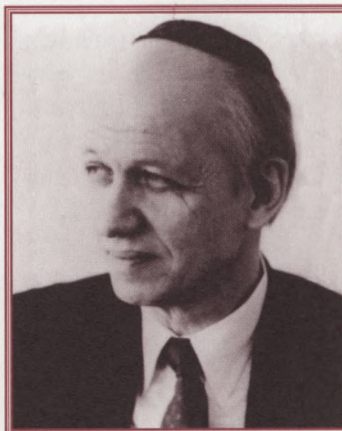
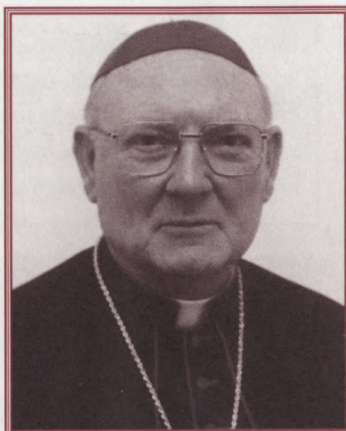


Fourth Annual *Nostra Aetate* Awards: The Unfinished Agenda

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU) of Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT, honored two outstanding individuals for their commitment to dialogue, understanding and reconciliation between Jews and Christians on November 17, 1999, with the prestigious *Nostra Aetate* Award.

Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, president of the



Recipients of the 1999 CCJU *Nostra Aetate* Awards, Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy and Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg.

Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, and Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg, president of Jewish Life Network, a Judy and Michael Steinhardt Foundation, New York City, were honored at the Park Avenue Synagogue, 50 East 87th Street, New York City.

continued on page 10

CCJU Sets Conferences: *What Do We Want the Other to Teach about Us?*

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU) of Sacred Heart University, Fairfield Connecticut, is planning several conferences on the topic, "What Do We Want the Other to Teach about Us?" to be conducted in the coming year. The conferences are to be held in Jerusalem (February 8-11), Edmonton (Canada), (March 19-21), Louisville (April 9-11), and Rome (Winter, 2001).

The conference topic was conceived by Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the CCJU, who said, "These conferences get to the heart of what we want others to teach about us. By discussing our basic beliefs and what we want others to teach about us, we can get the message out to religious leaders, seminary students and the person in the pew."

Dr. David L. Coppola, CCJU director of conferences and publications, said, "Catholic universities such as Sacred Heart University, are strongly positioned in the new millennium to foster cooperation, understanding and truth between religions. These conferences are excellent opportunities for us to

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Letters



OFFICE OF THE CARDINAL
1011 FIRST AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10022-4134

Dear Rabbi Ehrenkranz:

The Jewish High Holy Days come once again, reminding our world of who created it, who blesses it with life and who judges it in his merciful justice. G-d who gives all humanity the dignity of being made in his image, has chosen Israel as his particular people that they may be an example of faithfulness for all the nations of the earth. With sincere love and true admiration for your fidelity to the Covenant, I am happy once again to send my greetings for a blessed New Year.

This Sabbath evening, as the celebration of Rosh Hashanah commences, a new decade will begin. During the year of 5760 we Christians will start a new era of the year 2000, the turn of another millennium in our history. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has asked all Christians to enter this new millennium in the spirit of Jubilee. Part of the process of Jubilee is a call for *teshuva*, or repentance. Ash Wednesday, March 8th, has been specially set aside as a day for Catholics to reflect upon the pain inflicted on the Jewish people by many of our members over the last millennium. We most sincerely want to start a new era.

I pray that as you begin a new decade, and as we begin another millennium in our Jewish-Christian relationship, we will refresh our encounter with a new respect and even love for one another as children of G-d. Working in our own ways, but also working together, let us both remain committed to the fulfillment of G-d's reign. I ask this Yom Kippur that you understand my own abject sorrow for any member of the Catholic Church, high or low, including myself, who may have harmed you or your forebears in any way.

Be assured of my prayers and friendship. *L'shanah tovah tikotevu!*

Faithfully,

Archbishop of New York

www.ccju.org

The site contains descriptions about 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 VI, No. 3, Fall 1999

Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding
of Sacred Heart University

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<http://www.ccju.org>

News and Notes

Cardinal O'Connor's Letter

On September 8, 1999, John Cardinal O'Connor, archbishop of New York, sent his yearly Rosh Hashanah greetings to about 100 Jewish community leaders. In his letter, the Cardinal repeated Pope John Paul II's wish that all Christians enter the new millennium by making a *teshuva*, or repentance, for any pain inflicted on the Jewish people by members of the Catholic Church. Cardinal O'Connor concluded his letter by expressing his own "abject sorrow for any member of the Catholic Church, high or low," who may have harmed the Jewish people.

Inspired by the letter, Burberry chairman Victor J. Barnett, Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel, and World Bank president James D. Wolfensohn agreed to underwrite the reprinting of the letter in the *Sunday New York Times* (September 19, 1999, p. 33) on the eve of Yom Kippur. They also prayed for the Cardinal's speedy and complete recovery from his recent illness so that he could continue his important work of bringing people of all faiths together for many years to come.

When asked about receiving the letter, Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the CCJU, said, "I was deeply impressed with such a warm and genuine letter, but not surprised. Cardinal O'Connor is not only a good friend and a holy man, but he is also a great leader. This letter is just one more example of his leadership and sincere commitment to strengthening Christian-Jewish dialogue and friendship."

Several Catholic prelates have publicly supported Cardinal O'Connor's letter, notably, Francis Eugene Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago, and Bishop Thomas V. Daily, Bishop of Brooklyn. ♦

Holocaust Remembrance Day at Sacred Heart University

The Campus Ministry of Sacred Heart University and the Jewish Friendship Organization, both of Fairfield, Connecticut, sponsored a Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day at Sacred Heart University on April 13, 1999 (27 Nissan 5759). Over 40 members of the administration, faculty, staff, students and guests attended the service in the faculty dining room to hear poems, prayers and memoirs read by various representatives from the Sacred Heart University community.

