

A Periodical of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University

## Annual Seminarists' Institute

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU) of Sacred Heart University sponsored its second annual Institute for Seminarists and Rabbinical Students on June 4-6, 2001. The event took place on the University's Fairfield campus and gathered 20 future religious leaders from the Jewish and Christian faiths to study and discuss the advances made in Christian-Jewish dialogue over the last 35 years, and to explore possibilities for future progress.

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish



Jewish and Christian participants at the 2001 Seminarists' Institute, sponsored by the CCJU, engage in lively discussion after each of the presentations.



Understanding, said that the Institute was an inspiration to him. "This was an excellent opportunity for Jewish and Christian seminarists to really study with each other and get to know each other. I am convinced that such efforts will help us all to secure a future of peace and understanding," he said.

David L. Coppola, Ph.D., director of conferences and publications for the CCJU, who facilitated the Institute, said that the conference "again attracted international, national and local leaders who gave presentations and interacted

with the students. We began with a basic trust in each other to speak the truth of each tradition respectfully and to present each side honestly and authentically. The result was an excellent three days where the students participated in a positive experience of interreligious understanding. Now

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## Letters

May 24, 2001

To: His Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper  
President, Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews  
Vatican City

As you know, over a billion people watched the spiritual journey of His Holiness Pope John Paul II as he followed the steps of St. Paul in Damascus. Many saw or listened to his remarks in Damascus and those of President Assad of Syria. As you can readily appreciate, President Assad's virulent accusations against the Jewish People are extremely hurtful to us. They bring to the surface fears and remind us of the historical tribulations that have, until recently, defined the relationship between the Jewish community and the Christian Church. Further, he unfortunately misapprehends the doctrine of the Catholic Church, as we understand it, regarding the Jewish religion and completely misstates what we understand to be the Church's view of the historical events surrounding the life and death of Jesus.

We are concerned that many of those who heard President Assad's words may not be aware that his representation of Church doctrine is inaccurate. Indeed, sadly, he may, himself, not be aware of the revolutionary changes in Church thinking over the last 35 years. We are concerned that through ignorance of these recent teachings or through inadvertence or malicious intent, the misreading of Church doctrine here by a political figure could easily have baleful effects.

Specifically, we fear that many in the Muslim world may take these statements as an accurate reflection of Church teaching, thus making reconciliation and understanding between Christians and Jews, not to speak of Muslims and Jews, in the region, that much more difficult.

We are saddened that these events have become for some an occasion for "Pope-bashing," although it is obvious to us and to any fair-minded observer that responsibility cannot be placed on the Pope for the rhetoric of his hosts or of those accompanying him. Indeed, the Pope himself made clear his views on the proper relationship between religions including Christianity, Judaism and Islam when he stated, while in Syria, "We all know that real peace can only be achieved if there is a new attitude of understanding and respect between the peoples of the region, between the followers of the three Abrahamic religions. Step by step, with vision and courage, the political and religious leaders of the region must create the conditions for the development that their peoples have a right to, after so much conflict and suffering. Among these conditions, it is important that there be an evolution in the way the peoples of the region see one another, and that at every level of society the principles of peaceful coexistence be taught and promoted."

We humbly request that you find a positive and concrete way for the Vatican to specifically correct the misreading of Church doc-

trine that we fear arose during the Pope's recent visit to Damascus.

To in any way cast doubt on the Pope's total condemnation of anti-Semitism or his continuing personal efforts on behalf of Christian-Jewish reconciliation is to be completely ignorant of what the Pope has actually said and done during the course of his Pontificate. For example, in addition to his many statements, his speech to the Jews in Poland has made this clear. There he has said, "Be sure, dear brothers, that the Poles, this Polish Church, is in a spirit of profound solidarity with you when she looks closely at the terrible reality of the extermination - the unconditional extermination - of your nation, an extermination carried out with premeditation... The Polish pope has a particular relationship with all this, because, along with you, he has in a certain sense lived all this here, in this land."

We appreciate the efforts of the Catholic Church in recent years to state publicly the correct theological relationship of Catholics and Jews and to correct the errors of the "teaching of contempt." These efforts are evident to all in the Councilar document of *Nostra Aetate* at Vatican II, in the *Guidelines*, the *Notes*, the *We Remember* document, as well as the fundamental agreement between Israel and the Holy See.

We seek your thoughts on how to make certain these views are properly promulgated in all areas of the world. Please be assured of our continuing respect and friendship and collaboration in working together to bring about Catholic-Jewish reconciliation.

### *Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue Co-Chairmen*

Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding Connecticut	Rabbi Jack Bemporad Center for Interreligious Understanding New Jersey
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### *Executive Committee*

Professor Marshall Breger Rabbi Elliot Dorff Rabbi Emanuel Goldsmith Rabbi David Lincoln Rabbi Harold Schulweis Rabbi Ronald B. Sobel Rabbi Robert Widom	Catholic University of America, School of Law University of Judaism, California Queens College of Jewish Studies, New York Park Avenue Synagogue, New York Valley Beth Shalom, California Temple Emanu-El, New York Temple Emanuel, Great Neck, NY
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### *Cardinal Kasper replies:*

26 May 2001

Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz  
Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding  
Sacred Heart University  
5151 Park Avenue  
Fairfield, Connecticut 06432-1000 (USA)

Dear Rabbi Ehrenkranz,

Thank you most cordially for transmitting to me the letter of May 24 from the Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue. I am

certainly grateful for the sensitivity expressed by you and your colleagues.

Let me assure you at once of my empathy for how some of the words of President Assad created anxiety in the Jewish community. I am sure these words evoked terrible memories and I understand your concern.

On Sunday, May 13, the Holy Father said the following in this *Angelus* address:

All people, in particular those responsible for the international community, have the duty to help both sides in the conflict break this immoral chain of provocation and reprisals. It must be remembered, and repeated again and again, that the language of peace and the culture of peace must replace the language of incitement and hate.

I confess to being disturbed by the assumption that President Assad's speech could be interpreted as Catholic teaching. I want to assure you that the Catholic Church will continue to teach what it has consistently taught since *Nostra Aetate* in 1965, that the Jews are not responsible for the death of Christ. This will be done, as always, at the exclusion of political consideration.

Sincerely,  
Walter Cardinal Kasper  
President, Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews

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*The Jewish Forward*  
May 25, 2001  
Letters to the Editor, page 8.

Pope: Respect Is Key to Real Peace

To repudiate Dan Friedman's statement in his letter to the editor of May 18, "Syria's Lesson: Know Your Allies," allow me to quote from the Pope in Syria: "We all know that real peace can only be achieved if there is a new attitude of understanding and respect between the peoples of the region, between the followers of the three Abrahamic religions. Step by step, with vision and courage, the political and religious leaders of the region must create the conditions for the development that their peoples have a right to, after so much conflict and suffering."

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz  
Executive Director  
Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding  
of Sacred Heart University  
Fairfield, Connecticut

## www.ccju.org

The site contains descriptions of CCJU conferences and events, as well as archives and publications of the Center. Of special interest to scholars is a comprehensive and accurate list of dozens of recent Catholic and Christian statements on Christian-Jewish relations and hundreds of other articles. Students may find the Related Links tool particularly interesting because of its Bible and Qur'an searches, Torah on-line, the Vatican, and several engaging interreligious links. We hope that you will enjoy the site, and we welcome any suggestions that will help us to foster greater understanding among religions.

## CCJU PERSPECTIVE

**Volume VIII, No. 2, Fall 2001**

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of Sacred Heart University

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*CCJU Perspective* is published semi-annually by the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University, a not-for-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law. © 2001 Sacred Heart University. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

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## *Chief Rabbi of the Ukraine & the Pope Pray at Babi Yar*

When Pope John Paul II came to visit the Babi Yar monument for a time of prayer June 25, 2001, he was warmly greeted by Rabbi Yaakov Dov Bleich, Chief Rabbi of the Ukraine. They prayed together at Babi Yar, the ravine in which more than 30,000 people—the majority of whom were Jews—were seized in 1941 and executed within one week's time in Kiev by Nazi troops. Over a two-year period, about 200,000 people were killed and buried in Babi Yar in common graves. They were among the 17 million Ukrainians estimated to have died from persecution or famine. Today the ravine is a memorial surrounded by trees and a place of pilgrimage, especially for Jews.

"Thanks to the efforts of Pope John Paul II, there is hope that there will be no more Babi Yars," the rabbi, who represents a Jewish community of about 500,000, said in a written message later handed to the Pope.

At a meeting with some religious leaders in Kiev, the Pope said the Nazi killings of Jews at Babi Yar was an "episode of murderous frenzy" and one of the most atrocious crimes against humanity recorded in the 20th century, and should serve as "a salutary warning to all. Who can ever forget the immense tribute of blood which they paid to the fanaticism of an ideology propounding the superiority of one race over others? What atrocities is man capable of when he fools himself into thinking that he can do without God!" he said.

Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, said the Pope's visit at Babi Yar was significant. "I think it is an act of historical justice to honor these martyrs," he said. ♦

## *Interreligious Dialogue*

Reflecting on the theme of interreligious dialogue at his weekly general audience on November 29, 2000, Pope John Paul II told over 30,000 people

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*The religious texts of other religions point to a future of communion with God, of purification and salvation, and they encourage people to seek the truth and defend the values of life, holiness, justice, peace and freedom.*

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gathered in St. Peter's Square "to recognize the authentic religious experiences of others and to listen to them in a spirit of humility." What follows is the text of the Pope's remarks in English.

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

*In today's catechesis we reflect on the theme of interreligious dialogue. God, who is the Father of all, offers the gift of salvation to all the nations. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who is also at work outside the visible*

*limits of the Church, people in every part of the world seek to adore God in an authentic way.*

*The religious texts of other religions point to a future of communion with God, of purification and salvation, and they encourage people to seek the truth and defend the values of life, holiness, justice, peace and freedom. When Christians engage in interreligious dialogue, they bring with them their faith in Jesus Christ, the only savior of the world. This same faith teaches them to recognize the authentic religious experiences of others and to listen to them in a spirit of humility, in order to discover and appreciate every ray of truth from wherever it comes.* ♦

## *Pope's Mea Culpa One Year Later*

The "mea culpa" the Pope expressed last March remains one of the most significant events of the Jubilee and was very possibly the most moving. In the wake of the Pope's request for forgiveness, many local churches confessed the faults that have marked the history of each country.

In the United States, ecclesial repentance had a diocesan character. Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston spoke of past sins, such as Negro slavery and, more recently, the abuses committed by some priests. Archbishop Michael Sheehan of Santa Fe stressed the faults committed against the Indians. Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver asked forgiveness for continuing prejudice against Jews, and the archdiocese of New York, then led by the late Cardinal John O'Connor, asked for for-

giveness for those "who have hated the poor because of their poverty." The "mea culpa" in neighboring Canada was directed toward the natives. The Australian bishops' conference asked for forgiveness for the harms caused to aborigines when many children were taken from their families to be educated in the missions.

Brazil had a simultaneous celebration: the Great Jubilee of 2000, and 500th anniversary of its discovery. This coincidence made Brazil's "mea culpa" that much more keenly felt, for the wounds to "the human dignity of many of our brothers, especially the Indians, whose land, life, and even reason for living was taken from them, and the Negroes, whose liberty was removed."

The Argentine bishops pointed out eight sins committed by believers, among them those "against human rights," an explicit reference to "culpable silences" and "effective participation" in abuses committed during the 1976-1983 dictatorship.

In Cuba, the bishops asked for forgiveness for everything in the history of the local Church that "denied the Gospel of truth and love."

Several bishops' conferences in Europe addressed the issue of anti-Semitism. The Church in Germany

chose a specific form of reparation: to compensate some 7,000 victims of forced labor who were employed in ecclesiastical structures during the Third Reich. Polish bishops asked forgiveness for "all those among us who have shown contempt for people of another creed, or tolerated anti-Semitism at the time of the *Shoah*." The Swiss bishops asked for a similar "mea culpa," admitting that it "could have done more" against "the murderous tyranny of National Socialism." The Spanish bishops focused on the Civil War and asked for forgiveness for all those who stained themselves with actions that the Gospel deplors. ♦

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## *Rabbi Leon Klenicki Retires*

Rabbi Leon Klenicki, an international pioneer in Catholic-Jewish relations, announced his retirement December 31, 2000, as the interfaith affairs director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in New York. He joined the ADL staff in 1973 as director of Jewish-Catholic relations.

Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore, U.S. bishops' moderator of Catholic-Jewish relations, said the

rabbi's numerous books and articles on Catholic-Jewish issues—many co-written with Catholic scholars—"constitute an extremely valuable resource for anyone who is in the field of Catholic-Jewish relations. We have not always agreed on certain issues. . . but he really has gone the extra mile in trying to explain to Catholic groups in Europe and South America, as well as in our own country, the position of the Jewish community, and also a perspective of the Jewish faith that is extremely helpful."

Rabbi Klenicki has been one of the major leaders who helped to implement the vision of the Second Vatican Council in the United States and internationally as it applies to Jews and Catholics. While best known in United States interfaith circles, Rabbi Klenicki has played an important role in Catholic-Jewish relations in Latin America since the 1960s. In 1968, in connection with Pope Paul VI's visit to Bogota, Colombia, he gave a major paper at the first continent-wide Latin American meeting of Catholics and Jews. For the Latin American bishops' council and the Argentine Council of Jews and Christians, he did the first study in South America of the treatment of Jews and Judaism in Catholic catechetical texts. In the 1990s he traveled several times to Poland to help develop programs of Catholic-Jewish understanding. Rabbi Klenicki has written, edited, co-written or co-edited hundreds of articles and books. Many have appeared in both English and Spanish, and some have also been translated into other languages, including Italian, Portuguese, German

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## *Father John F. Hotchkin Dies*

Father John F. Hotchkin, who for more than 30 years was executive director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, died on June 28, 2001, in New York. He was a gifted priest with a fine sense of humor, who for 50 years helped to chart Catholic-Jewish relations, especially at the time following the Second Vatican Council. He was truly one of the giants who pioneered the paths that Catholic-Jewish dialogue now enjoys.

and Polish.

Rabbi Klenicki, who turned 70 in September, said he will remain an ADL consultant and will continue teaching at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York, where he has been a professor of Jewish Studies since 1978. He will also continue as the ADL's co-liasion with the Vatican, a position he shares with Rabbi David Rosen of Jerusalem. He said he plans to devote more time to several research and writing projects, including a planned collection of studies on the New Testament and rabbinic Judaism. He also hopes to finish a book on daily spirituality he is co-writing with his wife, Myra. ♦

## Cardinal Cassidy Retires

At 76 years old, Australian Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy stepped down in early March as president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and as president of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews at the Vatican. When he took up these posts in 1989, the Catholic-Jewish international liaison committee had not met for years. Dialogue was practically at a standstill because of tensions over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz, the Nazi death camp in Poland, and because of Pope John Paul II's meetings with Palestinian leader Chairman Yasser



Arafat and with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim, who had been accused of collaborating with the Nazis. Also, the Vatican and Israel had no diplomatic relations at the time.

Cardinal Cassidy carefully guided the Vatican toward improved relations, helping to write a landmark document on the Holocaust in 1998 (*We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*) and assisting the Pope on his journey to the Holy Land. He focused on building respect, trust and friendship between Catholics and Jews and then found ways to celebrate common ground and overcome differences.

He had spent two years as assistant Vatican secretary of state and, before that, 33 years in the Vatican diplomatic corps, serving in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe. He is a friend of the CCJU and received its *Nostra Aetate* Award in 1999.

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding called Cardinal Cassidy "a trusted friend of the Jewish people, who could always be counted on to be a clear voice amid any controversy. The Catholic Church's relationship with other religions, especially based on the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, has helped Catholic-Jewish relations move forward in unprecedented ways—much is due to his service."

Cardinal Cassidy will return to Australia to spend time with his brothers and sisters and their families, and he would like to celebrate Mass in parishes and visit the sick near his new home there. ♦

## Congressional Medal of Honor for Cardinal O'Connor

The legacy of Cardinal John O'Connor as a great moral leader was recognized when President George W. Bush presented the Congressional Gold Medal to Mary O'Connor Ward, the cardinal's sister, and Cardinal Edward Egan, archbishop of New York, during a ceremony in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

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*He was a man  
who left a mark on his time.  
A moral leader  
not only in title, but in truth.  
A defender of the faith,  
the very kind who have  
kept the faith alive for  
two millennia.*

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Cardinal Egan presided at the July 10 ceremony. The cathedral was filled to overflowing with civic leaders, people who had worked with the Cardinal, clergy, religious and laity from every part of the Archdiocese of New York. "Priest, admiral, bishop and archbishop, he left us, his beloved flock, an example and a legacy of understanding and compassion across racial, religious and ethnic lines that we shall never forget; an example and a legacy which we thank the Congress of the United States most sincerely for recalling and celebrating this day in the presence of our esteemed President," the Cardinal said.

