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## [Newest Templeton Prize winner rejects "intelligent design"](#) [3]

The recipient of the 2008 Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities was Michael Heller, a Polish cosmologist and Catholic priest, currently Professor in the Faculty of Philosophy at the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Krakow. John M. Templeton Jr., the chair of the John Templeton Foundation and the son of Sir John Templeton, who established the prize in 1973, [told](#) [4] the *Times* of London (March 13, 2008), "Michael Heller's quest for deeper understanding has led to pioneering breakthroughs in religious concepts and knowledge as well as expanding the horizons of science." Heller will receive the prize from Prince Philip at a private ceremony at Buckingham Palace on May 7, 2008; it brings with it 1.6 million dollars, which Heller plans to use to establish a center for the study of science and theology in Krakow.

In a March 12, 2008, [statement](#) [5] (PDF) prepared for a press conference about the award, Heller addressed "intelligent design," writing, "Adherents of the so-called intelligent design ideology commit a grave theological error. They claim that scientific theories, that ascribe the great role to chance and random events in the evolutionary processes, should be replaced, or supplemented, by theories acknowledging the thread of intelligent design in the universe. Such views are theologically erroneous. They implicitly revive the old manicheistic error postulating the existence of two forces acting against each other: God and an inert matter; in this case, chance and intelligent design. There is no opposition here. Within the all-comprising Mind of God what we call chance and random events is well composed into the symphony of creation."

In 2005, responding to a piece in the *Wall Street Journal* that described the Templeton Foundation as a patron of the "intelligent design" movement, the foundation's senior vice president Charles L. Harper Jr. [wrote](#) [6] (PDF), "Quite the opposite is true. ... Templeton support has gone to intelligent design proponents in rare situations, representing roughly 0.1% of our activity. In two of the cases cited, these

involved grants won in judged competitions involving non-intelligent-design-related topics. The others involved two professors who we think have become public intelligent design advocates only after getting grants from us." A [section](#) [7] of the Foundation's website discusses its position on "intelligent design" further, stressing that "we do not believe the science underpinning the 'Intelligent Design' movement is sound [and] we do not support research or programs that deny large areas of well-documented scientific knowledge."

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