Rabbi S. Jerome Wallin, from Sacred Heart University's Campus Ministry team, presided over the service and said, "This is a moment of caring, loving respect. This gathering honors the Holocaust victims and all people of good will. We must remember so that we can become better people and reach out to others in need."

Opening remarks were offered by Thomas Forget, Ph.D., vice president of Academic Affairs. Dr. Forget began by

saying that his first response to the Shoah was silence. He then spoke of his happy boyhood memories filled with the sounds of passing trains on the Long Island Railroad. "It gave me a sense of excitement knowing that the people on the trains were coming and going to work, home, or to wonderful places I had never been," he said. "But now, after visiting the concentration camp in Auschwitz, Poland, the sound of trains fills me with fear, guilt, prayer, despair and hope. The sound of trains is now a painful reminder of the tracks of death. We are here today to recall so that we can remember that the human journey is from fear to hope, misunder-

standing to peace."

Mr. Zelig Preis, a Holocaust survivor now living in Trumbull, Connecticut, spoke of his horrific experiences in several

concentration camps. He said, "It is difficult to believe, but at that time, very few people seemed to care about us. There was a total disregard for human life. Jews were accused and abused. Any resistance was met with swift and brutal force. We had no rights and everything was taken from us, even our loved ones. My own brother was senselessly shot." He continued, "People are saying that these things never happened. It is an inhumane act to deny those lives that were lost to evil, the decency of remembrance."

Mr. Preis concluded by speaking especially to the Sacred Heart

People are saying that these things never happened. It is an inhumane act to deny those lives that were lost to evil, the decency of remembrance.

Zelig Preis, Holocaust Survivor

continued on next page

News and Notes

University students, "We have a responsibility to speak out against injustice. Keep your eyes and ears alert. Stand up and be counted. Develop a higher consciousness that demands justice in places like Bosnia and Kosovo today."

Following a multimedia presentation entitled "The Holocaust—Don't Let History Repeat Itself," assembled by Laura Kaufman-Tofinchio, manager of Admission Operations, seven memorial candles were lit. Six candles honored the memory of the six million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis, and one candle represented all the other people who died at the hands of the Nazi terrorism.

The service concluded with the chanting of the Kaddish, the Jewish prayers for the dead, and a memorial prayer. Cantor Y'Shaya Gramma's voice echoed from the depths of the darkness of the Shoah and called out for a light of hope.

Dr. David L. Coppola, director of conferences and publications of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, said after the service, "This event is significant for Sacred Heart University because it demonstrates our solidarity in prayer and practice with the Jewish people. This is a time for us to reverently remember the past and to courageously strengthen our resolve to resist discrimination, oppression and terrorism in the future. To remember is a beautiful, essential and painful human action."

At last year's CCJU *Nostra Aetate* Awards Ceremony and Lecture, Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris, and John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, both asked that Catholics pray with their Jewish brothers and sisters on the 27 of Nissan, in remembrance of the Shoah and as a sign of Catholic-Jewish solidarity. ❖

B'nai B'rith Makes Donation to CCJU Library

B'nai B'rith Abraham Lodge No. 89 of Bridgeport, Connecticut, has donated \$500 to the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding's library to be applied toward the purchase of books or audio-visual materials on Judaism.

Jerry Rookasin, retired accounting and business law teacher at Bunnell High School, Stratford; Kathryn Braun, a Fairfield attorney; and Robert Factor, a retail office products businessman in Fairfield, made the presentation to David L.

Coppola, Ph.D., the CCJU's director of conferences and publications.

Instituted October 13, 1867, the B'nai B'rith Abraham Lodge No. 89 has grown to nearly 200 active members and is committed to fostering Jewish, religious and humanitarian ideals among people of the Jewish faith and all humanity.



David Coppola, Ph.D., director of Conferences and Publications of the CCJU, (left) receives a \$500 donation from representatives from B'nai B'rith, Jerry Rookasin, Kathryn Braun and Robert Factor.

"The lodge has invested its money and we are spreading out the interest to those groups that help to promote cross-cultural and interreligious understanding," Mr. Rookasin said. "We all agreed that Sacred Heart has done an extraordinary job, in view of the past history between religions, in turning things around to a more positive era. This took a lot of courage. We are appreciative of the Center, and we hope that this gesture will help to continue to strengthen our connection and encourage other groups to also support the Center's work."

Mr. Factor agreed: "We believe that Sacred Heart University is a good friend of the Jewish community and vice versa. The president of Sacred Heart, Dr. Cernera, has done a remarkable job."

Currently, the CCJU library at Sacred Heart University contains more than 450 volumes pertaining to Judaica and Jewish-Christian studies, as well as videos and other resources. Dr. Coppola said that the CCJU would like to build that number to 5,000 in the next 10 years. ❖

Lecture at Seymour Hollander House

Dr. David L. Coppola, director of conferences and publications for the CCJU spoke to an interreligious audience of older adults on April 21, 1999, at the Seymour Hollander House located on the grounds of the Jewish Community Center, 4190 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, Connecticut. His presentation focused on the history of Christian-Jewish relations and the recent advances since Vatican II.

Most of the people in attendance said they were not surprised by the recent changes that have occurred between Jews and Christians. The general feelings were that these changes were long overdue and that religions should not try to force anyone into converting to another faith. One member of the audience said she was very happy to hear about these changes because she did not want her grandchildren to have to suffer due to their interfaith marriages.