# News and Notes

The medal is the highest honor awarded by Congress to individuals, institutions or events. Lawmakers and then-President Bill Clinton approved the recognition for Cardinal O'Connor last year. He was selected for the medal months before his death last year in May, and the medal was struck by the U.S. Mint later in the year. It bears an image of Cardinal O'Connor on the front, and on the back it has his coat of arms with the motto, "There can be no peace without justice."

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University (CCJU), attended the ceremony and said, "Cardinal O'Connor was a great man and an admirable religious leader. He was a tireless advocate for improved Christian-Jewish relations, and a dear friend of the CCJU. He would go completely out of his way to promote harmony. We miss him greatly and hope that his legacy will inspire courage in other religious leaders to work for peace and understanding."

Below is the text of President Bush's address at St. Patrick's Cathedral to present the Congressional Gold Medal posthumously to Cardinal John O'Connor.

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*Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Eminence; Governor Pataki and Mrs. Pataki; Mayor Giuliani. I want to thank Chuck Schumer and Vito Fossella for such beautiful words. Senator Clinton. Distinguished members of the United States Congress. Members of my*



*President Bush gives the Congressional Medal of Honor to Cardinal O'Connor's sister, Mary O'Connor Ward.*

*Cabinet. Mary Ward. Dorothy Hamilton and members of the O'Connor family. Reverend Ogilvie and Father Coughlin. Leaders of the Catholic Church. Maureen O'Flynn, thank you for sharing your angelic voice with us today. My fellow Americans.*

*Thank you for the welcome to your city and to the seat of this archdiocese. I especially want to thank the police and fire departments for the presentation of the colors, and their service to this community.*

*John Cardinal O'Connor was fond of recalling the greeting he received when visiting the Vatican. Pope John Paul II would meet him with these words: "How is the archbishop of the capital of the world?" For me, on my first visit as president, it's a pleasure, Mr.*

*Mayor, to be in the capital of the world.*

*This is a happier occasion than the day when we said our good-byes at a solemn Mass in a mourning city. It takes a lot to bring all of New York to a pause. But that's what happened when the earthly remains of John Cardinal O'Connor were laid to rest in this beautiful cathedral.*

*From the distance of a year, his character and his contributions only seem larger. We remember a life of good works, strong faith and great influence. For many here today, those memories are still vivid and very personal. For parishioners, it may be the memory of an imposing figure who stood here so many times, looking every inch a cardinal—fearing, it seemed, nothing, and having an opinion, it seemed, on everything.*

*For thousands of veterans, it's the memory of a chaplain who counseled them, heard their confessions, and attained the rank of admiral. For the working men and women, it will be the memory of an advocate, someone who rose to great prominence, but remained the proud son of a union man who honored hard work. The poor and immigrants of this city will always remember their staunch friend who defended their interests and understood their struggles. Many families remember the Church leader who came to AIDS patients with care and love. Parents here and in Scranton will remember the priest who gave so much time and special care to boys and girls with disabilities. And the world will remember the gallant defender of children and their vulnerability, innocence, and their right to be born.*

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*Many decades from now, these living memories of the man will begin to pass. Fewer and fewer will have known the sound of his voice, the largeness of his presence, the sting of his rebuke, his marvelous sense of humor, or the breadth of his compassion. But future generations will know at least this about the 11th leader of the Archdiocese: He was a man who left a mark on his time. A moral leader not only in title, but in truth. A defender of the faith, the very kind who have kept the faith alive for two millennia. A great man in a high place. And also for 80 years on this earth, a good person, a cheerful giver and a much-loved soul.*

*Posterity will know this: The Congress of the United States, in respect and gratitude, directed that a gold medal be struck bearing Cardinal O'Connor's name and image. And on this day, on behalf of the American people, I'm honored to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the family and to the successor of John Cardinal O'Connor.*

*God bless America. ♦*

## *Denver Archbishop Receives National Award from Jewish Group*

Praising the shared religious heritage of Christians and Jews, Denver Archbishop Charles J. Chaput accepted the 2001 Institute of Human Relations national award from the American Jewish Committee at a banquet in Denver. "Jews and Catholics may see

our religious heritage differently, but we share it nonetheless," the Archbishop said. "From that heritage comes a passion for justice, a sense of responsibility for others and a commitment to the common good."

The Archbishop said that whenever he has met someone active in advocating for justice, he has found that he or she was usually formed in Jewish or Christian homes. "A certain kind of world view, generous and zealous, is imprinted on their hearts," he added. "It helps them look outward, seeking to make the world a better place."

The January 25 banquet began with a joint invocation by Rabbi Steven Farber and Archbishop Chaput that symbolized the growing bonds of friendship between the Jewish and Catholic communities. A year ago, Archbishop Chaput wrote a letter to the Jewish community expressing sorrow for the wrongs done by Catholics against Jewish people. Since that time, the Archdiocese of Denver and the American Jewish Committee have cosponsored a series of dialogues and workshops to strengthen the bonds between the two communities.

In an address to the gathering, Rabbi A. James Rudin, an internationally known leader in Catholic-Jewish dialogue, praised the progress made in Jewish-Catholic relations since the Second Vatican Council, and especially during the leadership of Pope John Paul II. "Pope John Paul II has built upon the historic document, *Nostra Aetate*, issued at the Second Vatican Council," Rabbi Rudin told the more than 350 people attending the banquet.

"There has been a sea of change in Catholic-Jewish relations—it seems more progress has taken place since the Second Vatican Council than in the previous 1,900 years of the Church."

Characterizing the 20th century as a time of the "slaughter of the innocents," Rabbi Rudin said the growing bonds of friendship between Jews and Catholics are a sign of great hope for the world. "If we continue to improve our relations, we can provide a model for other groups, races, nationalities and governments," he added. ♦

*Reprinted with permission from Catholic News Service.*

## *Pope Insists on End to Middle East Violence*

At an August 2 meeting, Pope John Paul II met with Palestinian leader Chairman Yasser Arafat to stress the "absolute necessity" of an end to all forms of violence in the Middle East as an indispensable condition for peace in the area. During a 25-minute audience in his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, the Pope "firmly reiterated the absolute necessity that an end be put to any form of violence, whether the result of attacks or reprisals," a Vatican statement said. At the same time, the statement continues, the Pope called for negotiations, "the only means capable, with the help of the international community, of giving hope to attain peace."

After the failed Camp David talks last year, the Vatican's proposals for peace were that "priority be given to dialogue, to the application of international decisions (especially U. N. reso-



lutions), and to the need for an internationally guaranteed special status for the holy places of the three monotheist religions."

Chairman Arafat praised John Paul II for his advocacy for justice in the Middle East conflict and was quoted in the Italian newspaper, *La Stampa*, as saying that the Pope "has always taken a firm position in favor of justice and peoples' rights." When asked about Ariel Sharon's accusations that Chairman Arafat had failed to control extremists' violence, the Palestinian leader said that Mr. Sharon had not been able to control his own army's violence, nor was Italy able to control the violence at the G-8 summit in Genoa. ❖

## *U.S. Bishops Make Appeal to Israelis and Palestinians*

National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB)  
June 15, 2001, Resolution:  
On the Israeli-Palestinian Crisis

During the last nine months we have watched with sorrow and dismay as opportunities for peace in the Middle East have been lost in a spiral of violence. This violence is clearly seen in the destruction of so many homes, in the growing number of wounded and disabled, and most of all in the number of Palestinians and Israelis who have lost their lives, including many children and youth. This cycle of violence has exacerbated an already dangerous

situation and dimmed prospects for peace. In this time of darkness, we make our own the prayer of Pope John Paul II:

The terms of the Middle East drama are well known: The Jewish people, after tragic experiences connected with the extermination of so many sons and daughters, driven by the desire for security, set up the State of Israel. At the same time the painful condition of the Palestinian people was created, a large part of whom are excluded from their land.... Gathered here today, we present to the One God, to the Living God, to the Father of all, the problems of peace in the Middle East and also the problem, which is so dear to us, of the rapport and real dialogue with those with whom we are united — in spite of the differences — by faith in one God, the faith inherited from Abraham. May the spirit of unity, mutual respect, and understanding prove to be more powerful than what divides and sets in opposition.

(Homily at Otranto, Italy, Oct. 5, 1980)

In this spirit, we reiterate our strong call of November 2000: "The only acceptable option is an end to the violence, respect for the basic human rights of all, and a return to the path of peace." (U.S. Catholic Conference, November 15, 2000.) A way must be found to return quickly to genuine negotiations, embracing, as far as possible, the gains made in the last rounds of final status talks. We deeply regret that the negotiations last summer and fall did not achieve a lasting settlement. Despite that failure and recent, terrible events, it is not too late to embrace nonviolence, dialogue and negotiation as the only road forward.

The steps toward a just and lasting peace remain the same: real security for the State of Israel, a viable state for Palestinians, just resolution of the refugee problem, an agreement on Jerusalem which protects religious

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*The only acceptable option is an end to the violence, respect for the basic human rights of all, and a return to the path of peace.*

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freedom and other basic rights, (1) an equitable sharing of resources, especially water, and implementation of relevant UN resolutions and other provisions of international law. (2) These steps will pave the way to a future of cooperation and accommodation rather than occupation and conflict.

As supporters of the State of Israel and a state for Palestinians, we recognize that each side in this conflict has deep, long-standing and legitimate grievances that must be addressed if there is to be a just and lasting peace.

It is necessary for all to recognize that Palestinians rightly insist on an end to Israel's three-decade-long occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and to the continued establishment and expansion of settlements. Palestinians see this occupation, maintained by force and marked by daily indignities, abuse and violence, as a central underlying cause of the present crisis. Israel

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# News and Notes

has a fundamental right to security, but security will not be won by ongoing annexation of Palestinian land, blockades, air strikes on cities, destruction of crops and homes, and other excessive uses of force.

It is also necessary for all to recognize that Israelis rightly see the failure of Palestinians to demonstrate full respect for Israel's right to exist and flourish within secure borders as a fundamental cause of the conflict. Palestinian leaders must clearly renounce violence and terrorist acts against innocent civilians, take effective steps to stop them, and bring to justice those responsible. The violence undermines the trust required to make peace and weakens the Palestinian search for justice. The Palestinian Authority must show the Israeli people that it is fully committed to prepare its people to live in peace with Israel.

These times call for new attitudes on the part of all the parties to the conflict. "We all know," the Holy Father said during his recent visit to Syria, "that real peace can only be achieved if there is a new attitude of understanding and respect between the peoples of the region, between the followers of the three Abrahamic religions.... [I]t is important that there be an evolution in the way the peoples of the region see one another and that at every level of society the principles of peaceful coexistence be taught and promoted." (Remarks upon arrival in Damascus, Syria, May 5, 2001.)

In the same spirit, this is a

moment that requires that more Palestinian leaders and supporters of the Palestinian cause not simply advocate a Palestinian state, but also be unambiguously clear about Israel's right to peace and security, and the imperative to end all violence. This moment equally requires that more Israeli leaders and supporters of the State of Israel not only defend Israel and her people, but also advocate for the legitimate aspiration of Palestinians to live in their own homeland with dignity. At the same time, each community must refrain from inciting hatred against the other. We

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*We deeply regret that the negotiations last summer and fall did not achieve a lasting settlement. Despite that failure and recent, terrible events, it is not too late to embrace nonviolence, dialogue and negotiation as the only road forward.*

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pray that the voices urging respect for the rights and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians will be heeded by their leaders and people. The just claims of both peoples should also enjoy the active support of Christians throughout the world. Civic, educational and religious leaders should be challenged to refrain from fanning the flames of ethnic and religious prejudice and be encouraged to promote a process of reconciliation without which peace will never be a reality.

While peace will ultimately spring from new attitudes and new ways of acting on the part of Palestinians and Israelis, our government, as well as the entire international community, must

be actively engaged, in appropriate and significant ways, in working for a just and comprehensive solution to this conflict. We expect that they will do so in a way that responds respectfully to the legitimate claims and expectations of both parties, and does not acquiesce in unilateral actions which undermine negotiations.

As Catholics in the United States, we have a special concern for the toll the Israeli-Palestinian struggle is taking on the Christian communities in the area. The native-born Christian presence in Israel and the occupied territories, less than two percent of the total, risks shrinking into insignificance, in no small part due to the present troubles and their human and economic consequences. Other developments, such as the concerns of Christians about the Nazareth mosque, only

exacerbate a sense of marginalization. As a result of these and other factors, the future of a living Christian presence in the Holy Land is in doubt. The Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah, himself a Palestinian from Nazareth, has pleaded with families to remain as faithful witnesses to the Gospel in the Holy Land. Regrettably, many families have already emigrated and many more are tempted to do so. Partnerships with Catholic parishes in the Holy Land are one way to encourage the Christian presence there.

Mindful of our historic debt to the Church in the Holy Land and our duties of solidarity to a sister church in severe need, we ask Catholics in the

United States to join in strengthening the Church there during the present crisis and supporting its work for a just peace. We urge Catholics to be much more conscious of and give much greater attention to the crisis in the Middle East, and do what they can to support a living Christian presence in the land of Jesus' birth. We urge them to be unflagging in pressing our government to play an active and constructive role in the search for a just peace. We urge them to reach out in dialogue and joint action with Jews, Muslims and other Christians in this country. Finally, we urge them to support generously the urgent relief and development work of Catholic Relief Services, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of the Holy Land, and other worthy initiatives. The efforts of these and other organizations would be severely undermined if the U.S. government were to cut off humanitarian aid for the occupied territories, as some are proposing.

We pray that the God of peace, who has called us to be ambassadors of reconciliation, will achieve what human means alone cannot. Confident in God's blessings, we ask U.S. Catholics to join us through their prayers, their fasting and their good works in assisting Palestinians and Israelis, Jews, Muslims and Christians, in securing justice and peace in the Holy Land.

(1) The question of Jerusalem involves two aspects. Territorial sovereignty is a bilateral question for Israelis and the Palestinian Authority to resolve equitably and by negotiations according to UN Resolutions. The reli-

gious dimension of Jerusalem, especially the "Old City," involves the need to preserve its unique and sacred character, both the Holy Places and the living communities of believers there. In order to safeguard the religious and human dimensions of Jerusalem, the Holy See has long advocated a special statute, internationally guaranteed. This statute would secure: freedom of religion and conscience for all; the juridical equality of the three monotheistic religions; respect for the identity and sacred character of the City; protection of and freedom of access for all to the Holy Places; the regime of "status quo" in Holy Places where it applies. This statute, to be negotiated by the two parties in consultation with the three religious communities, could be guaranteed by the UN, the sponsors of the peace process, or another entity, but, in any case, should be sanctioned by the United Nations.

(2) Among the pertinent UN Resolutions are nos. 232, 338, and 194.

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## *Wartime Archives Are Yet to Be Catalogued*

The Vatican Press Office published on August 7, 2001, the declaration signed by historian Jesuit Father Peter Gumpel explaining why the Vatican is not able to open all its World War II archives right now. Jewish and Catholic members of a historians' panel had been studying the Vatican archives relating to Pope Pius XII's wartime activities. Father Gumpel in his declaration explained that not all three million

pages of documents have been catalogued yet, and therefore are not available to scholars.

In the declaration, Father Gumpel, postulator of the cause of beatification of Pius XII, complains about news leaks by a commission member which have seriously compromised the group's work. He also noted that Eugene Fisher, the group's coordinator, said it would have been difficult to write a summary report of the group's work, given the disparity of the members' judgments.

The commission was established in 1999 to respond to accusations that Pope Pius XII allegedly failed to condemn Nazi atrocities publicly. The group included three Jewish and three Catholic historians, who were reduced to two when Eva Fleishner resigned.

In a statement published at the end of July, Cardinal William Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore and moderator for Catholic-Jewish relations of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, attested to additional news leaks. The "Coordinator of the Jewish side, Mr. Seymour Reich, chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation (IJCIC), has released to the press the group's joint letter to Cardinal Walter Kasper and used the occasion to misrepresent its content in his press release," Cardinal Keeler said in the statement. Cardinal Keeler requested the commission to continue with the dialogue and not politicize the Holocaust. ❖

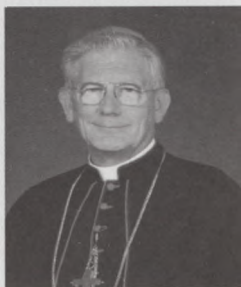
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## *Statement by Cardinal William H. Keeler on the Catholic-Jewish Holocaust Scholars Group*

Earlier this week the public learned that the team of Catholic and Jewish historians working together on the 12 volumes of published materials from the Vatican Archives of the World War II period had suspended its work for the present period. Many questions still remain, as the scholars' own Preliminary Report and letter to Cardinal Kasper acknowledge. First, much work remains to be done on the 12 volumes themselves, as the scholars point out. Admittedly they could not achieve a full consensus on how to proceed at this state of their work. They do offer the hope that in dialogue with Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, they may yet discern a way forward.

