

Rabbi Abie Ingber

Rabbi Abie Ingber is a pioneering advocate of immigrant and refugee rights, social justice and interfaith collaboration. For over 30 years, he served as the executive director of the Hillel Jewish Student Center at the University of Cincinnati. In 2008, he founded the [Center for Interfaith Community Engagement](#) at Xavier University and served as its executive director until his retirement in 2018. He was also a senior visiting professor in the University's Department of Theology, and Special Assistant to Fr. Michael Graham, S.J., President of Xavier. Rabbi Abie works with people of all faiths and ages toward the goals of mutual understanding and social justice. He celebrates life's differences and teaches that joy is present in all religions and cultures.

His mother escaped from Nazi-occupied Poland on Christmas Eve in 1942. Rabbi Abie and John Feister wrote an article about her escape entitled, [A Christmas Miracle for a Jewish Woman](#), which appeared in the December 2014 edition of the St. Anthony Messenger. Rabbi Abie grew up in Canada and received his undergraduate degree in microbiology and immunology from McGill University. He went on to earn a master's degree and rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College.

As a teenager, he talked his way into [John Lennon and Yoko Ono's](#) hotel room during their 1969 Bed-In in Montreal, a non-violent protest in support of peace, when they recorded "Give Peace a Chance."

More recently, his work on behalf of refugees and interfaith understanding has taken him around the world to [Darfur](#), Uganda, and Kenya with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), a nonpartisan organization that works around the world to protect those who have been forced to flee their homelands. His work has also taken him to Cameroon to talk with Muslim students; to Ethiopia and Egypt; to the Museum of Dialogue of Cultures in Poland; and to Korea to lecture at two universities.

For eight years Rabbi Ingber served as an NPR Morning Edition radio commentator on WVXU. His tag line, "I'm Rabbi Abie Ingber, and now you know what I think," was recognized throughout the SW Ohio and Michigan region. Rabbi Abie has served as vice president of the Interreligious Information Center in New York City, and as a founding board member of the Brueggeman Center for Dialogue at Xavier University. With the Brueggeman Center, Rabbi Abie co-

created an award-winning exhibit, ["A Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People,"](#) which toured 18 cities and the Vatican, and was seen by over a million people. In 2007, he co-convened the first Catholic-Jewish Lay Conference at the Vatican. Rabbi Ingber currently serves on the Boards of Yahad-in-Unum Mid-America (with Fr. Patrick Desbois, Paris); International Human Rights Arts Festival (New York) and Closing the Health Gap (Cincinnati).

Rabbi Abie's work has been recognized with many awards, including the 2008 Eternal Light Award from the Center for Jewish Catholic Studies in Tampa, Florida and the Dr. Martin Luther King Award from the University of Cincinnati. In 2012, President Barack Obama invited him to the White House. His passion for [Tikkun Olam](#), or "healing the world," has led him to meet not only with refugees and students around the world, but also with three popes, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, human rights activist Elie Wiesel, and Miep Gies, the woman who tried to save the life of Anne Frank during the Holocaust. In 2016, Rabbi Ingber received Roosevelt University's highest honorary degree, the Doctor of Social Justice, *honoris causa*.

In his decade as Executive Director of the Center for Interfaith Community Engagement at Xavier University, he provided unique cultural learning opportunities on campus and beyond. Annually, he led a trip of nursing and pre-med students to [Guatemala](#) where they provided medical care to underserved populations. That program has now been transferred to Regis University in Denver. When a pastor in Florida threatened to burn the Koran, he encouraged students of all faiths to [read the Koran aloud](#) in the center of campus, showing how similar Islam is to its Abrahamic brethren. To bring the sound of the Hebrew Bible to the campus community, Rabbi Abie convened students and community to read the Bible aloud and non-stop for 58 hours. More than 30 languages were used in the public reading.

Rabbi Ingber, in his retirement, served as Rabbi-in-Residence at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati, the seat of the Episcopal community. He also continues to travel the world lecturing, while carving out time to complete his children's books, his collection of radio commentaries, and his musical theater presentation for the Cincinnati Opera.