At numerous times during the presentation, members of the audience interjected with stories where Jews and Christians were friends, co-workers and family members. One woman of 102 years said, "Despite all the evil in the world, I have never been surprised by how many good people there really are. You don't really notice them so much because they are the majority." Another woman said, "There are good and bad people in every religion. It has nothing to do with being a Jew or a Christian. It has to do with your heart."

Wayne Fleshman and Ellen Siddell, directors of social services for the Seymour Hollander House, commented that the participants were eager to schedule a follow-up session because the presentation had generated so much interest. ♦

CCJU Book Release

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding (CCJU) of Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, Connecticut, is to release its latest book, *With My Last Breath, Let Me See Jerusalem, memoirs of Holocaust survivor, Leo Neuman*, on December 13, 1999. The 12:00 p.m. ceremony will be held in the Board Room of the William Pitt Center, Sacred Heart University campus. Mr. Neuman of Syracuse, New York, is a friend of the CCJU and will be present for the release and signing of books.

It is a cruel irony that Mr. Neuman was born in Auschwitz, Poland, where one of the most infamous death camps was constructed by the Nazi regime in its attempt to exterminate the Jewish people, with the resultant murdering of millions of Jewish people. He survived six years in

You are not born with hate, hate is learned. It's important to publish this book because it gets two beautiful religions together to listen to the truth. We can help stop the hate.

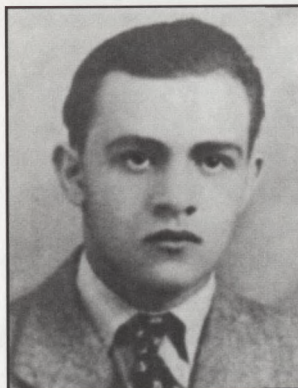
Leo Neuman, Holocaust Survivor

numerous death camps. However, Mr. Neuman is much more than a survivor or victim, he is alive and excited about telling his story. He said, "I want the world to remember and know the truth. You are not born with hate, hate is learned. It's important to publish this book because it gets two beautiful religions together to listen to the truth. We can help stop the hate."

Ordinarily, the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding is committed to advancing and publishing the insights of religious leaders, scholars and educators as they contribute to the disciplines of theology, philosophy, history and ethics. *With My Last Breath* is a unique and important CCJU publication 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.

For more information or to place an order, contact the CCJU at (203) 365-7592 or visit their web site at www.ccju.org. ♦



Leo Neuman as a young man.

Looking Towards the Future

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University, attended an international conference at the Foundation for International Studies, Valletta, Malta, on May 6-8, 1999, entitled, "Human Rights and Our Responsibilities Towards Future Generations: An Interreligious Perspective." The conference was organized by the Future Generations Program in collaboration with the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Participants from 14 countries and representatives from Judaism, Christianity and Islam came together to discuss how each faith understands its responsibility towards future generations. Among the impressive roster of participants were Professor Richard Falk of Princeton University, New Jersey; Professor David Heyd, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali, Institute of Diplomacy, Jordan; and His Eminence, Professor Guido deMarco, president of Malta.

Citing the Torah, the Gospels, and the Qur'an, presenters at the conference were unanimous in their assertion that each religion mandates that believers see "the other" as created in the image of God. Topics covered by the presenters also included preserving the environment, the work of peace and justice, protecting human and religious dignity, safeguarding the rights of women and children, and educating future generations in religious faith, hope and love.

Rabbi Ehrenkranz said, "The conference was a positive experience learning how to care about each other. The discussions were lively and continued long after a particular paper had been presented. We all agreed that we must stop political leaders from manipulating religions to foster violence."

At the conclusion of the conference, the participants agreed to the following statement:

1. Human dignity is being continuously endangered throughout the world, both at individual and collective levels, by massive and severe violations of human rights and by

deplorable crimes against humanity. Such behavior undermines the human dignity of everyone now alive, and it also diminishes the prospects for the human dignity of future generations, including those to be born in the distant future.

2. On the basis of extensive discussions among participants drawn from the monotheistic religions of the Book that prevails in the Euro-Med region, it is agreed that interfaith dialogue on the basis of their spiritual traditions is an essential step on the path toward healing intercivilizational wounds and conflicts. As our own experience confirms, interfaith dialogue clarifies our identity, including shared

values and a shared commitment to uphold human rights, which in turn is one key to the protection of the needs and interests of future generations.

3. Although this Valletta meeting was set in the Euro-Med region, thereby concentrating on the perspectives and preoccupations of the Euro-

Med region, the participants agreed that this approach has universal application, and that the inclusion of the other great world religions in the dynamics of interreligious dialogue is desirable and, indeed, necessary.

4. It is also agreed that it is essential to consider the differences as well as the similarities among religions in the course of such a dialogue. It must be made clear that it is not the purpose of such a dialogue to merge spiritual identities or to promote a syncretist approach to religion. On the contrary, this statement celebrates the diversity among distinct religious perspectives; it commends at the same time familiarity and appreciation of spiritual otherness and the discovery of shared respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and a commitment to further dialogue on these themes from the perspectives of three faiths.

5. The conference also concludes that the advances of education, freedom and civic participation, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are of particular importance in relation to the well-being of present and future generations.

6. To uphold our responsibility to future generations, it is of paramount importance to mobilize religious commu-

It must be made clear that it is not the purpose of such a dialogue to merge spiritual identities or to promote a syncretist approach to religion.

1999 Malta Conference Declaration

nities to lend their influence to eliminate war and war-making from the human experience.

7. The conference affirms the importance of reducing poverty, unemployment and other forms of social distress to the absolute minimum, and urges religious leaders to give these concerns the highest priority.