Now the situation has become more problematic. At an early stage a European member of the group, Dr. Bernard Suchcky, caused serious damage to the group's credibility by leaking its Preliminary Report during their meeting in Rome last October. This event seriously impeded the work in progress, making it impossible for them to complete a critical phase of their research in timely fashion and diminishing the level of trust of the other members toward one of their number. Earlier this year, another member, Professor Robert Wistrish, troubled the trust level further when, in



that the Coordinator of the Jewish side, Mr. Seymour Reich, Chair of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation (IJCIC), has released to the press the group's joint letter to Cardinal Kasper and used the occasion to misrepresent its content in his press release. Neither Dr. Eugene Fisher, Catholic Coordinator for the group, nor the Catholic members of the team were consulted in this by Mr. Reich, and all three Catholics have firmly rejected it. It now seems more difficult than ever to see a way forward.

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*It is seen more clearly than ever that the work of reconciliation will be long and immensely challenging. Of crucial importance for the future must be the separation from scholarly research of elements of a politically driven agenda that poisons the atmosphere and makes true progress unattainable.*

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It is important to stress that some genuine progress was made by the team of scholars and helpful to recall

an interview with the *Jerusalem Report*, he imputed bad faith to the Holy See.

With sadness I note

its origin. Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, Cardinal Kasper's predecessor, suggested that such a group be established during the meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee in Rome in March 1998. It became clear that, although a significant number of documents from the Holocaust years had been published by the Holy See at the direction of Pope Paul VI, scholars had not seriously studied them. I was pleased to be present then and again, a year later, in Baltimore, when Cardinal Cassidy read publicly a prepared address in which he expressed deeply felt disappointment that his offer to facilitate such a study had not been taken up by the IJCIC.

The spirit of Cardinal Cassidy's suggestion and, I would like to believe, the spirit with which the group itself undertook their work was one of dialogue. They were asked to see whether our two faith communities, by bringing together appropriate historical scholarship, could work toward that reconciliation of memory called for in the Holy See's *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, a document issued only a week earlier.

The publication of *We Remember* coincided with the actual arrival in Rome from Jerusalem of a joint pilgrimage group comprised of six American bishops, seven rabbis, two priests and two laymen, one Catholic and one Jewish. Next day, we listened as the rabbis in the group clearly and constructively raised in direct conversation with Cardinal Cassidy virtually all of the Jewish concerns with the document — along with significant positive reactions as well — that were to come

out in the public forum in ensuing weeks and months. At a meeting the following week, the Jewish representatives presented the identical issues.

In view of the general lack of knowledge of the documents of the Holy See, I supported Cardinal Cassidy's move to put the 12 volumes of Vatican documentation on the table for mature scholarly dialogue. He wisely decided not to involve someone from the Pontifical Commission itself directly with the group, lest there be the slightest appearance of an attempt by the Holy See to influence the work of the scholars. I was delighted with his selection as Catholic Coordinator for the scholars' group of our own staff person at the United States Bishops' Conference, Dr. Eugene Fisher, identified to me years earlier by Cardinal Johannes Willebrands as most qualified for the consideration of any Catholic-Jewish issue.

Dr. Fisher has served well and ably in the estimation of those involved in the process. So too, I believe, have all three of the Catholic scholars, Fathers Gerald Fogarty, SJ, and John Morley, and Dr. Eva Fleischner, who later resigned from the team. All three are Americans, and we in the United States can be proud of and grateful for their generous response to the request made of them by Cardinal Cassidy on behalf of the Holy See.

One question to ask of any dialogue group is whether the members have been able to work through the differing personal and professional experiences they bring with them to the table toward some measure of consensus. The Preliminary Report of this group indicates that they were able to

do so on significant matters if by no means on everything.

It is seen more clearly than ever that the work of reconciliation will be long and immensely challenging. Of crucial importance for the future must be the separation from scholarly research of elements of a politically driven agenda that poisons the atmosphere and makes true progress unattainable. As Rabbi Jack Bemporad, Director of the Center for Interreligious Understanding, counseled in an address last year at the Centro pro Unione in Rome, the establishment of a proper atmosphere is crucial to the success of any interreligious dialogue. If there is a lack of trust, mutuality, or respect, then genuine dialogue cannot take place, said Rabbi Bemporad.

Joint efforts by Catholic and Jewish scholars working together can bear fruit in the long run, provided the dialogue is conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust. I believe we must continue to look for a way to bring Catholic and Jewish memories of the period of the *Shoah* together for a reconciling dialogue. Those who might wish to politicize this moment of pain should reflect on what is at stake in our effort to grapple together with our history for the sake of both Jews and Catholics. In the end, under God, our common message should be one of renewed hope for all humanity.

Cardinal William H. Keeler  
Archbishop of Baltimore  
Episcopal Moderator for Catholic-Jewish Relations  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops ❖

## *Islamic Conference Participants Told to Stress Education*

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak emphasized that "the problems faced by Islam do not come from its well-known enemies, but from those who are ignorant of our religion." In a message sent to the 13th Congress of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, held in Cairo, Egypt, on June 1, 2001, President Mubarak said Islam's main problem is in its own ranks, among the "ignorant who do not know the real principles of religion. . . . Ignorant

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*If Islam wishes to take the  
place that corresponds to it in  
the map of the civilized  
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renewed and to go forward.*

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Muslims confuse others with their mistaken concepts." He then referred to ideologues and fundamentalist groups, and accused them of presenting Islam to the world as "violent, criminal and bloodthirsty." He said, "If Islam wishes to take the place that corresponds to it in the map of the civilized world, it must be able to be renewed and to go forward."

Hundreds of Muslim delegates and philosophers from over 70 countries attended the conference, which discussed ways to present Islam to non-Muslims as a religion of tolerance, peace and fraternity. ❖

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## Cardinal Ratzinger Writes of a "New Vision"

When the 36-page declaration titled "*Dominus Iesus: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*" was published September 5, 2000, from the offices of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Jewish leaders were among its critics. Nonetheless, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who wrote "*Dominus Iesus*," continues to emphasize the unique

missionary activity to the world, and yet it must respect the fact that the Jewish people still have a living and viable relationship with God.

The cardinal recognized that Jews and Christians have had a troubled relationship from their beginnings. "In the history of Christianity, the already-difficult relations deteriorated further, even leading in many cases to attitudes of anti-Judaism which produced deplorable acts of violence in history," he said, which eventually contributed to the weakening of Christians' resistance to the *Shoah* during World War II.

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*The Church does not exclude the Jewish people from the Church's missionary activity to the world, and yet it must respect the fact that the Jewish people still have a living and viable relationship with God.*

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relationship that Catholicism has with Judaism.

On Dec. 29, 2000, in a front-page article in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's newspaper, Cardinal Ratzinger wrote of a "new vision" of Christian-Jewish relations. In the article, "Abraham's Heritage: A Christmas Gift," he said Catholic dialogue with Jews is a special gift because the Jewish faith is the foundation of the Christian faith. He said that the Church owes sincere and profound gratitude to the Jews who have preserved and maintained their faith in God and have influenced so many people through their witness. The Church does not exclude the Jewish people from the Church's mis-

But "maybe precisely because of the dramatic character of this latest tragedy," he said, every effort is now being made to find ways to build bridges of understanding and reconciliation. He said the new approach involves "a sincere desire to overcome every kind of anti-Judaism and to begin a constructive dialogue of reciprocal knowledge and reconciliation."

Cardinal Ratzinger also pointed out that Muslims share in the spiritual heritage of Abraham and belief in the same God as Christians and Jews, but because of cultural and historical developments, require a specific approach to dialogue that appropriately takes such factors into account. ❖

## Jews Revisit Jesus

The revolution in Christian approaches to Judaism has now brought a response from the Jewish side. A new document signed by prominent Jewish thinkers is the "most positive affirmation of Christianity ever made by a committed Jewish group," according to the director of the Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations in Cambridge.

The year 2000 may be remembered as one of the most important in modern relations between Jews and Christians, perhaps the most important since 1965, which marked the beginning of the sea-change in the Catholic understanding of Jews and Judaism. In 1965 the Second Vatican Council issued a hugely significant document called *Nostra Aetate* (In Our Age), which called for a re-evaluation of Christian attitudes. On 12 September 2000 another document, *Dabru Emet* (Speak Truth), was published, this time consisting of a Jewish reassessment of Christians and Christianity.

Like *Nostra Aetate*, *Dabru Emet* has a short and seemingly simple text, but one in which each carefully crafted phrase carries meaning and significance. Although the statement is addressed to the Jewish community, it has been produced with an awareness that another community is, as it were, looking over the Jewish shoulder to see whether it has been validly portrayed. More than 150 Jewish scholars, teachers and rabbis signed this declaration, and the broad range of signatories, including Orthodox and Progressive Jews, underlines its importance. It is the first detailed modern cross-

denominational statement published in the name of Jews and Judaism. The document stresses that it is time for Jews to learn about the efforts of Christians to honor Judaism and to reflect on what Judaism may now say about Christianity. *Dabru Emet* considers questions such as:

- What was the purpose behind the creation of Christianity?
- Does the fact that Jesus was a Jew have any implications for Jews?
- What are the implications of the fact that the followers of Jesus the Jew today number approximately one billion people?

Until now, the stimulus for Jewish-Christian dialogue has arisen, inevitably, from the Christian side, as Christians re-awoke to the fact that Christianity arose out of Judaism, and at the same time began to appreciate that Christian teaching made a significant contribution to Jewish suffering. Most Jews responded to the new Christian interest with suspicion—a legacy of the consequences of the Christian teaching of contempt towards the Jews. For the most part, there was little desire among Jews to engage in dialogue with Christians and Christianity.

The Christian teaching of contempt arose out of the Jewish rejection of Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah. Christian theology responded with polemic. Over the years, as we know only too well, Jews were portrayed as Christ-killers, a people guilty of dei-

cide, children of the devil who practiced ritual child murders, and so on. This Christian stereotype of the Jew was the primary cause of forced conversions, expulsions and pogroms. Eventually, it was assumed, Jews would repent and turn to Christ.

Judaism reciprocated the contempt. Although there is little evidence of any *adversus christianos* tract, Christianity was dismissed as a religion practiced by morally and culturally inferior gentiles, based on unbelievable claims such as God-in-the-flesh, which had degenerated into idolatry.

leaders concluded that it was more important to form religious alliances to battle against secularism and materialism than to fight and kill each other.

The murder of 6 million Jews and 5 million non-Jews during the Second World War was the second factor. The *Shoah* resulted in a general awareness of the immensity of the burden of guilt which the Church carried not only for its general silence, with some noble exceptions, during 1933-45, but also because of the teaching of contempt towards Jews and Judaism which it carried on for so many centuries. As Jules

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*Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon.  
Without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism  
and Christian violence against Jews,  
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been carried out, but Nazism itself was  
not an inevitable outcome of Christianity.*

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Three historical factors were the precursors to a change in attitudes: the Enlightenment, the *Shoah* or Holocaust, and the creation of the State of Israel.

The age of the Enlightenment, which might be described as the birth of modern culture, disseminated the principles of equality and dignity of all people. It became harder to preach contempt for another people and treat its religion as inherently inferior without losing one's own credibility in a culture of universal human dignity. At the same time, there was the growing power of secularism, which was eroding all religious claims. Some spiritual

Isaac showed immediately after the war, it was this that sowed the seeds of hatred and made it so easy for Hitler to use anti-Semitism as a political weapon. Although Nazism was opposed to Christianity, Hitler often justified his anti-Semitism with reference to the Church and Christian attitudes towards Judaism.

The *Dabru Emet* document, however, states explicitly: "Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon. Without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could not have taken hold nor could it have been carried out, but Nazism itself was not an inevitable

outcome of Christianity." This section on the *Shoah* is probably the most controversial. Some have criticized it for going too far. These people are convinced that any move toward reconciliation with those Christians who have rethought their theology of Judaism is foolish. They remain convinced that most Christians have not forsworn their triumphalism and point to the targeted proselytism of Jews by the Southern Baptists and by the Jews for Jesus movement. Within the Christian community, it is new and troubling to some to learn that many Jews do view Nazism as the logical outcome of European Christian culture; others express concern that Christians might feel completely exonerated by the Jewish statement.

The third factor is the establishment of Israel in 1948, the only state in which Jews form the majority. As a result, Jews have had more confidence in their dealings with Christians. All the Christian holy places are now in Israel or in Israeli-controlled territory, which means that the entire Christian world takes a close interest in developments. This has led to strong reactions "both of a favorable and unfavorable nature" but the very existence of this spotlight shining so strongly on Israel, and especially on Jerusalem, gives particular importance to any attempt at mutual understanding between Christian and Jew inside Israel.

While the Church has for many years been grappling with issues related to Christian anti-Semitism, attitudes towards the land and state of Israel have, from the theological perspective, proved more difficult to tackle. Theological difficulties have made a Christian reorientation to Israel problematic. Simply put, it has been easier for Christians to condemn anti-Semitism as a misunderstanding of Christian teaching than to come to terms with the re-establishment of the Jewish state.

Nevertheless, many Christian denominations which unsurprisingly

and the moving visit of the Pope in March last year are symbolic of the change in attitude among Christians.

It is therefore of little surprise to read in *Dabru Emet*: "Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish people upon the land of Israel. The most important event for Jews since the Holocaust has been the re-establishment of a Jewish state in the Promised Land. As members of a biblically based religion, Christians appreciate that Israel was promised and given to Jews as the physical center of the covenant between them and God."

The document also examines the

relationship as a whole between Judaism and Christianity, beginning with Christianity's historic attitude toward Judaism. "Christians have tended to characterize Judaism as a failed religion or, at best, a religion that pre-

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*Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish people upon the land of Israel.*

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exhibit extreme sensitivity to Palestinian concerns do acknowledge the centrality of Israel to Jews and Judaism. Thus the Pope stated in 1984 that "for the Jewish people who live in the state of Israel, and who preserve in that land such precious testimonies to their history and their faith, we must ask for the desired security and the due tranquillity that is the prerogative of every nation and condition of life and of progress for every society." The exchange of ambassadors between the Vatican and the state of Israel in 1994

pared the way for, and is completed in, Christianity," it states. It acknowledges that in recent years many Christian denominations have reassessed their stance towards Judaism and have renounced their historical positions. "We believe these changes merit a thoughtful Jewish response," the statement declares. It goes on to assert eight points: 1) Jews and Christians worship the same God; 2) Jews and Christians seek authority from the same book, the Bible; 3) Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish people upon the



land of Israel; 4) Jews and Christians accept the moral principles of the Torah; 5) Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon; 6) The humanly irreconcilable difference between Jews and Christians will not be settled until God redeems the entire world as promised in Scripture; 7) A new relationship between Jews and Christians will not weaken Jewish practice; 8) Jews and Christians must work together for justice and peace.

*Dabru Emet* is the most positive affirmation of Christianity ever made by a committed Jewish group. It states unequivocally that Christians worship the God of Israel and legitimately draw on the Hebrew Bible—our contradictions notwithstanding. This statement is problematic for some Jews as a result of doctrines such as the Trinity and Incarnation, which can be seen as compromising the integrity of Jewish monotheism. In response, some Christians are shocked to discover that Christianity can be seen by some Jews as idolatrous.

The authors and signatories have also had the courage to reject the assumption that dialogue results in increased assimilation, intermarriage, and Christian missionary activity. It says that a new relationship between Jews and Christians "will not accelerate the cultural and religious assimilation that Jews rightly fear. It will not change traditional Jewish forms of worship, nor increase intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews, nor persuade more Jews to convert to Christianity, nor create a false blending of Judaism and Christianity. We respect Christianity as a faith that originated within Judaism and that still has significant contacts

with it. We do not see it as an extension of Judaism. Only if we cherish our own traditions can we pursue this relationship with integrity."

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*We respect Christianity as a faith that originated within Judaism and that still has significant contacts with it.*

*We do not see it as an extension of Judaism.*

*Only if we cherish our own traditions can we pursue this relationship with integrity.*

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It is likely that some Jews who oppose theological dialogue will simply resist or ignore the declaration. Others, whose residual Jewish memory triggers a knee-jerk reaction of fear and anger at Christianity, will also refuse to go along with its findings. Both these groups carry the unhealed wounds of the past two millennia.

It is also possible that *Dabru Emet* will be abused by some Christian fundamentalists in order to advance their missionary efforts. Hopefully, however, the declaration's emphasis on a pluralist affirmation of Judaism's eternal covenant will be respected by even the more extreme Christian groups. Ironically, this affirmation of Christianity shows that Judaism's vitality is undiminished; it too can self-correct.

