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Exhibit displays written American history of religious freedom

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Posted: Friday, August 21, 2015 3:16 pm

Nathaniel Lee Tribune Correspondent | 0 comments

Staffers at the National Constitution Center announced plans to open a new exhibit during a press conference Wednesday.

The Religious Liberty Exhibit is timed to coincide with the World Meeting of Families which orchestrates the visit of Pope Francis in September and the Dalai Lama who will receive the Liberty Medal in the fall.

During the conference, the NCC's president and CEO, Jeffrey Rosen, described the historic documents that will be part of the exhibit and the role each document played in the development of religious freedom here in the U.S.

"This is so exciting, we are inaugurating a fall-long celebration of religious liberty to celebrate the visit of the pope and the Dalai Lama who is receiving the Liberty Medal at the Constitution Center in October," said Rosen.



Jeffrey Rosen, center, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center at 525 Arch St., conducts a media preview of the Religious Liberty Exhibit currently on display until Jan. 3, 2016.—TRIBUNE PHOTO BY NATHANIEL LEE

"We are opening up an exhibit of the rarest treasures of religious liberty, the founding documents that established our basic constitutional rights of religious freedom."

And that's not all: The NCC will also host a series of programs, discussions and symposiums which will bring together those who will discuss religious freedom from multiple perspectives.

So what can visitors expect to find at the exhibit?

Those who attend the exhibit will find a copy of George Washington's first Thanksgiving Proclamation penned in 1789 where he writes: "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of almighty God."

"We think of Thanksgiving as the pilgrims and turkey but actually it was a celebration of the Constitution itself that led Washington to announce the first Thanksgiving," said Rosen.

There are also Washington's letters written to Roman Catholic and Jewish religious groups who congratulated him on becoming the nation's first president as well as a historic letter from Thomas Jefferson where he addresses the First Amendment and his belief that it establishes a wall of separation between church and state.

Other artifacts include documents by Benjamin Franklin, a collection of Public Acts and Ordinances from Virginia from 1785, and more.

"We were so thrilled that the pope is coming to Philadelphia and that the Dalai Lama accepted the Liberty Medal that we here at the Constitution Center thought that it was our job to educate people about the meaning of religious liberty," Rosen said.

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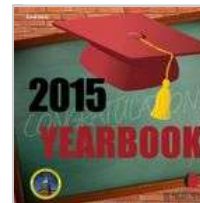
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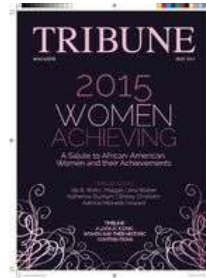


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"I thought it would be exciting to bring together in one place the most important and meaningful documents relating to religious liberty in the world."

The Religious Liberty Exhibit will be open Aug. 21 through Jan. 3, 2016.

For more information about the exhibit or other programs, contact the National Constitution Center at (215) 409-6700 or online at www.constitutioncenter.org.



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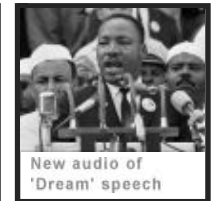
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▼ 92.84	▼ 4.70%
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▼ 15.73	▼ 1.342%
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