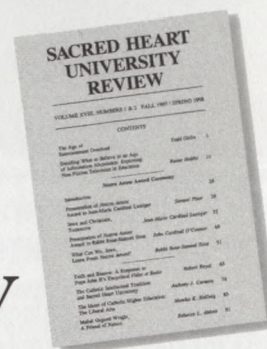
8. Among the substantive concerns discussed, it is agreed that it is essential to encourage and urge governments to dedicate themselves more seriously to the promotion of a safe, healthy environment in the spirit of sustainable human development, as expressed in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) and in the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights and Development (1993). Such an effort should be reinforced and supported by international institutions and by the NGOs.

9. It should be understood that the well-being of future generations depends on maintaining biodiversity and safeguarding the human genome. Among followers of the Abrahamic faith traditions, it is strongly believed that the Earth must be zealously protected against many dangers for the sake of all future generations and extending to all peoples throughout the world, and affirming that God's blessings extend to the entire human family, past, present and future.

10. We were mindful of contradictory developments bearing on these concerns. There is a definite global trend toward the acceptance of the values embodied in the human rights tradition: freedom, equality, democratic forms of participation, provision of basic human needs, a sense of justice, respect for law, tolerance and an acceptance of cultural and religious diversity. At the same time, there are dreadful setbacks, regressions to the worst expressions of ethnic and religious hatred that embody the denial of these values. We stand united in opposing these regressions. We believe that our religious traditions must be active in fostering a politics of reconciliation based on a dedication to dialogue that includes a willingness to listen to the grievances of the other and to examine critically our own religious and spiritual traditions.

11. In concluding, we believe that the well-being and happiness of future generations depend crucially on what we do now and in the years and decades ahead in keeping with our religious commitments. We affirm this approach in relation to the Euro-Med region, but we also seek to reach out beyond, and engage other world religions in carrying forth this commitment to uphold the life prospects and hopes of future generations for all people in the world. ♦

CATCH UP with the REVIEW



The *Sacred Heart University Review* was founded to serve as a creative and scholarly outlet for University faculty and visiting scholars. Over the years, essays have been published by Stephen Toulmin, George Gerbner, Todd Gitlin, Eli Wiesel, Catherine Stimpson, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Edwin Newman, George McGovern . . . and more!

We have aimed to be the journal of record for the University, capturing some of the vitality of Sacred Heart University's intellectual life on campus.

The *Review* is published semi-annually by Sacred Heart University in the Spring and Fall.

Subscription rates are \$7 per year (\$10 foreign) for individuals and \$10 for institutions. Back issues are available. Please make checks payable to: *Sacred Heart University Review*.

Mail this form, with payment, to:

Editor, *Sacred Heart University Review*, Dept. of English
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CCJU Sets Conferences *cont.*

advocate a respect for the dignity of all people, acknowledge a special relationship between Jews, Christians and Muslims, and work to further interreligious dialogue by putting into action the principles outlined in the 1965 Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate*. This is an ideal time to reflect on and repent of past mistakes, and renew hopes for the future."

The first CCJU conference, to be held in Jerusalem, will discuss the theological concepts that each religion wants the other to teach about it, such as those related to God, revelation, scripture, tradition, faith, salvation, covenant and community. This conference is to be held at the Ratisbonne Papal Institute and will be keyed by Edward I. Cardinal Cassidy, president of the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

The Ratisbonne Institute was founded to put into practice the recommendations of the document, *Nostra Aetate*, in an international and ecumenical framework, where Christians can study Judaism and have contact with Jewish people. The CCJU has agreed to support the work of Cardinals Cassidy; John O'Connor, archbishop of New York; and William H. Keeler, archbishop of Baltimore, who are directly responsible for the spiritual and fiscal supervision of the Ratisbonne Papal Institute. The CCJU plans to financially support Ratisbonne and strengthen its relationship by sending students from Sacred Heart University who will be pursuing a Master's degree in Religious Studies.

The CCJU conference in Edmonton will examine ways in which each religion wants others to teach how God has worked in history and continues to work today through major events, laws, leaders and communities of faith.

Louisville will be the site for the conference that is to address the most important ethical principles of each religion and how those principles shape everyday religious

practices. Papers will address such concepts as freedom, responsibility, choice, law, conscience, values, authority, peace, justice and education.

Plans are being finalized for a fourth conference on the same topic to take place in Rome. This conference will focus on what each religion wants the others to teach about them in the areas of prayer, spirituality and liturgy.

As an academic and research division of Sacred Heart University, the Center promotes forums for dialogue and study in order to advance greater knowledge, understanding and harmony among religions. The CCJU is committed to advancing and publishing the insights of religious leaders, scholars and educators as they contribute to the disciplines

These conferences are excellent opportunities for us to advocate a respect for the dignity of all people, acknowledge a special relationship between Jews, Christians and Muslims, and work to further interreligious dialogue by putting into action the principles outlined in the 1965 Vatican II document, Nostra Aetate.

David L. Coppola, Ph.D.

of theology, philosophy, history, ethics, aesthetics and pedagogy. The papers from these conferences will be made available on the CCJU web site (www.ccju.org), summarized in the *CCJU Perspective*, the *Sacred Heart University Review*, and will result in a four-part book on Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the implementation of these ideas in the future. The book, to be published by Sacred Heart University Press, will serve as an invaluable and timely resource for college and seminary students as well as religious leaders and other adults involved in religious education. ♦

Tell 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 and draws together religious lead-

ers, 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) 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. ♦

The Papal Forest

According to the ancient Jewish tradition of the Lamed-Vov, a tradition that certain Talmudists trace back to the time of the prophet Isaiah, the world reposes upon 36 Just Ones. The Lamed-Vov, indistinguishable from simple mortals, frequently are unaware of their station. But if just one of them were lacking, the sufferings of humankind would poison even the souls of the newborn, and humanity would suffocate with a single cry. For the Lamed-Vov are the hearts of the world multiplied, and into them, as into one receptacle, pour all our sorrows. Thousands of popular stories take note of them. Their presence is attested to everywhere.