*Dabru Emet* does not claim to answer the divine purpose behind the creation of Christianity but does explore the question. It suggests: "Christians know and serve God

through Jesus Christ and the Christian tradition. Jews know and serve God through Torah and the Jewish tradition. That difference will not be settled by one community insisting that it has interpreted Scripture more accurately than the other; nor by exercising political power over the other. Jews can respect Christians' faithfulness to their revelation, just as we expect Christians to respect our faithfulness to our revelation. Neither Jew nor Christian should be pressed into affirming the teaching of the other community."

One of the main achievements of *Dabru Emet* is that it puts into practice the foundational principle of dialogue, involving a respect that takes the other as seriously as one demands to be taken oneself.

by Edward Kessler ❖

(For a complete copy of *Dabru Emet*, see the CCJU *Perspective* (Winter 2001), p. 17, or visit [ccju.org](http://ccju.org))  
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## *Jewish Views on Christianity: A 1968 Document*

Never published, a text created for the French rabbinate discusses the rejection of other religions. The Chief Rabbi of Strasbourg, Rene Gutman, intends to publish an internal document, dating back to 1968, that advises a more open-minded look at Christianity and other religions. Written by Rabbi Charles Touati and philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, this work offers the conclusion that rejection of Christianity could have been avoided.

# News and Notes

Up to now the French Rabbinate refused to make this document public.

The document stayed in the files of the French Rabbinate until Rabbi Gutman decided to make it public. Three pages long and in the form of an outline, the text describes the results of *Nostra Aetate* concerning non-Christian religions and Christian attitudes toward Judaism, published by the French bishops in 1973.

Rabbi Gutman explained the genesis of this text during a dialogue organized by the College of Jewish Studies of the Universal Jewish Alliance in

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Paris. It all started in 1968, three years after *Nostra Aetate*. The French bishops asked Chief Rabbi Jacob Kaplan to write a paper on the way Judaism views Christianity. Rabbi Kaplan in turn asked Rabbi Charles Touati, president of the doctrinal commission of the French Rabbinate, to put together a committee to prepare a file that would serve as the basis for a potential official position. Mr. Touati chose philosopher/professor Emmanuel Levinas, and Professor Georges Vajda, an expert on Oriental matters. Work started in May 1968. Each committee member selected a series of texts drawn from

the Jewish tradition, then the whole committee decided on the core of material.

The committee established certain guidelines: the document would involve the French rabbinate only and it would contain only works written by authorities recognized by universal Judaism. Keeping in mind that there might be contradictory texts, the committee believed that their selections represented works best reflecting Judaic thinking. The tenor of the document goes beyond Jewish-Christian relations.

The basic tenets of the document are:

- Rejection of Christianity could have been avoided.
- In Jesus' times, Christians were not idolaters; they worshipped the God who created the world and they had much in common with Jews.
- Christians are promised eternal salvation.
- Israel can learn from Christians and Muslims when it comes to moral matters.
- Christianity and Islam have contributed to the betterment of humanity.
- Christianity and Islam contribute to preparing the way for the Messiah.

This outline was only the first step toward an official declaration that would involve the French rabbinate. But the project floundered under circumstances described by Rabbi Gutman.

The document was distributed to all the rabbis so that the General Assembly of the French Rabbinate could reach a decision. It took 10 years (1978) for the topic to appear on the dockets of the Rabbinic Congress. It then made for a lively discussion, to say the least. A large minority, led by Rabbi Emer Jas, did not think it would be possible to have a genuine dialogue with Christians, and expressed some strong doubts. Due to a lack of clear consensus votes, Rabbi Kaplan decided to withdraw the document and to postpone the preparation of a public declaration.

Thirty-two years after the writing of the document, Georges Vajda and Emmanuel Levinas having passed away, Rabbi Charles Touati decided that it was time to make the document public, and gave the project to Rabbi Rene Gutman. Rabbi Gutman calls it a historical document, which will be published in its entirety this year in the *Revue des Etudes Juives*. The rabbi views it as a very important document because it is a synthesis of the French Rabbinate's thinking since the Middle Ages, characterized by a positive understanding of Christianity amidst a Christian community that has shown itself sometimes friendly, sometimes oppressive. Rabbi Gutman maintains that to some French rabbis, Christianity is probably not necessary for Judaism, but Judaism knows it is necessary for the world. Christianity is also necessary for the redemption of a world led by violence.

Now the question is, is the French Rabbinate ready to reopen the 1968 document? "I am sure that, in today's context, a declaration would involve more in-depth discussion about

Islam," says Rabbi Gutman.

Rene-Samuel Sirat, former Chief Rabbi of France, points out, "Other priorities and other ideological choices may appear today." David Messas, Chief Rabbi of Paris, emphasizes that the 1968 document "cannot be considered an accurate reflection of French Judaism's current thinking." But he does not dismiss the possibility that one day the rabbinate will take another look at this document and resume the discussion. ❖

Reprinted with permission from *Le Monde*, (February 12, 2001). Translation from the French by Guillaîne Dale, assistant to the directors, CCJU.

## *Dr. Coppola Speaks to Priests' Group*

Dr. David L. Coppola, director of conferences and publications for the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU), spoke to two groups of Catholic priests from the Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut, on May 1 and 3, 2001, at the Church of the Holy Family in Hebron. His topic was "Catholic-Jewish Relations," and focused on the history of relationships and the advances since Vatican II. Dr. Coppola offered practical suggestions for preaching and teaching.

Most of the priests said they were not surprised by the advances that have occurred between Catholics and Jews—although they noted many challenges to moral and theological dialogue around the topic of Israel. Some of the priests related stories of the obstacles between Catholics and Jews before the Second Vatican Council,

especially attempts at conversion. Father Mark O'Donnell, who helped to organize the days of study, said, "There is definitely a healthy and growing respect between Christians and Jews, especially at the parish level. I don't think Christians are trying to force Jews to convert. We are all trying to grow in faith and holiness."

The Most Reverend Daniel A. Hart, Bishop of Norwich, lauded Pope John Paul II for his efforts at peace and interreligious dialogue and encouraged local interreligious dialogue groups in parishes to meet regularly for spiritual enrichment and prayer. He said, "I think it is especially important that we come together to discuss educational and moral values, and gather for joint efforts that relate to social justice and human rights issues." ❖

## *Rabbi Ehrenkranz Returns to Canada*

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU), returned to Edmonton, Canada, March



18-21 to continue a conversation the CCJU began last year when it sponsored a conference for historians and theologians on the topic, "What Do We Want the Other to Teach About Our History?" [For a summary of this conference, visit the Center's website at [ccju.org](http://ccju.org) and look under Conferences.]

Rabbi Ehrenkranz was one of three speakers in the annual dialogue sponsored by the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action. He was joined by Roman Catholic Archbishop Thomas Collins of the Edmonton Archdiocese, and Saleem Qureshi, professor of Political Science at the University of Alberta. The dialogue among Jews, Christians and Muslims focused on the importance and significance of Jerusalem to their religious traditions.

"No two people perceive God's relationship to humans in the same way," the rabbi told the audience. "Nonetheless, we must join together to make the world a better place based upon the fact that Judaism, Christianity and Islam are fundamentally religions of peace. Jerusalem must become the city of peace."

As part of the two-day conference, a prayer service was held on the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre in South Africa, when police fired on a peaceful anti-apartheid demonstration, killing 67 people and wounding 186 others. In 1966, the United Nations proclaimed March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and in 1989 Canada began to promote it as a time for education and reflection. ❖

# FOR

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# Pope Pius XII and the Jews

— Rabbi David G. Dalin

New York Rabbi David Dalin has proposed that Pope Pius XII be proclaimed "Righteous Among the Nations," the highest award given by the state of Israel to persons who were outstanding in assisting persecuted Jews during World War II. An article published in the *The Weekly Standard*, a conservative U.S. magazine, states: "The Talmud teaches that 'whosoever preserves one life, it is accounted to him by Scripture as if he had preserved the whole world.'" More than any other 20th century leader, Pius XII fulfilled this Talmudic dictum, when the fate of European Jewry was at stake. No other Pope had been so widely praised by Jews, and they were not mistaken. Their gratitude, as well as that of the entire generation of Holocaust survivors, testifies that Pius XII was, genuinely and

profoundly, a righteous gentile."

Rabbi Dalin maintains that many recently published books have not understood the way in which Pius XII opposed Nazism and all that he did to save Jews from the Holocaust. In this connection, the rabbi refers to a great number of events, documents, declarations and books. "Any fair and thorough reading of the evidence demonstrates that Pius XII was a persistent critic of Nazism. Consider just a few highlights of his opposition before the war. Of the 44 speeches Pacelli gave in Germany as Papal Nuncio between 1917 and 1929, 40 denounced some aspect of the emerging Nazi ideology. In March 1935, he wrote an open letter to the Bishop of Cologne, calling the Nazis 'false prophets with the pride of Lucifer.' That same year, he assailed ideologies 'possessed by

the superstition of race and blood' to an enormous crowd of pilgrims at Lourdes."

One of Rabbi Dalin's books, "Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience," was singled out as one of the best academic works of 1997. Ordained in New York, Rabbi Dalin has given several conferences on relations between Christians and Jews at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut; George Washington University; and Queens College, New York. He serves on the CCJU's Board of Directors

Rabbi Dalin concludes his article affirming that "Pius XII was not Hitler's Pope, but the closest Jews had come to having a papal supporter, and at the moment when it mattered most." His article is reprinted with permission here from *The Weekly Standard*.

Even before Pius XII died in 1958, the charge that his papacy had been friendly to the Nazis was circulating in Europe, a piece of standard Communist agitprop against the West.

It sank for a few years under the flood of tributes, from Jews and gentiles alike, that followed the Pope's death, only to bubble up again with the 1963 debut of *The Deputy*, a play by a left-wing German writer (and former member of the Hitler Youth) named Rolf Hochhuth.

*The Deputy* was fictional and highly polemical, claiming that Pius XII's concern for Vatican finances left him indifferent to the destruction of European Jewry. But Hochhuth's seven-hour play nonetheless received consid-

erable notice, sparking a controversy that lasted through the 1960s. And now, more than 30 years later, that controversy has suddenly broken out again, for reasons not immediately clear.

Indeed, "broken out" doesn't describe the current torrent. In the last 18 months, nine books that treat Pius XII have appeared: John Cornwell's *Hitler's Pope*, Pierre Blet's *Pius XII and the Second World War*, Garry Wills's *Papal Sin*, Margherita Marchionne's *Pope Pius XII*, Ronald J. Rychlak's *Hitler, the War and the Pope*, Michael Phayer's *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930-1965*, Susan Zuccotti's *Under His Very Windows*, Ralph McInerny's *The Defamation of Pius XII*, and, most

recently, James Carroll's *Constantine's Sword*.

Since four of these—the ones by Blet, Marchionne, Rychlak, and McInerny—are defenses of the Pope (and two, the books by Wills and Carroll, take up Pius only as part of a broad attack against Catholicism), the picture may look balanced. In fact, to read all nine is to conclude that Pius's defenders have the stronger case—with Rychlak's *Hitler, the War and the Pope* the best and most careful of the recent works, an elegant tome of serious, critical scholarship.

Still, it is the books vilifying the Pope that have received most of the attention, particularly *Hitler's Pope*, a widely reviewed volume marketed with

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the announcement that Pius XII was "the most dangerous churchman in modern history," without whom "Hitler might never have ...been able to press forward." The "silence" of the Pope is becoming more and more firmly established as settled opinion in the American media: "Pius XII's elevation of Catholic self-interest over Catholic conscience was the lowest point in modern Catholic history," the *New York Times* remarked, almost in passing, in a review last month of Carroll's *Constantine's Sword*.

Curiously, nearly everyone pressing this line today—from the ex-seminarians John Cornwell and Garry Wills to the ex-priest James Carroll—is a lapsed or angry Catholic. For Jewish leaders of a previous generation, the campaign against Pius XII would have been a source of shock. During and after the war, many well-known Jews—Albert Einstein, Golda Meir, Moshe Sharett, Rabbi Isaac Herzog, and innumerable others—publicly expressed their gratitude to Pius. In his 1967 book *Three Popes and the Jews*, the diplomat Pinchas Lapide (who served as Israeli consul in Milan and interviewed Italian Holocaust survivors) declared Pius XII "was instrumental in saving at least 700,000, but probably as many as 860,000 Jews from certain death at Nazi hands."

This is not to say that Eugenio Pacelli—the powerful churchman who served as nuncio in Bavaria and Germany from 1917 to 1929, then as Vatican secretary of state from 1930 to 1939, before becoming Pope Pius XII six months before World War II began—was as much a friend to the Jews as John Paul II has been. Nor is it to say that Pius was ultimately successful as a defender of Jews. Despite his desperate efforts to maintain peace, the war came, and, despite his protests against German atrocities, the slaughter of the Holocaust occurred. Even

without benefit of hindsight, a careful study reveals that the Catholic Church missed opportunities to influence events, failed to credit fully the Nazis' intentions, and was infected in some of its members with a casual anti-Semitism that would countenance—and, in a few horrifying instances, affirm—the Nazi ideology.

But to make Pius XII a target of our moral outrage against the Nazis,

For Jewish leaders of a previous generation, the campaign against Pius XII would have been a source of shock. During and after the war, many well-known Jews—Albert Einstein, Golda Meir, Moshe Sharett, Rabbi Isaac Herzog, and innumerable others—publicly expressed their gratitude to Pius.

and to count Catholicism among the institutions delegitimized by the horror of the Holocaust, reveals a failure of historical understanding. Almost none of the recent books about Pius XII and the Holocaust is actually about Pius XII and the Holocaust. Their real topic proves to be an intra-Catholic argument about the direction of the Church today, with the Holocaust simply the biggest club available for liberal Catholics to use against traditionalists.

A theological debate about the future of the papacy is obviously some-

thing in which non-Catholics should not involve themselves too deeply. But Jews, whatever their feelings about the Catholic Church, have a duty to reject any attempt to usurp the Holocaust and use it for partisan purposes in such a debate—particularly when the attempt disparages the testimony of Holocaust survivors and spreads to inappropriate figures the condemnation that belongs to Hitler and the Nazis.

The technique for recent attacks on Pius XII is simple. It requires only that favorable evidence be read in the worst light and treated to the strictest test, while unfavorable evidence is read in the best light and treated to no test.

So, for instance, when Cornwell sets out in *Hitler's Pope* to prove Pius an anti-Semite (an accusation even the pontiff's bitterest opponents have rarely leveled), he makes much of Pacelli's reference in a 1917 letter to the "Jewish cult"—as though for an Italian Catholic prelate born in 1876 the word "cult" had the same resonances it has in English today, and as though Cornwell himself does not casually refer to the Catholic cult of the Assumption and the cult of the Virgin Mary. (The most immediately helpful part of *Hitler, the War and the Pope* may be the 30-page epilogue Rychlak devotes to demolishing this kind of argument in *Hitler's Pope*.)

The same pattern is played out in Susan Zuccotti's *Under His Very Windows*. For example: There exists testimony from a Good Samaritan priest that Bishop Giuseppe Nicolini of Assisi, holding a letter in his hand, declared that the Pope had written to request help for Jews during the German roundup of Italian Jews in 1943. But because the priest did not actually read the letter, Zuccotti speculates that the bishop may have been deceiving him—and thus that this testimony should be rejected.

Compare this skeptical approach to evidence with her treatment, for example, of a 1967 interview in which the German diplomat Eitel F. Mollhausen said he had sent information to the Nazis' ambassador to the Vatican, Ernst von Weizsacker, and "assumed" that Weizsacker passed it on to the Church "officials." Zuccotti takes this as unquestionable proof that the Pope had direct foreknowledge of the German roundup. (A fair reading suggests Pius had heard rumors and raised them with the Nazi occupiers. Princess Enza Pignatelli Aragona reported that when she broke in on the Pope with the news of the roundup early on the morning of October 16, 1943, his first words were: "But the Germans had promised not to touch the Jews!")

With this dual standard, recent writers have little trouble arriving at two pre-ordained conclusions. The first is that the Catholic Church must shoulder the blame for the Holocaust: "Pius XII was the most guilty," as Zuccotti puts it. And the second is that Catholicism's guilt is due to aspects of the Church that John Paul II now represents.

Indeed, in the concluding chapter of *Hitler's Pope* and throughout *Papal Sin* and *Constantine's Sword*, the parallel becomes clear: John Paul's traditionalism is of a piece with Pius's alleged anti-Semitism; the Vatican's current stand on papal authority is in a direct line with complicity in the Nazis' extermination of the Jews. Faced with such monstrous moral equivalence and misuse of the Holocaust, how can we not object?

It is true that during the controversy over *The Deputy* and again during the Vatican's slow hearing of the case for his canonization (ongoing since 1965), Pius had Jewish detractors. In 1964, for example, Guenter Lewy produced *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany*, and in 1966, Saul Friedlander added *Pius XII and the*

*Third Reich*. Both volumes claimed that Pius's anti-communism led him to support Hitler as a bulwark against the Russians.

