For a world deeply in need
Now more than ever, the world needs justice

- **31 countries** carry out the forced disappearance of their citizens
- **101 countries** repress freedom of expression
- **112 countries** torture their citizens
- **76% of the world’s population** lives under regimes that restrict religious freedom
- More people are enslaved today than at any time in human history

“A vision for justice and human dignity

Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., had a vision for Notre Dame: to defend human dignity by promoting democracy, peace, and justice across the globe. Founded by Fr. Hesburgh in 1973, The Center for Civil and Human Rights promotes justice by:

**Educating**
first-rate human rights lawyers to defend the rights of the oppressed

**Enlightening**
the world community through innovative research on pressing human rights issues

“We have to offer leadership because it’s not just something we profess as a casual thing, it’s our faith… that’s why we’re not just a University here, we’re a Catholic University. We do believe deeply in these matters and they’re a matter of our total profession of faith in the dignity of human beings.”

Fr. Hesburgh on the need for an Institute to study human rights.
Changing the world, one human rights lawyer at a time

CCHR has educated more than **300 lawyers from over 85 countries**, giving them the knowledge and skills to fight for justice where justice is needed most.

Our graduate programs in international human rights law provide our students with a strong legal, philosophical, and ethical foundation. Many go on to serve internships in prominent human rights institutions throughout the world.

“Our alumni network stretches across the globe. CCHR graduates bring Notre Dame values to bear both in international human rights bodies and on the ground in their home countries.”

Pablo Saavedra, a Chilean lawyer, received his master’s degree (LL.M.) in international human rights law at CCHR in 1996. He is now the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, one of the world’s leading human rights bodies.

“The Center for Civil and Human Rights was essential to my formation as a human rights lawyer. It opened my eyes to an international perspective and instilled in me the spirit of the Fighting Irish: sincerity, humility, a hunger for continual learning, and an eagerness to improve society. To put it simply, I was one kind of lawyer before Notre Dame and a different kind of lawyer after Notre Dame.”

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Knowledge in service of human dignity

CCHR enlightens the world through research on urgent human rights issues. That commitment is now redoubled as we launch a new research agenda targeting four crucial human rights issues.

Defending Religious Freedom

Never has the freedom to practice one’s faith been more threatened. CCHR has identified this issue as a top research priority.

Through field work, publications, and conferences, CCHR’s research draws the world’s attention to the repression of religion as one of the most widespread of human rights violations.

Rebuilding Torn Societies

In countries recovering from war, genocide, and dictatorship, CCHR investigates the overlooked but critical role of civil society – indigenous communities, the Church, and non-governmental organizations – in addressing past injustices.

Of special interest are reconciliation and forgiveness, which bring a fresh approach to transitional justice among these beleaguered peoples.
Making the connection

CCHR was founded on the belief that we could make a difference in the lives of people suffering injustice. In addition to our academic and research programs, we engage in activities that connect people with knowledge and resources:

- **Strategic Partnerships**
  CCHR partners with human rights, academic, and Church communities throughout the world.

- **Catholic Social Thought / Human Rights Database**
  An innovative online research tool that will enable scholars, students, and officials to explore the connection between Catholic social thought and human rights law.

- **Arc of the Universe: Ethics and Global Justice**
  A new blog on global justice with contributors from around the world.

- **Faculty Affiliates**
  Over 70 faculty affiliates from departments across Notre Dame make CCHR a truly interdisciplinary center.

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**Strengthening Human Rights Institutions**

From Africa and Asia to Europe and the Americas, regional institutions are critical for protecting human rights. We study how these institutions can be strengthened.

The convening power of Notre Dame allows CCHR to gather prominent scholars and human rights practitioners together to help analyze and support these regional systems.

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**Exposing the Dynamics of Human Trafficking**

Today, over 20 million people are exploited in forms of modern-day slavery. Trafficked persons are drawn from vulnerable populations and are often women and children. They are denied their most basic human rights.

In addition to its own scholarly activities, CCHR works to build an active Notre Dame community that educates the public about human trafficking.
“Now is the time.”

Fr. Hesburgh to CCHR director Daniel Philpott on the need to realize the vision of a fully funded Institute.
The Center for Civil and Human Rights is founded on the belief that every human being, created in the image of God, has a dignity entitled to respect and protection. In all of its efforts, the Center stands in solidarity with the oppressed, the afflicted, and the vulnerable and seeks to secure their human rights and the conditions for their flourishing.

Through education, the Center aspires to equip human rights lawyers and other students to become champions of human rights in every corner of the world.

Through research, the Center aims to raise awareness of particular forms of oppression among activists, officials, scholars, and students in order that they may promote human rights more effectively.

These commitments emanate from the Catholic tradition of justice found at the heart of the University of Notre Dame.

Learn more and stay in touch:

humanrights.nd.edu