Some have suggested that Pope John Paul II is one of these 36 Just Ones because he has done more to improve Christian-Jewish relations than any person in the last 2000 years. The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University is able to flourish because of his support and example. For these reasons, the CCJU has undertaken a unique project called the Papal Forest. This forest is to commemorate the extraordinary efforts of John Paul II in his work to bring understanding among religions and will be a sign and promise of peace and harmony for Christians, Jews and Muslims for centuries to come.

The CCJU in cooperation with the Jewish National Fund will begin by planting 25,000 trees in Nazareth on a

hill that overlooks the Church of the Annunciation and borders Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities. The cost of planting a tree in the Papal Forest is \$36.

The CCJU hopes to plant one million trees throughout the Holy Land. The proceeds will help to promote the work of the Center, and a portion will be used to support the Ratisbonne Pontifical Institute in Jerusalem where Judaism is taught to Christians. The Center intends to strengthen its association with the Ratisbonne Pontifical Institute and Sacred Heart University by establishing academic chairs in Religious Studies and Theology at the Ratisbonne and Sacred Heart University.

Additionally, the CCJU has planned a conference for February of 2000 at the Ratisbonne, and will include presentations by Christian, Jewish, and Muslim scholars. Scholars from each religious tradition will present papers on what they would like the other to know and teach about them. We will officially inaugurate the forest at that time.

For more information about the Papal Forest, visit our website at www.ccju.org or contact the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding at 203-365-7592. To purchase trees in this forest visit our website at www.papalforest.com or write to:

Papal Forest
67 Fallbrook Avenue, Suite 201
West Hills, CA 91307

To place an order by phone, please call 888-454-0002. ❖



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www.papalforest.com



Nostra Aetate Awards *cont.*

In his 20-minute address, "Dialogue in Our Time," Cardinal Cassidy praised the progress between Christians and Jews since the promulgation of the 1965 Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate*, that opened the doors of dialogue and mutual respect between Christians and Jews. "We have built a completely new relationship between our communities, a solid relationship that will last, no matter what storms may come to try us or new obstacles obstruct our path," he said. "The challenge for us now is to move forward."

The Cardinal said that Christians and Jews must be engaged in a thoughtful dialogue characterized by mutual esteem and a common goal. He noted that there would not always be agreement in dialogue. "We must not be surprised or disturbed when, on one or another matter that touches our faith or history, we have different opinions or understandings," he said. "Neither should sincere criticism upset us, provided that it is objective and framed in a way that does not offend our mutual esteem and respect for one another."

Cardinal Cassidy admitted, "Not all those who are involved in our dialogue have shown the respect and esteem for the other that is essential for fruitful dialogue." He continued, "There is no place in such dialogue for judgments, accusations, negative actions or attitudes that are unworthy of our new relationship."

The Cardinal stressed the importance of education and formation and commended the CCJU for its work, and in particular, the CCJU's plans to gather seminarians and rabbinical students to come together in prayer and study at Sacred Heart University.

Cardinal Cassidy concluded by saying that Christians and Jews are called to be "a light to the nations" and their role is "to project to the world a deeper version of life, revealing its meaning, direction and ultimate goal, being bearers of hope."

Rabbi Greenberg also spoke of hope for the future and expressed his admiration for the work of the present Pope. "No Pope has spoken as strongly and unequivocally as Pope John Paul II who has stated that God's covenant with Jewry is irrevocable," he said.

The rabbi asked the congregation to support Christianity in its efforts to be self-critical. Noting that Cardinal Cassidy was the chief author of the 1998 Vatican Document, *We Remember, A Reflection on the Shoah*, the

rabbi said, "This remarkable Vatican document continues and advances the unfinished process of self-critique and repentance which the Catholic Church is pursuing. Some have quarreled with one aspect or another of this statement—especially its passages on Pope Pius XII. However, the big picture is that the text acknowledges Christianity's failures and calls for learning and internalizing the lessons of the *Shoah* as never before." He continued, "Self-criticism, prophetic self-criticism, is the mark of great religions. Part of what makes Judaism so special is that our own prophets were fundamentally and powerfully critical of our failures."

Rabbi Greenberg said that the unfinished agenda of Jewish-Christian dialogue is the "restoration of the image of God" by acknowledging that every person is of "infinite value," and by "purging evil" through common efforts aimed at "establishing justice and love together." The partnership between Jews and Christians is one that respects the uniqueness of every human being and is open to God's "multiple revelations" and "multiple covenants" that allow "faiths with different religious models to be true vehicles of God's presence in the world," he said. "If we Jews are prepared to understand in a new way,

then we, too, can come to understand that God intended Christians to bring these values and ideas to the world."

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, said, "The CCJU chose Cardinal Cassidy and Rabbi Greenberg because they have significantly helped to create a better feeling and understanding between Jews and Christians. Both are scholars and outstanding religious leaders who are eager to make the world a better place. Cardinal Cassidy was the main architect of the 1998 Vatican document on the *Shoah* and he is a true friend to the Jewish people. Rabbi Greenberg has been a powerful voice of intelligence and compassion for the Jewish community."

Past recipients of awards are Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger, Rabbi Rene-Samuel Sirat, John Cardinal O'Connor, Senator Joseph I. Lieberman, William H. Cardinal Keeler, Bishop Krister Stendahl and Rabbi Mordecai Waxman.

For free copies of the complete text of Cardinal Cassidy's and Rabbi Greenberg's lectures, please contact the CCJU at 203-365-7592. For more information on past *Nostra Aetate* Awards, visit the Center's web site at www.ccju.org. ♦



Dr. Anthony J. Cernera, Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg, Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy and Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz at the *Nostra Aetate* Awards.