As accurate information on Soviet atrocities has mounted since 1989, an obsession with Stalinism seems less foolish than it may have in the mid-1960s. But, in fact, the evidence has mounted as well that Pius accurately ranked the threats. In 1942,

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for example, he told a visitor, "The Communist danger does exist, but at this time the Nazi danger is more serious." He intervened with the American bishops to support lend-lease for the Soviets, and he explicitly refused to bless the Nazi invasion of Russia. (The charge of overheated anti-communism is nonetheless still alive: In *Constantine's Sword*, James Carroll attacks the 1933 concordat Hitler signed for Germany by asking, "Is it conceivable that Pacelli would have negotiated any such agreement with the Bolsheviks in Moscow?"—appar-

ently not realizing that in the mid-1920s, Pacelli tried exactly that.)

In any case, Pius had his Jewish defenders as well. In addition to Lapide's *Three Popes and the Jews*, one might list *A Question of Judgment*, the 1963 pamphlet from the Anti-Defamation League's Joseph Lichten, and the excoriating reviews of Friedlander by Livia Rotkirchen, the historian of Slovakian Jewry at Yad Vashem. Jenő Levai, the great Hungarian historian, was so angered by accusations of papal silence that he wrote *Pius XII Was Not Silent* (published in English in 1968), with a powerful introduction by Robert M. W. Kempner, deputy chief U.S. prosecutor at Nuremberg.

In response to the new attacks on Pius, several Jewish scholars have spoken out over the last year. Sir Martin Gilbert told an interviewer that Pius deserves not blame but thanks. Michael Tagliacozzo, the leading authority on Roman Jews during the Holocaust, added, "I have a folder on my table in Israel entitled 'Calumnies Against Pius XII'... Without him, many of our own would not be alive." Richard Breitman (the only historian authorized to study U.S. espionage files from World War II) noted that secret documents prove the extent to which "Hitler distrusted the Holy See because it hid Jews."

Still, Lapide's 1967 book remains the most influential work by a Jew on the topic, and in the thirty-four years since he wrote, much material has become available in the Vatican's archives and elsewhere. New oral-history centers have gathered an impressive body of interviews with Holocaust survivors, military chaplains, and Catholic civilians. Given the recent attacks, the time has come for a new defense of Pius—because, despite allegations to the contrary, the best historical evidence now confirms both that

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Pius XII was not silent and that almost no one at the time thought him so.

In January 1940, for instance, the Pope issued instructions for Vatican Radio to reveal "the dreadful cruelties of uncivilized tyranny" the Nazis were inflicting on Jewish and Catholic Poles. Reporting the broadcast the following week, the *Jewish Advocate* of Boston praised it for what it was: an "outspoken denunciation of German atrocities in Nazi Poland, declaring they affronted the moral conscience of mankind." The *New York Times* editorialized: "Now the Vatican has spoken, with authority that cannot be questioned, and has confirmed the worst intimations of terror which have come out of the Polish darkness." In England, the *Manchester Guardian* hailed Vatican Radio as "tortured Poland's most powerful advocate."

Any fair and thorough reading of the evidence demonstrates that Pius XII was a persistent critic of Nazism. Consider just a few highlights of his opposition before the war:

- Of the 44 speeches Pacelli gave in Germany as Papal Nuncio between 1917 and 1929, 40 denounced some aspect of the emerging Nazi ideology.
- In March 1935, he wrote an open letter to the Bishop of Cologne calling the Nazis "false prophets with the pride of Lucifer."
- That same year, he assailed ideologies "possessed by the superstition of race and blood" to an enormous crowd of pilgrims at Lourdes. At Notre Dame in Paris two years later, he named Germany "that noble and powerful nation whom bad shepherds would lead astray into an ideology of race."

- The Nazis were "diabolical," he told friends privately. Hitler "is completely obsessed," he said to his long time secretary, Sister Pascalina. "All that is not of use to him, he destroys,...this man is capable of trampling on corpses." Meeting in 1935 with the heroic anti-Nazi Dietrich von Hildebrand, he declared, "There can be no possible reconciliation" between Christianity and Nazi racism; they were like "fire and water."

- The year after Pacelli became secretary of state in 1930, Vatican Radio was established, essentially under his control. The Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, had an

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uneven record, though it would improve as Pacelli gradually took charge (extensively reporting *Kristallnacht* in 1938, for example). But the radio station was always good—making such controversial broadcasts as the request that listeners pray for the persecuted Jews in Germany after the 1935 Nuremberg Legislation.

- It was while Pacelli was his predecessor's chief adviser that Pius XI made the famous statement to a group of Belgian pilgrims in 1938 that "anti-Semitism is inadmissible; spiritually we are all Semites." And it was Pacelli who drafted Pius XI's encyclical, *Mit brennender Sorge*, "With Burning Concern," a condemnation of Germany among the harshest ever issued by the Holy See. Indeed, throughout the 1930s, Pacelli was widely lampooned in the Nazi press as Pius XI's "Jew-loving" cardinal, because of the more than 55 protests he sent the Germans as the

Vatican secretary of state.

To these must be added highlights of Pius XII's actions during the war:

- His first encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus*, rushed out in 1939 to beg for peace, was in part a declaration that the proper role of the papacy was to plead to both warring sides rather than to blame one. But it very pointedly quoted St. Paul—"there is neither Gentile or Jew"—using the word "Jew" specifically in the context of rejecting racial ideology. The *New York Times* greeted the encyclical with a front-page headline on October 28, 1939: "Pope Condemns Dictators, Treaty Violators, Racism." Allied airplanes dropped thousands of copies on Germany in an effort to raise anti-Nazi sentiment.

- In 1939 and 1940, Pius acted as a secret intermediary between the

German plotters against Hitler and the British. He would similarly risk warning the Allies about the impending German invasions of Holland, Belgium, and France.

- In March 1940, Pius granted an audience to Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German foreign minister and the only high-ranking Nazi to bother visiting the Vatican. The German's understanding of Pius's position, at least, was clear: Ribbentrop chastised the Pope for siding with the Allies. Whereupon Pius began reading from a long list of German atrocities. "In the burning words he spoke to Herr Ribbentrop," the *New York Times* reported on March 14, Pius "came to the defense of Jews in Germany and Poland."

- When French bishops issued pastoral letters in 1942 attacking deportations, Pius sent his nuncio to protest to the Vichy government against "the



inhuman attacks and deportations of Jews from the French-occupied zone to Silesia and parts of Russia." Vatican Radio commented on the bishops' letters six days in a row—at a time when listening to Vatican Radio was a crime in Germany and Poland for which some were put to death. ("Pope Is Said to Plead for Jews Listed for Removal from France," the *New York Times* headline read on August 6, 1942. "Vichy Seizes Jews; Pope Pius Ignored," the *Times* reported three weeks later.) In retaliation, in the fall of 1942, Goebbels's office distributed ten million copies of a pamphlet naming Pius XII as the "pro-Jewish Pope" and explicitly citing his interventions in France.

• In the summer of 1944, after the liberation of Rome but before the war's end, Pius told a group of Roman Jews who had come to thank him for his protection: "For centuries, Jews have been unjustly treated and despised. It is time they were treated with justice and humanity, God wills it and the Church wills it. St. Paul tells us that the Jews are our brothers. They should also be welcomed as friends."

As these and hundreds of other examples are disparaged, one by one, in recent books attacking Pius XII, the reader loses sight of the huge bulk of them, their cumulative effect that left no one, the Nazis least of all, in doubt about the Pope's position.

A deeper examination reveals the consistent pattern. Writers like Cornwell and Zuccotti see the Pope's 1941 Christmas address, for example, as notable primarily for its failure to use the language we would use today. But contemporary observers thought it quite explicit. In its editorial the following day, the *New York Times* declared,

"The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas.... In calling for a 'real new order' based on liberty, justice, and love, the Pope put himself squarely against Hitlerism."

So, too, the Pope's Christmas message the following year—in which he expressed his concern "for those hundreds of thousands who, without any fault of their own, sometimes only by reason of their nationality or race, are marked down for death or progressive extinction"—was widely understood to be a public condemnation of the Nazi extermination of the Jews. Indeed, the Germans themselves saw it

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as such: "His speech is one long attack on everything we stand for...He is clearly speaking on behalf of the Jews...He is virtually accusing the German people of injustice toward the Jews, and makes himself the mouthpiece of the Jewish war criminals," an internal Nazi analysis reads.

This Nazi awareness, moreover, had potentially dire consequences. There were ample precedents for the Pope to fear an invasion: Napoleon had besieged the Vatican in 1809, capturing Pius VII at bayonet point; Pius IX fled Rome for his life after the assassination of his chancellor; and Leo XIII was driven into temporary exile in the late nineteenth century.

Still, Pius XII was "ready to let himself be deported to a concentration camp, rather than do anything against his conscience," Mussolini's foreign minister railed. Hitler spoke openly of entering the Vatican to "pack up that

whole whoring rabble," and Pius knew of the various Nazi plans to kidnap him. Ernst von Weizsacker has written that he regularly warned Vatican officials against provoking Berlin. The Nazi ambassador to Italy, Rudolf Rahn, similarly describes one of Hitler's kidnapping plots and the effort by German diplomats to prevent it. General Carlo Wolff testified to having received orders from Hitler in 1943 to "occupy as soon as possible the Vatican and Vatican City, secure the archives and the art treasures, which have a unique value, and transfer the Pope, together with the Curia, for their protection, so that they cannot fall into the hands of the Allies and exert a political influence." Early in December 1943, Wolff managed to talk Hitler out of the plan.

In assessing what actions Pius XII might have taken, many (I among them) wish that explicit excommunications had been announced. The Catholic-born Nazi had already incurred automatic excommunication, for everything from failure to attend Mass to unconfessed murder to public repudiation of Christianity. And, as his writing and table-talk make clear, Hitler had ceased to consider himself a Catholic—indeed, considered himself an *anti-Catholic*—long before he came to power. But a papal declaration of excommunication might have done some good.

Then again, it might not. Don Luigi Sturzo, founder of the Christian Democratic movement in wartime Italy, pointed out that the last times "a nominal excommunication was pronounced against a head of state," neither Queen Elizabeth I nor Napoleon had changed policy. And there is reason to believe provocation would, as

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Margherita Marchione puts it, "have resulted in violent retaliation, the loss of many more Jewish lives, especially those then under the protection of the Church, and an intensification of the persecution of Catholics."

Holocaust survivors such as Marcus Melchior, the chief rabbi of Denmark, argued that "if the Pope had spoken out, Hitler would probably have massacred more than six million Jews and perhaps ten times ten million Catholics, if he had the power to do so." Robert M. W. Kempner called upon his experience at the Nuremberg trials to say (in a letter to the editor after Commentary published an excerpt from Guenter Lewy in 1964), "Every propaganda move of the Catholic Church against Hitler's Reich would have been not only 'provoking suicide,'...but would have hastened the execution of still more Jews and priests."

This is hardly a speculative concern. A Dutch bishops' pastoral letter condemning "the unmerciful and unjust treatment meted out to Jews" was read in Holland's Catholic churches in July 1942. The well-intentioned letter—which declared that it was inspired by Pius XII—backfired. As Pinchas Lapide notes: "The saddest and most thought-provoking conclusion is that whilst the Catholic clergy in Holland protested more loudly, expressly, and frequently against Jewish persecutions than the religious hierarchy of any other Nazi-occupied country, more Jews—some 110,000 or 79 percent of the total—were deported from Holland to death camps."

Bishop Jean Bernard of Luxembourg, an inmate of Dachau from 1941 to 1942, notified the Vatican that "whenever protests were made, treatment of prisoners worsened

immediately." Late in 1942, Archbishop Sapieha of Cracow and two other Polish bishops, having experienced the Nazis' savage reprisals, begged Pius not to publish his letters about conditions in Poland. Even Susan Zuccotti admits that in the case of the Roman Jews the Pope "might well have been influenced by a concern for Jews in hiding and for their Catholic protectors."

One might ask, of course, what could have been worse than the mass murder of six million Jews? The answer is the slaughter of hundreds of thousands more. And it was toward saving those it could that the Vatican worked. The fate of Italian Jews has become a major topic of Pius's critics, the failure of Catholicism at its home supposedly demonstrating the hypocrisy of any

In calling for a 'real new order' based on liberty, justice, and love, the Pope put himself squarely against Hitlerism.

modern papal claim to moral authority. (Notice, for example, Zuccotti's title: *Under His Very Windows*.) But the fact remains that while approximately 80 percent of European Jews perished during World War II, 80 percent of Italian Jews were saved.

In the months Rome was under German occupation, Pius XII instructed Italy's clergy to save lives by all means. (A neglected source for Pius's actions during this time is the 1965 memoir *But for the Grace of God*, by Monsignor J. Patrick Carroll-Abbing, who worked under Pius as a rescuer.) Beginning in October 1943, Pius asked churches and convents throughout Italy to shelter Jews. As a result—and despite the fact that Mussolini and the Fascists yielded to Hitler's demand for

deportations—many Italian Catholics defied the German orders.

In Rome, 155 convents and monasteries sheltered some 5,000 Jews. At least 3,000 found refuge at the Pope's summer residence at Castel Gandolfo. Sixty Jews lived for nine months at the Gregorian University, and many were sheltered in the cellar of the Pontifical Biblical Institute. Hundreds found sanctuary within the Vatican itself. Following Pius's instructions, individual Italian priests, monks, nuns, cardinals, and bishops were instrumental in preserving thousands of Jewish lives. Cardinal Boetto of Genoa saved at least 800. The bishop of Assisi hid 300 Jews for over two years. The bishop of Campagna and two of his relatives saved 961 more in Fiume.

Cardinal Pietro Palazzini, then assistant vice rector of the Seminario Romano, hid Michael Tagliacozzo and other Italian Jews at the seminary (which was Vatican property) for several months in 1943 and 1944. In 1985, Yad

Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial, honored the cardinal as a righteous gentile—and, in accepting the honor, Palazzini stressed that "the merit is entirely Pius XII's, who ordered us to do whatever we could to save the Jews from persecution." Some of the laity helped as well, and, in their testimony afterwards, consistently attributed their inspiration to the Pope.

Again, the most eloquent testimony is the Nazis' own. Fascist documents published in 1998 (and summarized in Marchione's *Pope Pius XII*) speak of a German plan, dubbed "Rabat-Fohn," to be executed in January 1944. The plan called for the eighth division of the SS cavalry, disguised as Italians, to seize St. Peter's and "massacre Pius XII with the entire

Vatican"—and specifically names "the papal protest in favor of the Jews" as the cause.

A similar story can be traced across Europe. There is room to argue that more ought to have been attempted by the Catholic Church—for the unanswerable facts remain that Hitler did come to power, World War II did occur, and six million Jews did die. But the place to begin that argument is with the truth that people of that time, Nazis and Jews alike, understood the Pope to be the world's most prominent opponent of the Nazi ideology:

• As early as December 1940, in an article in *Time* magazine, Albert Einstein paid tribute to Pius: "Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing the truth. I never had any special interest in the Church before, but now I feel a great affection and admiration because the Church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced thus to confess that what I once despised, I now praise unreservedly."

• In 1943, Chaim Weizmann, who would become Israel's first president, wrote that the "Holy See is lending its powerful help wherever it can, to mitigate the fate of my persecuted co-religionists."

• Moshe Sharett, Israel's second prime minister, met with Pius in the closing days of the war and "told him that my first duty was to thank him, and through him the Catholic Church, on behalf of the Jewish public for all they had done in the various countries to rescue Jews."

• Rabbi Isaac Herzog, chief rabbi of Israel, sent a message in February 1944 declaring, "The people of Israel will never forget what His Holiness and his

illustrious delegates, inspired by the eternal principles of religion, which form the very foundation of true civilization, are doing for our unfortunate brothers and sisters in the most tragic hour of our history, which is living proof of Divine Providence in this world."

• In September 1945, Leon Kubowitzky, secretary general of the World Jewish Congress, personally thanked the Pope for his interventions, and the World Jewish Congress donated \$20,000 to Vatican charities "in recognition of the work of the Holy See in rescuing Jews from Fascist and Nazi persecutions."

• In 1955, when Italy celebrated the 10th anniversary of its liberation, the Union of Italian Jewish Communities

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proclaimed April 17 a "Day of Gratitude" for the Pope's wartime assistance.

• On May 6, 1955, the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra flew to Rome to give in the Vatican a special performance of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony—an expression of the State of Israel's enduring gratitude to the Pope for help given the Jewish people during the Holocaust.

This last example is particularly significant. As a matter of state policy, the Israeli Philharmonic has never played the music of Richard Wagner, because of his well-known reputation as "Hitler's composer," the cultural patron saint of the Third Reich. During the 1950s especially, the Israeli public, hundreds of thousands of whom were

Holocaust survivors, still viewed Wagner as a symbol of the Nazi régime. It is inconceivable that the Israeli government would have paid for the entire orchestra to travel to Rome to pay tribute to "Hitler's Pope." On the contrary, the Israeli Philharmonic's unprecedented concert in the Vatican was a unique communal gesture of collective recognition for a great friend of the Jewish people.

