

# Faith Digest: Lego says Jabba set not anti-Islam

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**Lego says set isn't anti-Muslim.** Danish toymaker Lego is defending its Star Wars-based Jabba the Hutt building-blocks set after a Turkish cultural group said it promulgates negative stereotypes of Muslims. Earlier this year, the Turkish Cultural Community of Austria criticized the Danish toy company, saying the Jabba's Palace set was insensitive because of its similarity to Muslim mosques. In the Star Wars film series, Jabba is a giant, slug-like crime lord whose palace regularly was filled with unsavory characters. The Turkish group said the toy set resembles Istanbul's renowned Hagia Sophia—a church-turned-mosque that's now a museum—and the Jami al-Kabir mosque in Beirut. Part of the set, they continued, looks like a minaret. Lego responded in statement that its product “does not reflect any non-fictional buildings, people or the mentioned mosque.” Lego announced it will pull the Jabba's Palace set—which sells for about \$120—off shelves at the end of the year, but not because some considered it offensive. “The Lego Star Wars product Jabba's Palace 9516 was planned from the beginning to be in the assortment only until the end of 2013 as new exciting models from the Star Wars universe will follow,” the statement read.

**Prayer for persecuted Christians scheduled in Dallas.**



Participants from different

religious traditions will gather in Dallas to pray for the persecuted. A broad-based group of Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, mainline Protestant and evangelical Christians will gather to pray for persecuted Christians—particularly in the Middle East—and draw attention to their plight. The Prayer for Martyrs event is scheduled for 7 p.m. April 9 at Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas. Featured speakers include Jeff Wickwire, pastor of Turning Point Church in Fort Worth; Billy Abraham, professor in SMU’s Perkins School of Theology; Kevin Kanouse, bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America; Mike McKee, bishop in the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church; and Douglas Deshotel, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Dallas.

**Canadian prisoners sue over lack of chaplains.** Inmates in British Columbia have filed suit to overturn a decision by the Canadian government to cut part-time prison chaplains, alleging the policy has nearly eliminated prison ministry to minority faiths. The lawsuit asks the court to declare the policy a violation of Canada’s Charter of Rights and to reinstate minority faith chaplains in British Columbia. The suit was triggered by Ottawa’s announcement last October that it was canceling the contracts of all part-time prison chaplains to save an estimated \$1.3 million. The non-Christian chaplains ministered to Muslim, Sikh, Jewish and Buddhist inmates, and those who follow aboriginal spirituality. The legal action, brought against Attorney General Rob Nicholson and Public Safety Minister Vic Toews, charges Christian prisoners continue to have access to Christian

religious services, Bible study sessions and other faith-based activities. Prison advocates said the cuts would hurt non-Christian prisoners, who would be expected to turn to full-time chaplains—most of whom are Christians—for spiritual care and guidance. Of the 75 full-time chaplains at federal prisons, 37 are Roman Catholic, 36 are Protestant, and two are Muslim, according to the Correctional Service of Canada.