisi by popes over the last 40 years, beginning with the 1986 convening by Pope John Paul II. The Global House of Friendship and Hope consciously builds and extends this legacy. It will feature some of the special signs and artefacts of the first convening, evoking their continued relevance to friendship and peace.



II. Friendship

(cont'd)

Making Friendship Personal

Friends Forum. This station offers curated testimonies of Elijah leaders regarding the impact of friendship in their lives. Visitors will be invited to record their own testimonies, thereby self-actualizing their commitment to friendship. This can be accomplished, in part, by mingling projections of their recorded messages those of the religious leaders.

Make Friends. Visitors will have a profile they have filled, and this will allow matching up visitors to create an encounter of friendship. Visitors can use their personal devices, which will hook into an active digital “nervous system”, threaded through the various galleries, that will link them with other visitors and with people in other locations, thereby greatly enhancing the visitor experience. The matching could occur in the context of the visit to the Global House, ideally on the floor. The alternative is matching people online through a database that will be created, that will allow making friends across distances.



II. Friendship

(cont'd)

This will be linked to our Friends Across Faiths network, headquartered in the Global House, but not immediately dependent on visiting the exhibition. Visitors are also invited to join the growing Network.

Testimonies of friendship matches will be part of contribution of visitors, to be shared further on social media.

Pray for Friends. Prayer is a vital dimension of spiritual friendship. Small alcoves with pre-selected texts from different faiths will be made available for prayer for friends, under various life circumstances. AI generated suggestions could customize prayers to the profile of the visitor.

III. Saints and Religious Geniuses

A cubic, faceted and scaffolded gateway draws visitors into and around the periphery of this portal. While they are surrounded on all sides by fixed, visual representations (panels) of saints and other Religious Geniuses that are appended to the framework, a synchronized audio/video 'show' will activate the entire structure and space. Individual panels, each a flat video screens, will come to life and the panoply of selected Religious Geniuses will be recalled.

The Values – What Makes a Religious Genius?

A carefully curated list of spiritual qualities has been drawn together, through a research project involving 50 scholars of different faiths, by means of which the profile of a religious genius emerges. These spiritual qualities provide the universal common ground, that makes the different saints and religious geniuses members of one class, one family. Care is taken to include attitudes to nature in the description of the religious geniuses. Small portals will be devoted to the different qualities, and an understanding of what makes a religious genius and how religious genius transforms religion and speaks across time and across religious difference will emerge.



III. Saints and Religious Geniuses

Religious Geniuses in Historical Context and Present-Day Significance

12-16 saints and religious geniuses, representing all faiths, are featured in a field of scattered mini islands, each composed of the same framework as that which formed the portal, but now 'customized' to add a physical context representative of the diversity of time and place among the chosen 'geniuses'. Various modes of content delivery are utilized so as to ensure that we avoid a stultifying sameness that will cause visitors to 'tune out' after encountering the first few islands. In relation to each of these figures we are exposed to key elements of their story, to key teachings, to their transformative impact upon religion and society and to their ability to speak across faiths.



III. Saints and Religious Geniuses

(cont'd)

Saints will not only be the subject of each of these mini islands. They will be conversation partners. One of the highlights of the Global House will be the ability to hold AI-supported free exchanges with these figures, addressing them with a variety of individual and societal life concerns. A database of the writings and key reference works of each of these figures provides the basis for this first-of-its kind AI engagement with the saints, making their testimony, value and inspiration real for today and applied to the life of the visitor.

Owning the Message of the Saints

The life and message of the religious geniuses becomes personal through teaching and through prayer. Visitors will have the opportunity to explore quotes and brief messages of the saints, once again featured in their collectivity, and arranged thematically. They will be able, through their personalized devices, to affirm favorite quotes and to add new ones to a database of relevant quotes, including by figures not featured in the exhibition.

III. Saints and Religious Geniuses

Praying with the Saints is the concluding content element in this gallery. Saints have composed prayers. In many faiths, their very being is related to prayer, their own as well as that of the faithful. Thus, relating to the prayer of the saints is a way of making their reality deeply personal. Small personalized alcoves will allow the individual to “commune” with the sources and memories of these individuals and to relate to their teachings and sayings, and especially to go inwards in prayer, in their presence. AI may help suggest appropriate prayers, suited to each visitor. This serves as a bridge to the next gallery, devoted to prayer.



IV. Prayer

An Instrument of Your Peace

At the bridge between the two exhibition areas - Saints and Prayer, a special immersive combining these themes will be featured. Taking the famous prayer, attributed to St. Francis, “Lord make me an instrument of your peace”, a series of prayers from all faiths, highlighting self-transformation and overcoming negativity, will form a visual and audio collage that amounts to a continual prayer/meditation. This presentation runs for an indefinite duration, as the visuals and audio change in ongoing permutations, never repeating, and always translating the words of prayer to a visual message of growth and transformation.

The gateway leading to this gallery features a darkened enclosure that creates the aura of a sacred space. A swelling montage of voices is the only audio experience – a blending of chants, songs and spoken voices that come together to form an arresting but coherent atmospheric environment.