Hundreds of other memorials could be cited. In her conclusion to *Under His Very Windows*, Susan Zuccotti dismisses—as wrong-headed, ill-informed, or even devious—the praise Pius XII received from Jewish leaders and scholars, as well as expressions of gratitude from the Jewish chaplains and Holocaust survivors who

bore personal witness to the assistance of the Pope.

That she does so is disturbing. To deny the legitimacy of their gratitude to Pius XII is tantamount to denying credibility of their personal testimony and judgment

about the Holocaust itself. "More than all others," recalled Elio Toaff, an Italian Jew who lived through the Holocaust and later became Chief Rabbi of Rome, "we had the opportunity of experiencing the great compassionate goodness and magnanimity of the Pope during the unhappy years of the persecution and terror, when it seemed that for us there was no longer an escape."

But Zuccotti is not alone. There is a disturbing element in nearly all the current work on Pius. Except for Rychlak's *Hitler, the War and the Pope*, none of the recent books—from Cornwell's vicious attack in *Hitler's Pope* to McNerny's uncritical defense in *The Defamation of Pius XII*—is

continued on next page

finally about the Holocaust. All are about using the sufferings of Jews 50 years ago to force changes upon the Catholic Church today.

It is this abuse of the Holocaust that must be rejected. A true account of Pius XII would arrive, I believe, at exactly the opposite to Cornwell's conclusion: Pius XII was not Hitler's Pope, but the closest Jews had come to having a papal supporter—and at the moment when it mattered most.

Writing in *Yad Vashem Studies* in 1983, John S. Conway—the leading authority on the Vatican's 11-volume *Acts and Documents of the Holy See During the Second World War*—concluded: "A close study of the many

thousands of documents published in these volumes lends little support to the thesis that ecclesiastical self-preservation was the main motive behind the attitudes of the Vatican diplomats. Rather, the picture that emerges is one of a group of intelligent and conscientious men, seeking to pursue the paths of peace and justice, at a time when these ideals were ruthlessly being rendered irrelevant in a world of 'total war.'" These neglected volumes (which the English reader can find summarized in Pierre Blet's *Pius XII and the Second World War*) "will reveal ever more clearly and convincingly"—as John Paul told a group of Jewish leaders in Miami in 1987—"how

deeply Pius XII felt the tragedy of the Jewish people, and how hard and effectively he worked to assist them."

The Talmud teaches that "whosoever preserves one life, it is accounted to him by Scripture as if he had preserved a whole world." More than any other twentieth century leader, Pius fulfilled this Talmudic dictum, when the fate of European Jewry was at stake. No other Pope had been so widely praised by Jews—and they were not mistaken. Their gratitude, as well as that of the entire generation of Holocaust survivors, testifies that Pius II was, genuinely and profoundly, a Righteous Gentile. ❖

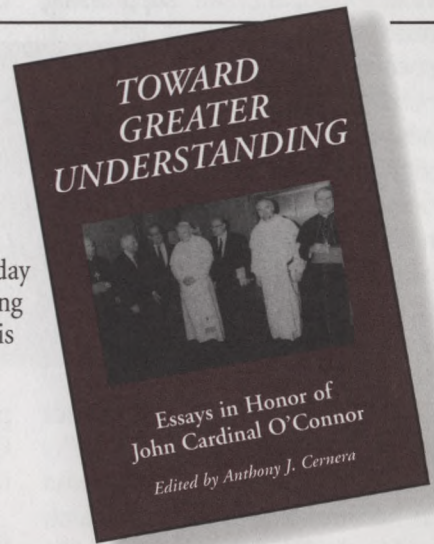
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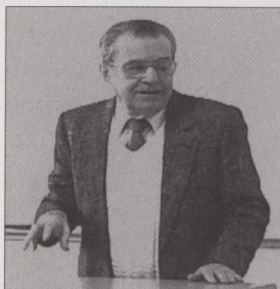
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## *Holocaust Survivor Speaks at Sacred Heart University*



On March 1, 2001, Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Baron were invited to come to Dr. David L. Coppola's Religious Studies class (RS599 Christian-Jewish Relations in Contemporary Church Teaching) by one of the students of the class, Alexis Harrison. Both Mr. And Mrs. Baron were prisoners

in a Nazi work camp. It was there that they met. After the liberation of the camp in 1945 they married and moved to the United States.

Mr. Baron told his story with his wife, Sari, occasionally interjecting comments. Abraham Baron was born as the youngest of six children. He is the only remaining member of his immediate family who survived the Holocaust. He describes himself as "not overly religious." Nonetheless, he said, "I have seen terrible suffering and death—including my own mother." (He found his mother's burned body, which he was able to identify by the chain around her head that he had given her earlier.) "Through it all, I had a very deep feeling that somebody was looking out for me."

When Abraham was 15 years old he was forced to live in the ghetto in Warsaw, Poland for five-and-a-half years. He was forced into slave labor and obeyed or died. "Many of my friends were shot or worked to death. They were not interested in our well-being. They only wanted the work done. After four weeks 1500 people had been reduced to a handful." He said that the hunger pains were indescribable and those who resisted were taken out to the fields and massacred.

Mr. Baron then showed the class the number tattooed to his arm by the Nazis. He had been forced to work in several camps. He described his experiences: "There was murder everywhere. To be beaten to death is worse than the gas chambers. And the Nazis loved group whippings. I remember that the Nazis always yelled! They yelled so loudly that you couldn't hear what they said. Once they just kept beating me until I could remember nothing. They treated us like garbage, but they counted us like diamonds. We were probably counted at least 25 times a day."

Later Mr. Baron was taken to Auschwitz, Poland, where he was told by other prisoners, "The only way out of this camp is as smoke in the crematoria." While there, he turned 19, and he had 12 of his healthy teeth pulled by the Nazi doctors just to see if their new dentures would fit.

Eventually he was taken to a camp called Buchenwald and was freed there. After four years he decided to go to America with his new wife, Sari.

Mr. Baron has spoken to several school groups including the middle schools in Fairfield, Connecticut. He also participated in the Steven Spielberg project where he was interviewed and videotaped with hundreds of other Holocaust survivors.

When asked by one of the students how he survived, he said, "I kept telling myself that this evil could not last forever and that I just had to hold on. I still think that is true. Despite all of the terrible things going on even today, we have to hold on and work together. These things really happened and we can't let them happen again."

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*I still think that is true.*

*Despite all of the terrible things going on even today, we have to hold on and work together. These things really happened and we can't let them happen again.*

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The course, "Christian-Jewish Relations in Contemporary Church Teachings," studies the dramatic positive strides in interreligious understanding advanced by the Second Vatican Council and the continued good relations between Christians and Jews. Theological, pastoral, liturgical and pedagogical implications of the last 35 years are discussed. ♦

*The Master of Arts in Religious Studies degree requires 33 hours of course work (11 three-hour courses) and a comprehensive examination or master's thesis. Those interested in taking these or other courses in Religious Studies should call Linda Kirby, dean of Graduate Admissions, at 203-371-7882 or contact the CCJU at 203-365-7592.*

## Annual Seminarists' Institute

*continued from page 1*

they can build on this network and draw support from one another in their work and ministry. The CCJU is delighted to be a part of this process."

The Institute was inspired by the Catholic Church's vision presented in the 1965 Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate*, which repudiated historic Christian teachings of contempt towards Jews and positively asserted the ongoing validity and common spiritual heritage that Christians and Jews share. The CCJU offers this Institute as one vehicle to promote interreligious dialogue, education and understanding among future religious leaders. All costs for meals and overnight accommodations, speakers, books, articles and materials for the Institute were underwritten by the Roxe Foundation, Leo Van Munching Jr., and the CCJU.

Students attending the Institute came from Blessed John XXIII National Seminary, Weston, Massachusetts; Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles; Jewish Theological Seminary, New York City; Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland; Pontifical North American College, Vatican City; St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Wynnewood, Pennsylvania; St. John Seminary, Brighton, Massachusetts; and Saint Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore. Many of the students commented how much they appreciated the informative and moving sessions which gave them a good basis for interfaith and interpersonal dialogue.

Presenters at the Institute included Dr. Anthony J. Cernera, president of Sacred Heart University; Dr. David L. Coppola, director of Conferences and Publications of the CCJU; Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the CCJU; Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg, president of CHAverlim kol yisrael/Jewish Life Network, New York; Rabbi James Rudin, president emeritus of the American Jewish Committee, New York; Dr. Eugene Fisher, associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.; Reverend Nancy Cox, associate pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church, Southport, Connecticut; and Father Daniel Murphy, pastor of Blessed Kateri Parish, Sparta, New Jersey.

## Conference Summary

### Day I

The Institute began with welcoming remarks by Anthony J. Cernera, Ph.D., president of Sacred Heart University, who spoke of growing up in the Bronx where many of his friends were Jewish. He said that later in high school he read Viktor E. Frankl's book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, and was profoundly moved. He resolved that if he ever had the chance, he would try to prevent such events as the *Shoah* from happening again. Dr. Cernera said, "Thankfully, the recent journey of the Catholic Church begun with the efforts of Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council's document, *Nostra Aetate*, has cultivated a climate where Catholic universities are encouraged to promote interreligious and ecumenical dialogue. The CCJU at Sacred Heart University is one of the best things we do as a university, and I believe these next few days will give you a new perspective and hope for the future. I know that I am a better Christian because of my friendships with Jews, especially Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz."

The keynote address was delivered by Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg, president of CHAverlim kol yisrael/Jewish Life Network of New York City. He affirmed that a funda-

mental starting point in interreligious dialogue is acknowledging that all people are created in the image of God and are endowed with equality, uniqueness and infinite worth. He said, "Every life is worth a universe. God is not looking for miracles, just partners in love." He continued, "The things we love are of infinite value. They are people. Love makes us all equal, even to some degree with God. God chooses to self-limit in



Rev. Nancy Cox, associate pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church, Southport, CT, spoke on the interreligious implications of ministering to Generation X.

favor of love. Paradoxically, love that self-limits is, in fact, just the opposite of limitation—it is being open to Love, the Infinite, the Unlimited One."

Rabbi Greenberg spoke of Judaism and Christianity and how both have models of heroic spirituality. He spoke of the Triumph of Life as told by each tradition and how the power of story is found when we discover our place in it. He continued, "We are the result of billions of years of moving toward God—being made in God's image more and more. . . . The story of the Triumph of Life as told by Jews and Christians and Muslims is from chaos to order (creation); from non-life to life (covenant); and from being less to being more like God (redemption)."

Rabbi Greenberg said that he believes that God offers multiple messages that are appropriate to different people. He suggested, for example, that Christians can now confidently affirm that most of the Jews at the time of Jesus were not blind or stubborn, as some Christian teaching of the past had taught. Similarly, from a Jewish perspective, Judaism could affirm that a small group of Jews were meant to hear the message of Jesus and carry it to the Gentiles.

When asked about intra-religious dialogue, he said, "I've spent a lot of my life searching for an open dialogue. There are many people of good will who are eager to participate. The difficulty is that the closer one is in religious beliefs to another, the more angry one could become about those minor differences."

Discussion also focused around the challenges of pluralism and some people's temptation to uncritically move to

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relativism. Rabbi Greenberg said, "God adores uniqueness and diversity. The story is not finished, and we need to be open to resurrection—which is a central rabbinic teaching—and how God calls us all to new life. There will always be differences, and one of the great things about authentic

dialogue is that we do not have to feel in any way compelled to dilute our beliefs."

## Day II

The following morning session and discussion on the history of the Christian-Jewish relationship was facilitated by Rabbi James Rudin, Senior Interreligious Advisor of the American Jewish Committee, New York. Rabbi Rudin began by describing Jewish-Christian history: "It's not that we've been so good the last 36 years, it's just that things in the last 1900 were that bad." He noted that "there will always be flash points between these two peoples of God because we both have long memories, and our histories bump into each other all the time. . . . After the Holocaust, things were either going to break down completely or there was going to be a breakthrough. Fortunately, 20 years after the end of the war—which is not a long time in Jewish or Catholic time—a breakthrough happened in *Nostra Aetate*."

Rabbi Rudin suggested that the initial unfinished agenda for the joint study of history between Jews and Christians is the roots of Christianity, the parting of the ways between Jews and Christians, covenant, the Gospel of John, justice, life issues, liturgy, and accurate educational programs. He said, "Each religion has to make theological space in the Divine economy, and we have to see how that space reveals more of the truth of our past and future."

The afternoon session of the second day was led by Eugene Fisher, Ph.D., associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C. Dr. Fisher spoke about the importance and challenges of Holocaust education and how Pope John Paul II has tried to work actively for healing between Christians and Jews.

Dr. Fisher said that there has been significant anti-Judaism in Christianity since its early days, which resulted in many Christians thinking that they were supposed to try to convert Jews. He noted that the 1965 Vatican document,



*Philosophical, theological and pastoral issues were discussed at the Seminars Institute.*

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*Nostra Aetate*, really "started the conversation" by referring to Judaism in the present tense. He said, "This began our journey from supercessionism to respect and understanding. Christian theology now teaches that Jews can be saved by their own merits because God's grace is enough. Jews are already with the Father, and they walk a path that parallels the followers of Jesus. In effect, Cardinal Walter Kasper [president of the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews] has made this clear by saying that there is no explicit mission of the Church to the Jewish People. Instead, Jews and Christians together have a mission to the world." He continued, "The Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews is deliberately led by the same commission that concentrates on Christian unity, ecumenism. As far as Catholics are concerned, the dialogue between Christians and Jews is not interreligious dialogue but ecumenical relations. . . . Because of Christians, over a billion people today have come to know the God of Abraham."

When questioned about forgiveness and the Vatican's use of the Hebrew word, *teshuvah* [a turning away from wrong and returning to a right relationship] towards the Jewish people in the 1998 *We Remember* document, Dr. Fisher said that the process of Jewish forgiveness is different

from that of Catholic forgiveness. He said by using the word, Catholic leaders wanted to show that they were making a sincere effort to communicate a deep and profound sorrow for the wounds of the *Shoah*.

Some discussion followed on the role of Pope Pius XII at the time of the *Shoah* and the deficiencies and misleading assertions of John Cornwell's 2000 book, *Hitler's Pope*. Dr. Fisher concluded by saying, "The main challenge in Christian-Jewish dialogue is trusting that the other is doing the best that he or she can within his or her tradition. Dialogue requires trust and willingness to respect differences and also the courage to challenge where there has been misunderstanding or wrongs committed. As I mentioned in the article ["Catholics and Jews Confront the Holocaust and Each Other" in *America Magazine* (September 11, 1999)], American Jews and Catholics, despite significant progress after Vatican II in Catholic-Jewish relations, strongly differ in their approach to history, scriptural texts, the papacy, the Church, the *Shoah*. But when Jews critique Christians and

their statements, they are actually treating Christians with the same respect they show their own texts and scholars. This may seem difficult to appreciate at times, but it is a sure sign that our friendship will continue to grow deeper."

The evening of the second day, Reverend Nancy Cox, associate pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church, Southport, Connecticut, made a presentation on the interreligious implications of ministering to Generation X (those born in the years from 1961-1981). She outlined some of the contradictory characteristics of Generation X. She said Generation X people tend to be individualistic, yet they highly value relationships; they do not respond well to authority, yet they long for instruction or mentoring. Additionally they tend to be skeptical, but pragmatic. They may be slow to commit to something, but are passionately dedicated; apathetic, but care deeply; relativistic, but search for deep meaning; and are disillusioned, but are not giving up.

Reverend Nancy Cox discussed the challenges of relativism and how to invite this age group to reach more deeply into their faith traditions, especially at moments of transitions such as marriage, the birth of a child or the challenges associated with illness. She said that both Jews and Christians have the responsibility of being

prophetic and standing up for social justice issues—a value held in high esteem by Generation X. "The challenges of secularization in society, postmodernism and consumerism make it difficult enough to reach out to this group. But they are generous and willing to work with others outside their normal religious boundaries—especially if it helps those in need. This is good news for Jewish and Christian faith communities. If we can give this group a good reason to come to our services, such as provocative and engaging preaching and good liturgy, then they will stay after services—especially if the coffee is good. They will also come back mid-week if we provide opportunities for the whole family to participate in interesting discussions or practical efforts at community service."

### Day III

On the final day of the Institute, the morning session was conducted by Father Daniel Murphy, pastor of Blessed Kateri Parish, Sparta, New Jersey, who spoke about the educational

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and liturgical possibilities in interreligious relations on the local level. Father Murphy said that he believed it had been "providential" that such a close relationship between Christians and Jews has been able to take root in Sparta, New Jersey—once considered a haven for Nazi sympathizers during the Second World War. He said, "My faith has really grown because of my relationships with other clergy members, especially the local rabbis."



Participants at the conference enjoy a relaxed moment between presentations.