Coppola Teaches New Courses

David L. Coppola, Ph.D., director of conferences and publications of the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, began teaching "The History of Christian-Jewish Relations" in the Fall semester of 1999 at Sacred Heart University. The course examines the historical and theological relationship between Judaism and Christianity beginning at the time of Jesus, which resulted in separation and misunderstanding through the Patristic Period, the Renaissance and the Middle Ages, until the present time.

A second course scheduled to be taught by Dr. Coppola is "Christian-Jewish Relations in Contemporary Church Teachings." This course 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 will be discussed.

These are the first of several courses to be introduced into the school of Religious Studies at Sacred Heart University that are designed to develop into an MA degree in Religious Studies with a concentration in Christian-Jewish Understanding.

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.

Lectures Published in the Sacred Heart University Review.

On October 20, 1998, the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University honored His Eminence, Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris, and Chief Rabbi Rene-Samuel Sirat, Chief Rabbi of France, with the prestigious *Nostra Aetate* Award. Presenting the awards were Dr. Samuel Pisas, international attorney, author, and Holocaust survivor, and His Eminence, John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York. The event took place at the Sutton Place Synagogue, New York City, and was emceed by Mitchell Krauss, former CBS news correspondent. As part of the CCJU Awards Ceremony, Cardinal Lustiger and Chief Rabbi Sirat each delivered a paper.

Commenting on the event, Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, executive director of the CCJU said, "These are exceptional leaders and role models. They were willing to reach out to each other in respect and honesty. . . . [This] is the most significant thing that has happened this year in Christian-Jewish understanding."

For a free issue of the *Sacred Heart University Review* that contains the complete texts of Cardinal Lustiger, Rabbi Sirat, Dr. Pisas, and Cardinal O'Connor, please contact the CCJU.

Seminarians and Rabbinical Students

The CCJU is to host seminarians and rabbinical students at Sacred Heart University for a 3-Day Institute on Christian-Jewish Understanding in June, 2000. The program will provide future religious leaders with an academic and personal experience of "the other's" religion. Particular attention will be paid to the positive advances accomplished in the last 35 years between Christians and Jews. Scholarships are available through the CCJU to those seminarians and rabbinical students who wish to attend. For more information contact Dr. Coppola at the CCJU.

Book Progresses

The papers presented at the 1998 Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding's conference, "Religion and Violence, Religion and Peace" held in Auschwitz, Poland, have been assembled and edited. What remains is final proofreading and the inclusion of graphics and pictures. The Center expects to publish these papers as a book from Sacred Heart University Press in Spring 2000, under the same title.

The papers from this conference address the roots of peace in the Torah, the New Testament, and the Qur'an. Additionally, several authors warn in their essays that religions still have the potential to incite wars and, as such, have a grave responsibility to foster a spirituality committed to preserving life and cultures of justice.

This book will be the third to be published by the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, which has also published *Toward Greater Understanding*, a 1995 festschrift (festival volume of essays) in honor of John Cardinal O'Connor's 75th birthday and 50 years as a priest and *With My Last Breath*, memoirs of a Holocaust survivor (1999).

FOR

UNDERSTANDING. . .



WITHIN OUR REACH.

The Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding
is an educational and research
division of Sacred Heart University,
providing forums for dialogue to foster
greater knowledge, understanding
and harmony between religions.

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Catholics and Jews Confront the Holocaust and Each Other

By Eugene J. Fisher

This issue of the CCJU Perspective features an article by Dr. Eugene Fisher, associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, which first appeared in America Magazine (September 11, 1999). Dr. Fisher is a leading American Roman Catholic expert on Christian-Jewish relations. In this article, he explains why 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, and the Shoah.

Any discussion of the current controversies between Catholics and Jews over issues related to the Shoah must be set within the much larger context of the astounding progress in Catholic-Jewish relations in the final third of the 20th century. Indeed, I would argue that the current high-voltage Jewish criticism of contemporary actions of the Holy See is itself a reflection of that progress.

In no previous century since the church assumed vast political power following the conversion of Constantine have Jews felt secure enough in Christian-dominated societies to speak as freely and frankly as they do today. While the framers of the Second Vatican Council's "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" (1965) might not have foreseen such a result, this unintended but certainly lively by-product of the renewal of Catholic teaching on the church's relationship with the Jewish people is to be welcomed. It signals a dialogue that allows the participants to bare their souls to one another without inhibition or fear of intimidation.

The controversies range from Jewish concerns over who the Pope meets (Waldheim, Arafat) and where cloistered convents and crosses should be located (Auschwitz/Birkenau), to who the church should declare a saint (Edith Stein, Cardinal Stepinac, Pope Pius XII). Many Catholics are understandably confused as to why some in the Jewish community feel constrained to second guess so many of what are, after all, internal matters in the life of the church. Catholic confusion is compounded when the complaints come at a time of rapid progress in the dialogue vigorously led by Pope John Paul II. This pope's active promotion of Catholic-Jewish relations is unprecedented in the history of the church. And why beat up on Catholics all the time? Why not go after somebody else once in a while? We don't go around setting up Messianic Jewish "synagogues," or saying that God doesn't hear the prayers of Jews or opining that the Anti-Christ will be a Jew. Why us? (Many Jews are surprised to learn that there is such a thing as "Catholic paranoia," but there is.)

The answers, on reflection, are not too difficult to discern. First, Roman Catholicism is by far the largest church within the

community of the baptized. Its pope, certainly in our time, is thus the most visible individual within that community. So Jews concerned about what that community might do (history has taught them all too well that such concerns are not by any means paranoid) will tend to watch very closely, even minutely, what the leadership of the Catholic Church does that might affect them. That great pioneer of the dialogue, Msgr. George G. Higgins, once likened the Jewish point of view in Catholic-Jewish relations to that of a mouse in bed with an elephant. The mouse gets little sleep, watching for any little tremor in the elephant's body that might indicate that it is about to turn over.