IV. Prayer

The Universal Experiences of Prayer

Emerging from this trance-like experience, and having internalized the sense of the universality of prayer, visitors are invited to recognize the common experiential foundations of prayer, as these find expressions in diverse religions. Individual “portals”, each a small learning center, are devoted to the spiritual and experiential universals of prayer across religions. Experiences/qualities/values such as love, awe, faith and more, all of which are requisite for a full prayer life, will be presented from the resources of multiple religions. They will be further enhanced by testimonies of faith leaders and believers that will speak to these qualities and how they relate to prayer. The impact of prayer will be appreciated on all levels, human, natural, cosmic. A portal devoted to “unity and interconnectedness” allows us to consider the impact of prayer on the earth and its wellbeing. Of special note is the “Peace Portal”, which will be featured as one of the main outcomes and experiential dimensions of prayer, through which this burning global need is addressed.



IV. Prayer

(cont'd) The universality of prayer experience is further enhanced through a series of interactive displays where formal similarities in types of prayer, its purpose and practice are explored, setting aside difference in faith content. Topics such as the typology of different modes of prayer (praise, supplication, thanksgiving, etc.) and associated rituals offer visitors the opportunity to reflect on their own lives: Why do we pray? How do we pray? Where and when do we pray? What do we pray for?

This station is lined with quotations from religious geniuses of all faiths as well as other inspirational figures. The messages and images amount to a call to and inspiration to prayer, emerging as a common universal call.



IV. Prayer

Intimacy and Particularity – Prayer by Faiths

We move from the universal to the particular by means of a physical and metaphorical arrangement of individual prayer spaces, each dedicated to a specific faith, arranged as side chapels (Cathedral like) in a semi-circular space. The visitor “enters” prayer spaces of the different faiths, through videos, live hookup, and some brief overview of the prayer habits, schedules and routines of different religions. Images and videos of individuals in prayer, in forms recognizable as particular to a given tradition, communicate the power of the prayer experience to inspire across religions. This is an apt space to use virtual reality technologies to make these chapels come alive in particular ways.

IV. Prayer

Prayer and the Individual

The goal of the exhibit is to provide understanding, inspire and awaken a desire for prayer. We thus arrive at various methods of making prayer personal. Testimonies of religious leaders on prayer are joined to those of visitors, who enrich the content of the museum and its message on its outward facing channels. “How prayer has shaped my life” is a powerful theme to be shared across the diversity of religions and audiences.

Finding “My” Prayer. A selection of inspirational prayers, accessible by theme or by religion awaits the visitor here, so that he or she can find their unique prayer, appropriate for the moment. A special class are so-called “universal prayers”, that is: prayers that have been articulated in a particular tradition, but that are not specific to it, and can be shared across religions. The visitor has the possibility to go deeper into these prayers in personalized booths or sitting areas, where they can be studied and recited.



IV. Prayer

(cont'd) They can also be accessed on one's device and taken to the dedicated prayer building, adjacent to the exhibition building. An individual's prayer need not come from tradition. It may, and often should, come from within. Accordingly, visitors will also be encouraged to author their own prayers, that could be entered into a database of prayers authored by visitors, to be shared within and beyond the confines of the exhibition space (depending on interest of visitor).

Coming Together in Prayer

The exhibition's concluding experience moves us from the individual to the community of visitors. At the center of the Cathedral-like space (or at the end of the sequence of galleries), visitors encounter a vast and dynamic vortex, spiraling up to the heavens, lifting visitors' own prayers to be suffused into our lives and the lives of all people. This arresting and memorable form of taking the experience out into the world and into one's life will inspire visitors to make prayer a bridge between their interior life and the world at large, social, natural and cosmic, within which our personal processes take place.



V. Exit

The Fruit of Hope

Exiting the “experience” of the Global House, we take time to digest all that we have experienced by means of a hope-themed artistic immersive, designed by Massimiliano Siccardi. Siccardi immersives provide bookends for the Global House experience. The journey, images, saints, and prayers, all feed a forward-looking vision, summarized by the one word “hope”. Hope is not simply a quality we strive for. The individual visitor, having gone through the journey of the Global House of Friendship and Hope, becomes himself or herself, the hope. Completing the journey, this immersive is all of the following: a prayer, a commitment and a signpost in the direction of becoming beacons of hope in the world.



The Annex

The Global House of Friendship and Hope is not, in and of itself, a religious space of prayer. It is an experience that grows out of a museum-type presentation. And yet, its very reality is a call to prayer. In the spirit of papal convenings in Assisi, it seeks to feature universal values, while upholding religious particularity. This is achieved in the annex to the main building, which is a unique kind of universal/particular prayer space. Access is free for all, and is not dependent on the museum visit. It is assumed that a significant portion of visitors to the exhibition would wish to shift modality and move to a purely prayerful modality, following their visit. They can do so in the Annex prayer building.

The Annex

The unique solution for a common, yet distinct, space of prayer for all, is achieved by technological means. This building will house a 360 degree immersive, that will project different scenes of noted houses of worship of different religions worldwide. It will thus evoke those iconic places in the mind of the visitor, who will feel transported to the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the Blue Mosque in Istanbul or the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Multiple iconic sites, associated with each of the religions will alternate, creating a religiously specific serially. When visiting groups, who wish to practice their particular traditions rituals come, there will be a focus on one such site. The one space will thus be spiritually enlivened by the power of prayer, while evoking the many memories and impressions of some of humanity's most noted prayer spaces. Religious particularity may also be evoked through projections that are suggestive and symbolic of different religions, complementing the primary reliance on video immersives.