He shared an ironic story where a rabbi came to speak to the Catholic congregation during their liturgy, which was being held in an Episcopal Church because the Blessed Kateri Church had not yet been built. "Now that was real interfaith cooperation," he said, smiling.

"The second step to building a strong interfaith dialogue group is to be educated together," Father Murphy said. He continued, "We began by asking Rabbi Leon Klenicki, interfaith affairs director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in New York, for suggestions and he facilitated a number of study groups that focused on the Hebrew Scriptures on its own terms. After a while, by educating ourselves and being open to the faith journeys of each other, we realized that it was time then to share our experiences with our congregations and begin to have educational panels and participate in different liturgical services." Father Murphy also said that it was a "wonderful moment of confirmation for our efforts" when a Jewish benefactor approached him and asked if his parish community would establish in its prayer garden a memorial for Righteous Gentiles, so that people would remember the Holocaust. Father Murphy said, "The garden is now a wonderful place to pray, not only because of its beauty and proximity to the Eucharist Chapel, but also because of its reminder that prayer requires us all to never forget and never fail to act with justice."

As the Christian-Jewish group has met more frequently, they have organized semi-annual faith forums (panel and

When asked how to begin a dialogue on a local level, Father Murphy said that the first thing was to build a friendship and a trust between the

discussion groups) on "hot topics" such as the Holocaust, as well as informational themes such as God, worship, prayer, morality and marriage. They also hold an annual Holocaust memorial service, which has changed over the years as the group has grown in trust and understanding. All of these programs have been videotaped and aired on local cable stations. The group also participates in social justice activities such as providing food for the hungry, supporting homeless shelters, sharing pulpits, sharing educational experiences for children, and supporting each other's communities in times of tragedy. "By working together, we realized that we had much in common, and we could accomplish a great deal of good. For example, through our joint efforts, the schools have agreed not to have graduations on Friday evenings or sports practices on Sunday mornings," he said.

### Concluding Session

At the final luncheon of the Institute, the students were joined by members of the CCJU Board of Directors who listened as many of the seminarians and rabbinical students shared their experiences of the Institute.

One Jewish participant said that he was surprised that the program offered such real and honest dialogue. He said, "This program certainly raised my sensitivities and wasted no time getting to issues. In particular, this has been a very important, moving experience for me to get to know Catholic seminary students personally, as real people, with many of the same concerns as I have. It was also very significant and interesting to have the opportunity to interact with my fellow Jewish participants."

Another Jewish student commented, "The readings, combined with presentations, helped me to think deeply about my own faith and theology. The small number of par-

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ticipants was perfect because I enjoyed having experts at the highest levels of dialogue willing to speak with me and

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answer my concerns. "A Christian student said, "I feel that it is important to highlight how much Jews and Christians have in common. Yet where we differ, I am confident that these future rabbis will try to understand as I will sincerely try to understand their beliefs. For example, I would like Jews to appreciate a Christian understanding of forgiveness. To be able to forgive and to seek peace of heart does not mean we need to forget, but it does mean to begin to trust and to let others in."

Another Christian student said, "The program was extremely well thought out. The presentations were diverse, yet they all hung together in a way that culminated appropriately in a pastoral approach to interreligious dialogue on the local level. To tell you the truth, it went well beyond my expectations. I have had misconceptions and prejudgments erased and came to encounter people of deep faith. Most helpful was the encounter of persons from different faith traditions seeking to communicate with each other through the faith they have in God."

All the participants agreed that the personal discussions that followed each presentation were invaluable. A Jewish student put it this way: "Because of our unscheduled conversations, I think my new Catholic seminarian friends realize that Judaism is diverse, and not all Jews think or worship the same way, and that Judaism today is not the same as that which was practiced during the time of Jesus. Modern Judaism is not the religion of the Old Testament but the religion of the *Mishna/Tanach*."

A Christian student agreed, "I felt the program was well-conceived and well-executed, with deep sensitivity and care—especially with plenty of free time to have informal conversations. I have come to experience something of the



*Participants at the Seminarians' Institute included Dr. Thomas V. Forget, Academic Vice President of Sacred Heart University; Rabbi James Rudin, senior interreligious advisor of the American Jewish Committee; and Dr. Eugene Fisher, associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.*

pain left in the Jewish people from the *Shoah*, and the responsibility I have to hear of the event from the Jewish people's perspective. I would highly recommend this program. It has sparked an interest in dialogue for me that I will foster in my ministry."

Father Michael Moynihan, pastor of Saint Michael's Parish, Greenwich, Connecticut, and chairman of the CCJU Board of Directors, said, "When you begin your ministry in your parishes or synagogues, reach out to the other religious leaders in your area. If the first person you reach out to rejects you, then move on to the next. There are plenty of people who believe that this is God's work and it is God's will that we all cooperate in His name."

Rabbi Ehrenkranz said that his faith as a Jew has been broadened because of his relationship with Christians. He said, "I have come to appreciate Judaism even more by working with Christians, and I hope that you can take this experience home with you and incorporate it in your ministry and your lives."

The next Institute is scheduled for June 3-5, 2002, at Sacred Heart University. For more information or to register, please contact Dr. David L. Coppola, director of Conferences and Publications, at 203-365-7592 or email [coppolad@sacredheart.edu](mailto:coppolad@sacredheart.edu). ❖

**T**hank you, dear friends, for that very warm welcome. It really does touch me. I'm thrilled to be here. It has really been a pleasure to sit back and listen to the words that have been spoken and to be moved by the overpowering transcendent spirit of good will and brotherhood and sisterhood that is in this room tonight. I thank Rabbi Sobel, Rabbi Lincoln, Archbishop McCarrick - really everyone who has spoken, and Roz Goldstein, for your kind words about me. I am reminded, Archbishop, thinking of your story about the eulogy at the funeral - of something that Hubert Humphrey once said after a great introduction. He said, "I wish my father and mother had been here to hear that introduction. My father would have enjoyed it, and my mother would have believed it!"

Well, I'm very proud that my mother is here! And I'm glad she could hear it. Not only that, my Aunt Fay is here and my cousin Renee. So it is a pleasure, frankly, to have a good reason to leave behind the current controversies. In Washington, D.C., if you'll allow me a stretch at punning—we're spending too much time there reading from the Book of Numbers these days! It's a pleasure to be here and move toward the Book of Prophets and prophesy, which we have heard tonight. I appreciate it very much. I was thinking in the presence of this many clergy that the one court to which neither presidential campaign has yet appealed is the heavenly court! There are enough canon experts and talmudic experts here that I think we could retain good counsel. So we'll wait and see how things go in the Florida Supreme Court.

I am delighted to be here. I want to thank Dr. Anthony Cerna and Sacred Heart University, which sponsors and hosts the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding. Tony is one of the dear, sweet people of Connecticut. Sacred Heart is one of our great institutions of higher learning, and beyond that, a wonderful citizen of the State of

Connecticut, Tony, I pay you and Sacred Heart the highest tribute. Thank you for what you do for our State. I regret very much that Archbishop Egan could not be here. I send him my best wishes, and hope he is better soon. It was my honor to get to know Archbishop Egan when he was in Bridgeport for 12 years, and I'm very proud and excited that he's in New York now and has been elevated to this high position. If I may borrow a quip that Vice President Gore used at the Al Smith Dinner this year—this has been a very exciting year for guys from Connecticut who regularly wear skull caps!

Incidentally, did you notice that precious moment, that interfaith moment, when I came out, and Rabbi Ehrenkranz and I both realized at the same time that Archbishop McCarrick and Father Loughran were wearing skull caps, but I was not! And my mother's very happy about that too, Archbishop!

I had the honor of working closely with Archbishop



Senator Joseph I. Lieberman (left), greets Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington, D.C., and Rabbi David Lincoln, Rabbi of the Park Avenue Synagogue, both of whom were honored with the 2000 CCJU Nostra Aetate Award.

Egan during his time in the Bridgeport diocese - for those in New York who have not yet gotten to know him, he is a brilliant scholar, a man of profound faith and compassion. I'm confident that he will inspire and improve the lives of people in New York, just as he has in Connecticut, particularly the children who have benefited so much from his stewardship of the parochial school system in the Bridgeport area.

Now, speaking of clergy, as some of you may know, Rabbi Ehrenkranz was my childhood rabbi, which means that he remains always my rabbi. He is still a dear friend and an unflinching source of inspiration and wisdom. I am very proud of the second career that he

has now gone on to. Thinking of higher office, actually, I remember a day that I was in Congregation Agudath Shalom, Rabbi Ehrenkranz' synagogue in Stamford where I grew up. This was after I became a member of the United States Senate. There was an older man, Louis Rodin, who came over to me and said - "We are so proud of you, Joe, and we have such high hopes for you. I actually believe that one day you can be president..." I began to inflate myself, and he said - "...of this synagogue!" And he was serious! We all have our standards for success, and it may have been easier to come by!

I truly wanted to be here tonight because I believe deeply in the mission of CCJU, and I wanted to personally and publicly take this opportunity to show my support for the work that the Center, and particularly tonight's honorees, Archbishop McCarrick and Rabbi Lincoln, do in building interfaith bridges and truly fulfilling God's will. Tony took a page from my remarks in telling that story about Pope John XXIII that seems so fitting tonight. You remember his name was Giuseppe Roncalli, born with that name, scheduled to meet this delegation of world Jewish leaders who were sitting with great anxiety and anticipation in an anteroom in the Vatican. The Pope burst through the door and said to the delegation, "I am Joseph, your brother," the wonderful words from the Bible. Five simple words that conveyed a powerful and profound message of love and hope and shared humanity and of humility. No matter our different denominations or individual beliefs,

we are all God's children; we are all, as the Holy Father said in those few words, brothers and sisters.

And these words remind us today, as they did then, of the extraordinary potential of faith to be a unifying force in our diverse and too-often divided world. It is clearly that loving and hopeful spirit that has animated the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding and that brings us here

tonight—in the words of those who have preceded me—has filled this magnificent sanctuary. We share, after all, more than a common belief in God, our Creator and Father, and more than a common set of core values. We also share an abiding sense, I think, that

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by understanding and accentuating the commonality that flows from our respective faiths, we can help overcome differences and heal divisions that exist more broadly in our community and in our world. The sad fact is that throughout recorded history, faith has too often been used, truly mis-used, as an excuse for bigotry and hatred and, worse, for violence. And this continues today in places across the globe, in the ongoing bloodshed in the Middle East, the persistent tensions in Northern Ireland, and the persecution of Christians in places like Sudan. But these bitter reminders of our human failings should not obscure the sweet progress that we have made in recent years in breaking down the barriers that too long have separated people of faith — particularly the barriers between Christians and Jews. In ways large and small, we have moved considerably closer together and therefore closer to our shared goal of peace on earth. Much of that progress, history notes and certainly should note, began with the Holy See of John XXIII, who convened Vatican II. The adoption of the papal encyclical *Nostra Aetate*, which gives its name to this evening, literally changed history. I think it's a change in history that we have too little acknowledged and appreciated, but it is time to do that.

While it was written for Catholics, it strongly signaled to non-Catholics, including Jews, that the Church was beginning a new journey of outreach and understanding. And, in fact, the Church has forcefully continued on that journey in the years since — building on Pope John XXIII's

expression of unity from faith and his explicit denunciation of anti-Semitism. In particular, Pope John Paul II has brought about historic changes in Church doctrine and practice that will make the future of hundreds of millions of people for centuries to come — better, safer, more peaceful, more full of love. In 1986, as has been recalled, John Paul II became the first pope since the Apostolic Age to visit the synagogue in Rome and pray there. During that service, the Holy Father said with great profundity and meaning, "With Judaism, therefore, we have a relationship which we do not have with any other religion. You are our dearly beloved brothers, and in a certain way it could be said that you are our elder brothers." Speakers who have come to the microphone and the pulpit tonight have given further current testimony to that powerful truth. When I read that sentence, I think not only of the extent to which the Torah, the Old Testament, is read as part of the Catholic Mass, but the profoundly Jewish content to the New Testament.

Remember, in Mark, particularly, in the Gospel according to Mark, when someone asks Jesus, "What is the first commandment?" And his answer is, "The first commandment is 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God; the Lord is one Lord.'" That will be recognized by Jews who are here of course as the *Shema Israel*, the fundamental affirmation of faith in Judaism—sublime and profound. And when seen in the context of Christian-Jewish relations, yet another proof of how deep are the ties that unite us; how common is the root of the tree from which both of these great religions have

grown. Changes in Church doctrine and teaching led to changes in attitudes and growing interest in opening dialogues between Catholics and Jews and then, interestingly, between non-Catholic Christians and Jews. Local interfaith groups regularly meet for spiritual enrichment and prayer.

Christians and Jews are coming together in increasing numbers to discuss their shared concerns about moral values in our society and to sponsor joint programs of good works - aiding the poor, the hungry, the sick and the homeless. The bonds of trust between Christians and Jews have therefore grown commensurately stronger. This ongoing dialogue has spurred many Christian denominations to write signif-

icant statements and publish recommendations for future relations with the Jewish people.

And now, appropriately, and it is time now — several Jewish organizations have responded in kind, publishing promising statements of their own. The most recent and significant step forward is the one that has been referred to — *Dabru Emet* — the Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity that appeared on September 10, 2000, and which I am proud to say was signed by Rabbis Sobel, Lincoln and Ehrenkranz.

Another historically hopeful sign came earlier in this millennial year when Pope John Paul II visited Israel, the Holy Land, in a pilgrimage of faith and reconciliation. He prayed at the Western Wall and visited the Holocaust memorial at Yad Vashem. There, Israeli Prime Minister Barach said, and I quote, "Your coming here today to the Tent of Remembrance at Yad Vashem is the climax of this historic journey of healing. This very moment holds within it 2,000 years of history." Prime Minister Barach was right, and I think we must acknowledge the truth that was in his statement. The relationship between Christians and Jews, and particularly between Catholics and Jews today, is the best it has been since the beginning of what I would describe as our 2,000-year familial relationship. I, for one, am very optimistic that the relations between our religions will grow even closer and deepen our respective and shared faith as the new century progresses.

I know that part of my optimism is based on my

own personal interfaith relationships, at home in Connecticut, which were influenced so greatly by both my parents and by Rabbi Ehrenkranz; the ones I've had in Washington with my colleagues in the Senate who gather together quietly and privately each Wednesday morning for an ecumenical prayer breakfast, and most recently, the extraordinarily uplifting and encouraging experiences I've had as a national candidate, traveling throughout America. One thing I have learned from these relationships is that faith can and often does lead to different personal conclusions about particular issues. Devout men and women can and

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*continued on next page*

do have disagreements over difficult moral questions. But our faith should remind us of our common origin and shared values, of both the goodness and—shall I call it imperfection—that is in each of us. And it should help build the humility and good will that will enable us to disagree without being divisive, so that we can ultimately find common ground as we have in recent years so often.

Some of America's humility and good will is being tested at this moment in our history by the current uncertainty over the presidential election. But I must tell you, standing in this pulpit, on this very unifying and uplifting evening, I am confident that as we always have in the face of much greater tests than this, our people, when it is all over, will go forward together. And one of the reasons we will go forward together is that we will be strengthened, as Americans have always unique-

ly been, by our shared faith in the democracy and our common and shared faith in God. That shared faith and the democratic values that flow from it have long sustained us as a nation, and I have no doubt they will continue to do so in the immediate and the distant future.

I can tell you myself, tonight, that I will always be grateful for the extraordinary opportunity that I was blessed with this year where I experienced first-hand the remarkable acceptance and inclusiveness across religious lines of the American people. After I was nominated, what seemed like the stuff of history to the pundits and commentators, seemed as I traveled around this country like everyday America to the warm and encouraging people I met on the campaign trail. Instead of focusing on what some would say seemed different, they embraced what was common to all of us. I have precious memories of some of these experiences. I will never forget in the first trip that Vice President Gore and I took after the convention, on a riverboat down the Mississippi, we stopped at a town whose name I don't remember now. As I greeted the crowd, an elderly woman asked me to lean over, and she said to me, "We Catholics are all with you!" I was touched. I don't know that she was authorized by the Church to make that statement, but it touched me! Next to her, a woman who was not to be outdone said, "And we Southern Baptists are, too!" I

remember the meeting of Hispanic delegates to the National Convention. When I walked in, a woman in the front row had a large hand-painted sign that summed up the sense of shared destiny that we Americans have in two big words: "VIVA CHUTZPA!"