Second, in my experience, many Jews have a heightened notion of the power and authority of the papacy. A major Jewish journal recently published without comment a letter to the editor that stated Pope Pius XII could have ended World War II just by telling the troops, most of whom were at least nominally Christian, to lay down their arms and go home. Would that it had been so! Popes have not even aspired to that kind of direct political clout over secular authorities and the laity in a long, long time.

Perhaps the single issue underlying all the controversies is memory. Jews wonder what the next generation of the world's one billion Roman Catholics will be taught about Jews, Judaism and the Holocaust. Jews understand very well that how we Catholics define the past for the next generation will deeply influence the fate of future generations of Jews within Western civilization. One great strength of traditional-oriented institutions, like the church and rabbinic Judaism, lies in their ability to frame the issues of human continuity from generation to generation. Stalin was right. The Catholic Church has no troops. But it has a prodigious memory and a gift (we believe it comes from the Holy Spirit) to interpret for

Yet dispute is not dialogue. Dialogue seeks to know what is hurtful to the other and to avoid it. Its goal is not winning but understanding.

its followers the meaning of human history. It has preachers and teachers. The Jewish community, having lived with and under us for much of the last two millennia, understands quite well the long-range significance of Catholic memory. That is why they worry about it so much. If I were Jewish, I might worry about us too.

Sensitivities on both sides, spoken and unspoken, abound in each of the Holocaust-related controversies. Jews for an entire generation hesitated to talk very much even with each other about what had happened to them. It was only in the mid-1970's, perhaps

continued on next page

in response to the television miniseries "Holocaust," that survivors felt able to talk to their children and to other Jews. When they did, holocaust "revisionists" popped up in colleges and on the media to deny that it ever really happened! So began the period of building Holocaust museums and promoting Holocaust education in public and private schools, twin efforts that have greatly enriched the educational and moral environment of the last remaining superpower, and thus, potential world bully. As Pope John Paul II has said, the Jewish witness to the Shoah is "a saving warning for all humanity, which shows (them) to be still the heirs of the prophets."

The Rabbinic Style

Yet, even though the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops have on numerous occasions condemned Holocaust denial for the "great lie" that it is, still Jews worry. Jewish worry manifests itself a little differently than does Catholic worry. Most of the spokespersons for the worriers have grown up in New York City, which is not as sensitivity-conscious in its public discourse as, say, Virginia, or Michigan, or even California, and many of the spokespersons are rabbinically trained; or, if not, they are nonetheless profoundly influenced by the rabbinical style of discourse. Anyone who has read a portion of the Talmud will realize quickly that it is quite a different genre of religious literature from either the protracted ruminations of Augustine or the clipped logical framework of Aquinas. It is argumentative, not only among rabbis ("But, Rabbi X said...") but also with the biblical text itself. For example, the argument raged among rabbis over the centuries, "How could Joseph have been so morally callous? He knew for all those years of his opulent living in Egypt that his father mourned his death. Yet he could spare not one messenger to tell his grieving father that he lived and prospered? What a breach of the commandment to

So when Jews look at a Vatican text, they probe it for weaknesses, dissecting its logical and moral vulnerabilities.... This is what Jews do to their own texts.

honor your father and mother!" I know of no Christian preacher who has ever raised this question. Yet arguing with the texts and with the most revered of Jewish ancestors is typical of rabbinic discourse.

So when Jews look at a Vatican text, they probe it for weaknesses, dissecting its logical and moral vulnerabilities. Here again they have done us Catholics a great service. The Jewish reception of every one of the statements of the Holy See, beginning with the declaration on non-Christian religions, which none other than Abraham Joshua Heschel panned as too little and too late, has been negative and even fractious. This is what Jews do to their own texts. It is an honor, perhaps oddly enough, when they do it to ours.

The service is to hold our feet to the fire; to temper thereby our dross metal statements into solid steel capable of serving the ages. Consequently, one can discern in official church statements over the years a steady progress in Catholic teaching about Jews and Judaism. Since getting this teaching right has everything to do with authentic Catholic teaching (Vatican II noted wisely that it is when searching her own mystery that the church encounters the mystery of Israel), we should be grateful for the honor Jews pay us in disputing on their own terms with us.

Yet dispute is not dialogue. Dialogue seeks to know what is hurtful to the other and to avoid it. Its goal is not winning but understanding. It would be helpful, therefore, if our Jewish partners in dialogue would learn that using the level of rhetoric on Catholics that is common within the Jewish community can block understanding as often as it communicates to us legitimate Jewish concerns. I would say this especially true when the subject is papacy.

Papacy as Sore Point

Until quite recently, the history of Catholics, like that of Jews, in the United States was one, by and large, of immigration and discrimination, of being excluded from the "better" neighborhoods, schools, jobs and social clubs. Entire political movements were formed whose primary purpose was to keep Catholic immigrants out, first out of the country and then, failing that, out of the established economic and social system. We were numerous and unsavory. We would bring down social and educational standards, polluting American culture. Above all, we were dangerous subjects of blind obedience to the "whore of Babylon," the pope, and thus at once un-Christian, undemocratic and of uncertain loyalty to the American experiment.

The pope was the symbol of what was wrong with the poor, huddled, teeming ethnic masses of "papists" who swarmed into America, threatening all that was good and sacred about the great "city set on a hill." If only Catholics would give up the pope, the mantra went, they could be socialized, Americanized, Christianized, sanitized and made fit for respectable company. But we would not and, by and large, we did not, which held back our assimilation and acceptance in this country for generations.

