

Michael Nazir-Ali addresses the 'Principalities and Powers' at CSI annual conference

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, May 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "When we are dealing with persecuted Christians and indeed other persecuted communities, we often have the sense that we are not just dealing with wicked individuals who are persecuting," Monsignor Michael Nazir-Ali observed in his keynote address at Christian Solidarity International's annual conference. "There is something more than that, something extra."

Monsignor Michael Nazir-Ali, a renowned British-Pakistani priest and public intellectual, was CSI's guest of honor at its annual conference in Zurich on April 1. Dr. Nazir-Ali delivered the keynote address at the conference, which was entitled, "The Struggle for Human Freedom and Dignity in a Warring World."



Monsignor Michael Nazir-Ali stands among the Christian's world leading thinkers and social commentators. photo: csi

CSI, a Christian human rights group, today published a [video](#) and [full transcript](#) of Dr. Nazir-Ali's talk on its website. The theme of Dr. Nazir-Ali's talk was inspired by the late Pope Francis' comment that we are living through "a third world war, fought piecemeal."

Drawing on the Apostle Paul's claim in the letter to the Ephesians that "we are not contending against flesh and blood but against the principalities, against the powers," Nazir-Ali argued that the rising religious persecution and warfare we observe in today's world is driven by deeper structures – ideologies, cultures, and "systems of domination" present in governments and organizations.

Dr. Nazir-Ali brought his deep theological knowledge and his wide experience as a cross-cultural advocate for justice to bear on the theme. He guided his listeners through the main biblical texts concerning these structures, and some of the theological debates surrounding them.

He also expounded the meaning of Apostle Paul's admonition to "gird yourself with truth" when confronting the powers. "In different contexts, speaking truth to power will mean different things," he suggested. In Syria, it means telling the truth about "who these people are who have been brought to power by the principalities and powers." In Pakistan, it means defending victims of blasphemy accusations using the existing principles of the legal system there. And in the West, it means rejecting a "false anthropology" promulgated by the socio-political establishment.

Ultimately, Dr. Nazir-Ali concluded, confronting the powers "requires working with faith for truth, justice and peace in a cruel and unjust world." "This is the calling of the Cross. It should be our calling."

The author of many books, Michael Nazir-Ali stands among the Christian's world leading thinkers and social commentators. He was born in Karachi, Pakistan, where he was ordained as an Anglican priest. He subsequently served in Pakistan as Bishop of Raiwind, and in the UK as General Secretary of the Church Mission Society (CMS), Bishop of Rochester and a member of parliament's House of Lords. He currently President of the Oxford Centre for Training, Research, Advocacy and Dialogue. In 2021 he was received into the Catholic communion and ordained as a Catholic priest. Pope Francis bestowed on him the title Prelate of Honor of His Holiness.

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