In a very different way, Archbishop McCarrick, I remember also a gentleman who came up to me at an event in Boston and told me he was 85 and he had memories of Al Smith's campaign for the presidency in 1928. He said, "Senator Lieberman, I'm going to work my heart out for you because I don't want those bigoted bums to do to you what

they did to Al Smith." That was 72 years ago and the level of tolerance and acceptance in our country has gone up so remarkably, but I was so touched that he was choosing this election, through me, to even that score and to speak up for really the

best impulses in the American people. So many of these people clearly either felt a bond because of what they saw as our shared faith in God, regardless of the path along which we approach God, or were encouraged to believe that the barrier that Vice President Gore had knocked down for me had also opened doors of opportunity for them in the future. It struck me that that is exactly how I felt in 1960 as an 18-year-old when John F. Kennedy was elected the first Roman Catholic President of the United States. I had no vision of what my future would be, but I knew in some sense that that breakthrough had opened doors for me. Never would I have imagined how those doors would have opened for me this year. This is why I feel so blessed and grateful. I must tell you that my optimism about the future relations between the faiths is encouraged deeply by the successes of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding and other groups like it, toiling in the vineyards of ecumenism and fostering good faith between the faiths.

Rabbi Ehrenkranz, my dear rabbi and friend, we are grateful for your dedication and that of your impressive staff, and proud of all that you have accomplished. It is truly comforting to know, though, that you are not alone in this challenge as we can see from the life's work of tonight's honorees. Archbishop McCarrick, my new neighbor in Washington, has, like Archbishop Egan, made enormous

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contributions as an educator, first here in New York, and then in Newark where he helped enlighten the minds as well as ennoble the spirits of tens of thousands of children. More recently, and internationally, as has been said, he has made a mark around the world as a tireless advocate for human rights and religious freedom for people of all faiths and all nations. And not to respond to the spokeswoman from the floor earlier - but let me just say to you, Your Excellency, I don't know a greater advocate for peace and justice in our world today than you, sir.

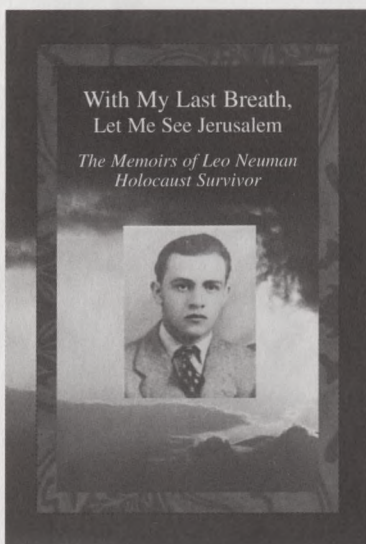
Last year in one of those wonderful moments of bipartisan cooperation that, believe it or not, does occur in Washington, we enacted legislation creating the United States Commission for International Religious Freedom. I am so proud and grateful to tell you tonight that Archbishop McCarrick is bringing his principled and passionate leadership to bear as a member of that critically important panel. Archbishop McCarrick is going to arrive tonight in Washington, to begin his new duties on January 4th. It seems particularly appropriate since Congress convenes the 107th session on January 3rd. We will need your prayers, Your Excellency. It is also comforting to know that at least one high office in Washington will be safely filled by that day!

Rabbi Lincoln has charted a similar course, traveling extensively overseas to promote the cause of religious freedom and tolerance while also compiling an extraordinary and deeply admirable record of bridge-building here in New York. The rabbi has had plenty of training in the art of understanding, having ministered to congregations as

diverse as a contingent of the Israeli Navy, the members of the Illinois State Senate, and as we can see from where we are tonight, the denizens, if I may use this word, of this Park Avenue neighborhood here in New York. And it shows - judging from the long list of honors and awards and leadership roles that have already been bestowed on him before tonight, as has been mentioned. I am honored to be in the presence of these two great men, these two great leaders, who in their life and work truly personify and express the aims, not just of the Center, but of *Nostra Aetate* itself.

You know, Mark Twain spent 20 of his most productive years in Hartford, Connecticut, when he wrote some of his great classics. I always like to think that - and I'm sorry Archbishop Egan is not here to hear this line - I hope you'll repeat this to him, Father - I was prepared to say that Mark Twain was one of the wisest men ever to live in Connecticut until, of course, Archbishop Egan moved there 12 years ago. So I love the quote from Twain where he said, "Always do right. This will gratify your friends and astonish the rest." Well, I can safely say that I am both grateful and astonished by the good works of the Center and its truly deserving honorees tonight. And if enough of us are inspired by their example to do similar good works, then in time, I know we share this hope and prayer, as Isaiah prophesied - "Every valley will be exalted, every mountain and hill will be made low, the crooked will become straight, and the rough places smooth. For the earth will be full of the glory of the Lord."

Thank you very much. ❖



## *With My Last Breath, Let Me See Jerusalem*

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University published *With My Last Breath, Let Me See Jerusalem*, memoirs of Holocaust survivor, Leo Neuman, in December 1999. It is a unique and important book because it is a primary source, a first-hand account that will enable scholars and students alike to better understand the *Shoah*, the Holocaust. This book is an invaluable resource for older students, as well as religious leaders and other adults involved in religious education. Most of all, it is written for those students of life who are unafraid to embrace another's pain in the search for truth and wisdom.

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# Book Reviews

The following books have been reviewed by Dr. Eugene J. Fisher, Associate Director, Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. Reprinted with permission from Catholic New Service.

Yossi Beilin, *Touching Peace: From the Oslo Accord to a Final Agreement* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000), 292 pages.

Gershon Gorenberg, *The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount* (New York: The Free Press, 2000), 275 pages.

The coincidence of the timing of the publication of these two books, so different in tone, content and style, yet complementary in what they have to tell the reader, is striking. Yossi Beilin's book narrates the Middle East peace process from the secret meetings at Notre Dame in Jerusalem in August 1990 (the use of a Catholic site reflected the fact that both Palestinians and Israelis trusted its neutrality) to the brink of Barak's upset victory over Netanyahu, a victory that did indeed give the world the hope that a "final agreement" was within reach. Beilin was involved in the entire process and adds perspectives that make this book a valuable resource for historians as well a significant book for anyone who wants to understand the peace process and the hopes and fears on both sides that went into its construction. His is the work of an insider.

Gorenberg, one of Israel's leading journalists, on the other hand, writes from outside the communities he describes, yet provides profound insights into them. The Temple Mount and its symbolism for Jews and

Muslims alike was at the center of the storm that ended Barak's hopes when Ariel Sharon triggered the current intifada. *End of Days* enables readers to understand just why this was so, and why Sharon's symbolic stroll on the Mount predictably lead to the tragic violence of the past months.

There is a poignancy to reading Beilin's book. Israelis and Palestinians had come very far and indeed were very close in substance to a solution when Arafat shied away from the Palestinian state being offered to him. Tantalizingly close. One can understand why the (for the present) much criticized Barak made the astoundingly generous offer he made to Arafat to close the deal. Gorenberg helps us understand the Islamic fundamentalism that contributed not a little to Arafat's reasons for balking at the last moment even though to an outsider it looks like he was being given everything he needed—and more.

Beilin is admirably insistent on communicating to his readers the sincerity and courage not just of the Israeli negotiators, but that of their Palestinian counterparts as well. One of the levels on which his book can be read is as a study of the moral toughness and vision of which humanity is capable at its best. Gorenberg, on the other hand, probes with mature intelligence the darker side of the human soul, obsessive and prone to violence to achieve the object of its obsession, which in this case is the most sacred

spot on the face of the earth.

The Temple mount is sacred not only to Jews, but to Muslims and Christians as well. And Gorenberg is quite even-handed in explaining to readers where the fundamentalist tendency endemic to all three traditions can lead their unwary practitioners. One of the levels on which his book can be read is as a lesson in how religious leadership needs to practice constant vigilance to keep at bay the darker forces its own profound symbolism can unleash. It occurred to me reading these two books that, together, they make a very good functioning definition of the doctrines of creation and original sin, teachings which all three Abrahamic traditions have in common, of course.

Gorenberg's book starts with what he calls "a shoot sprung from the trunk of Catholicism," the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments which led to the self-immolation of 530 people in Uganda in March of 2000. After this, however, the Catholic Church pretty much drops out of the picture in favor of more fanatical groups of Christians (from America) and Jews (many also from America) and Muslims. Helpfully, he does not just paint the dangers of these groups. He has spent time with them and so gives us a good sense of their communities and of key individuals within them. And he sets the vignettes and stories of contemporary millennialists within a solid historical foundation in



each case. What is the attraction of Jerusalem and its Temple Mount for so many people? Why is it such a volatile mix of nationalism and faith? Readers will find the answers here.

Beilin ends his book on the outside of the Israeli political scene, with Labor having lost to Likud, wondering when they might get back in to continue their interrupted work but certain that the momentum of the peace process, though it could be slowed, could not be stopped. Labor, and Beilin, have been in and out again. At this writing, Sharon is forming a unity government with Labor. It is to be noted that Sharon won, not by rejecting the peace process but by arguing that "only Sharon can bring peace," albeit on less generous terms than Barak had offered. I believe that Beilin's fundamental optimism will, in the end, be justified. Certainly, this is the clear will of the majority of the Israeli people expressed democratically at the polls. Beilin is convinced that it is the will of the majority of Palestinians, too. If so, when the time is right, the long, hard work of negotiating done by Israelis and Palestinians beginning at Notre Dame will still be there as a framework ready for implementation.

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Tivka Frumer-Kensky, et al., editors, *Christianity in Jewish Terms* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2000), 438 pages.

Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 451 pages.

*Christianity in Jewish Terms* is the product of the Jewish Scholars Study Group on Christianity, sponsored by Baltimore's Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies. The group has been meeting regularly for years in an effort

to reassess Judaism's understanding of its relationship with Christianity. In September 2000 the group issued *Dabru Emet* (Speaking Truth), a groundbreaking statement of historic proportions that acknowledged, among other things, that "Jews and Christians worship the same God." This has been the Christian claim, of course, but the doctrine of the Trinity has appeared to many Jews to reject the Oneness of the Creator, while the doctrine of the Incarnation is still seen today by many among Orthodox Jews as, technically (if not necessarily intentionally), "idolatry," since it appears to them to raise a human being to the level of divinity.

Perhaps even more controversial in *Dabru Emet* is the affirmation that "Nazism is not a Christian phenomenon," while asserting equally strongly that "without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could not have taken hold nor been carried out." Still, virtually all of the 200 or so rabbis and scholars approached by the group signed the statement. This is a sign of a growing consensus among Jews that it is time, after decades of successful dialogue with Protestants since the end of World War II and with Catholics since the Second Vatican Council for Jews, as one put it "to take yes for an answer."

The book is organized to complement the statement, taking 11 major themes, each of which is discussed first by a Jewish scholar, who is then responded to by a Christian and a Jewish scholar. The 27 contributors are among the leading scholars in the world in both communities. The result is a spritely and immensely illuminating dialogue on such themes as: the Shoah and anti-Semitism, God, Scripture, commandment, Israel, worship, suffering, incarnation, redemption, sin and repentance. In each the

point is what Judaism has to say about what Christians say about these topics. Quite often, the authors conclude, what Judaism used to say about Christianity has been found wanting through the closer lens of dialogical understanding. In many ways, then, this courageous book is a call on Jewish tradition, not to change its self-definition as such, but to change its way of interpreting Christianity, not an easy task as those Catholics such as myself engaged in a similar process for our own community can attest!

The book includes a helpful glossary of Jewish terms and concludes with a dialogue among its five editors. As Michael Signer of the University of Notre Dame sums up: "In the coming years, Jews and Christians should engage in a mutual search for respect, justice and love. We should begin this dialogue with a different framework than previous conversations. Both communities should face each other with the idea that we are groups of people who have spent our histories trying to live by the words, deeds and message of the Hebrew Bible. Each community has found its unique way to live out that message. We need to share these experiences and teachings with one another. We need not know everything that awaits us on the road ahead. The mystery of surprise will surely bring greater joy than the pessimism that growth and understanding are beyond our grasp." (P. 373)

Jeremy Cohen of Tel Aviv University is one of the leading medievalists in the world today. He is a specialist in Jewish-Christian relations over the centuries. His two prize-winning books, *The Friars and the Jews* (1982) and *Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It* have brilliantly evoked not only the disputations between Jews and Christians but also the profound and positive influ-

continued on next page

ence each has had, theologically, on the other. Here, he narrates engagingly how Christian writings from Augustine to Aquinas "fashioned (an image of) a Jew on the basis of (their) reading of the Bible," from age to age, and how "this hermeneutically crafted Jew assumed distinctive character and power in Christian thought and culture." For those seriously interested in Jewish-Christian relations, it is an utterly fascinating read.

James Carroll's *Constantine's Sword* attempts, and fails to achieve, the grand synthesis of Catholic theology on Jews and Judaism that this book easily provides the reader. But, then, Carroll spent a grand total of one year researching his book, while *Living Letters of the Law* is the result of a lifetime of study and dialogue.

The title of Cohen's book comes from the core argument of St. Augustine on what to do with the Jews once Christianity assumed power over them after Constantine. Whereas Ambrose of Milan, Augustine's mentor, had argued vociferously with Church leaders and emperors alike that Judaism, like paganism, should be suppressed, Augustine, though he accepted the negative portrayal of Jews as Christ-killers common in Christianity from the second century on, argued that Jews should have a rightful place

in Christian society. They pray to the true God, so their worship was to be respected and protected. And they witness to the validity of the Hebrew Bible (God's Law) as divine revelation, which is necessary for the witness of the Church itself. Pope St. Gregory the Great enacted this into the papal legislation of his period and it was continu-

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ously reaffirmed by popes down through the ages.

Much like the portraits of Jesus the Jew of Nazareth, however, the portrayals of Jews changed subtly from age to age as the needs of Christians

changed. This shifting in interpretation, though always within the broad parameters of the Augustinian witness theory, provides for a fascinating vantage point from which to view the history of the Church and, indeed, of Western civilization.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s I attended New York University's Institute of Hebrew Studies and was for the first time in my life (or virtually that of any other Catholic for that matter) exposed to how Western history looks from the perspective of the one Outsider group allowed to survive—and in many places thrive—under Christian domination. This book explains the theological underpinnings of the practical decisions by generation after generation of Church leaders on how Christian society was to understand and to treat its Jews. It is a must for any Catholic college library, or any parish or individual Catholic who wants to understand where Church teaching was at before the Second Vatican Council overturned all previous Christian reflection since St. Paul and set the Church on the course of the "dialogue of mutual esteem" that has resulted in the revolutionary progress in Catholic-Jewish relations and, therefore, in the response to that revolution by the authors and editors of *Christianity in Jewish Terms*. ❖

## *Invite a Friend*

Jews and Christians have reached a dramatic crossroad in history. For the first time in two millennia, they have the opportunity to put aside their divisiveness and seek reconciliation and understanding once and for all. Inspired by the Catholic Church's vision presented in the 1965 Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate*, which repudiated historic Christian teachings of contempt towards Jews and positively asserted the ongoing validity and common spiritual heritage that Christians and Jews share, the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University was established in 1992. It draws together religious

leaders, laity, scholars, theologians and educators to cultivate these new seeds of mutual respect and develop programs and publications to overcome deep-seated antagonisms that recent progress has not yet healed.

If you know someone who would be interested in knowing more about the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, please call (203) 365-7592 or email us from our web site ([www.ccju.org](http://www.ccju.org)) and we will be happy to send him or her a free copy of the *CCJU Perspective* and our information brochure, which describes the exciting and important work of the CCJU. ❖

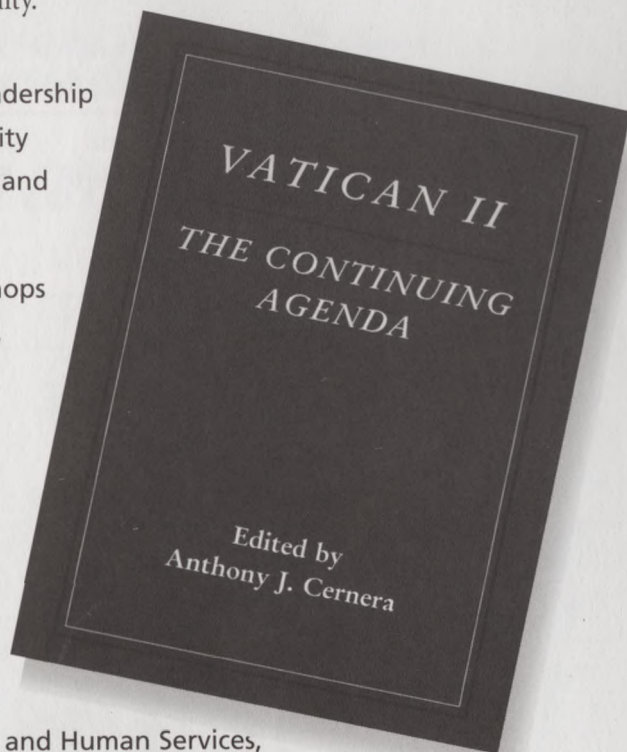
# Vatican II: The Continuing Agenda

Edited by Anthony J. Cernera

*Vatican II: The Continuing Agenda*, takes up the task of examining the spirit of Vatican II at work during a period of rapid changes and profound transitions within the global community.

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