So the papacy, even now, when the century-long wave of Nativist, Know-Nothing bigotry has subsided to a trickle, remains for Catholics a symbol of who we are as Americans, and what it cost our parents and grandparents to remain Catholic in a land of legal equality and ethno-religious discrimination.

When Jewish leaders criticize the pope, whether Pius XII or John Paul II, even many of the "progressives" among us find ourselves a bit disoriented, because sensitivities are triggered that we may not have known we had. For Catholics with a historical memory, Jews are fellow immigrants who suffered from much the same set of discriminatory attitudes and systemic exclusions. It is not at all accidental that the names of the leaders of the labor movement tend to be "ethnic," Jewish and Catholic. Nor is it accidental that Catholics and Jews tended, again until recently, to cluster in the same urban ghettos. So how is it that when we recognize our American story in the Jewish-American story, many Jews seem to

miss what is to us the obvious point that to attack the papacy is to raise up for us the specter of the Nativist bigotry we thought had been left behind after John F. Kennedy's campaign for the presidency?

In jumping all over the popes, many Jews do not seem to realize, they are by no means "speaking truth to power," as they themselves, I feel, sincerely believe. They are triggering the half-buried paranoia of the grandchildren of unwelcome immigrants. If Jews are to communicate with American Catholics, there will need to be a softening of the rhetoric until the volume is turned down enough so that we Catholics can hear what they are saying. Right now, the discourse is too loud to be comprehensible.

The Church Repentant?

The difficulty of communication is very much two-sided. If Jewish discourse tends to Catholic ears to be too disputatious, pointed and at times judgmental, Catholic discourse (especially that of Rome) can strike Jewish ears as too soft, nuanced and hesitant on the big issues, like the Holocaust. The recent statement of the Holy See, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, is a case in point. The Vatican document, emanating from Rome and addressing at once all of the world's one billion Catholics, was decidedly written in "Vaticanese," a sub-dialect that many American Catholics sometimes have difficulty comprehending. One of the characteristics of Vaticanese is its attempt not to say more than it actually wants to say. This can result in a plethora of caveats and distinctions, with which anyone familiar with medieval scholasticism will find themselves at home, but which in the larger world remains an acquired taste.

As I read the document for the first time on a charter bus going into Rome from DaVinci after a flight from Jerusalem with a distinguished group of U.S. bishops and their rabbinical counterparts from around the country, I could foresee that what made eminent sense to me was in a number of key areas going to cause my rabbi friends no end of difficulty. In retrospect, I think I underestimated the difficulty, but was not surprised by the reaction's intensity.

The points at issue in the Vatican text are related essentially to its summary of the history of Jewish-Christian relations in only a few paragraphs. Naturally things were left out that, from a Jewish point of view, needed to be said, but that the authors may have felt were implicit in the text and therefore did not need to be spelled out.

Two key distinctions illustrate this dynamic and the need for further dialogue. The first is the distinction in the text between "the church as such," which is held blameless for the Holocaust and what led up to it, and "the sons and daughters" of the church, for whose teachings, actions and inactions over the centuries and especially during the Holocaust the church as a whole is called upon by the document to repent. This language struck many Jews as less than straightforward. In fact, it is traditional. Although it is not the most fashionable ecclesiology in certain academic theological circles today, it cannot be said (as some Jews feared) that it was invented just to get the church off the hook with regard to its historical responsibility for setting the stage for the Shoah. Indeed, to the authors of the document, which was after all essentially a ring-

ing statement of repentance for past Catholic sins, the church's acknowledgment of responsibility was obvious in the statement's structure and very existence. But how and why repent if there was no sin?

Cardinal Edward Cassidy, who signed the document as president of the commission that authorized it, has explained on various occasions that the distinction is made traditionally in Roman Catholicism between the church as a sacramental, saving institution, the body of Christ on earth, and the church as a human institution, which includes all levels of "the sons and daughters" of the church, from popes to newly baptized infants. The latter can indeed be, as an institution, guilty of sin, and therefore it needs constantly to repent (it is "*semper reformanda*"). The former sense of church, because it refers directly to the actions of Christ in heaven and on earth, and thus to the integrity and validity of the sacraments necessary for salvation, including the sacraments of Eucharist and reconciliation, cannot be said to be "sinful" without impugning the Godhead as sinful and the sacraments as corrupt and ineffective.

So the church as a human institution and as a whole must repent of its manifold sins against Jews and Judaism—sins which paved the way for something, namely genocide, that the church at its worst never contemplated as a possibility. This to me is the clear teaching of *We Remember*. Yet in explaining how this is so, the doc-

If Jews are to communicate with American Catholics, there will need to be a softening of the rhetoric until the volume is turned down enough so that we Catholics can hear what they are saying. Right now, the discourse is too loud to be comprehensible.

ument makes a second distinction that again sounded to many Jews as a less than honest reckoning, but which I believe is vital to an accurate historical record of the period and any discussion of the church's role in it. This is the distinction between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism.

"The Teaching of Contempt"

The church's traditional polemic against Judaism, which was aptly named "the teaching of contempt" by Jules Isaac, whose theory was accepted by Pope John XXIII and formed the basis of Vatican II's "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religion," was intended, as it manifested itself in the first and second centuries, to show Christianity's superiority over the then equally young rabbinic interpretation of the texts common to Jews and Christians. (In the first century, one should recall, virtually all Christians were Jews, so the New Testament is properly read as an internal Jewish document, an argument by Jews directed to Jews about the most authoritative way to read the Jewish Scriptures, i.e.

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to understand what Judaism should become after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.)

Beginning already in the second century, as the Pope trenchantly pointed out in his address in November 1977 to the seminar on anti-Judaism/anti-Semitism sponsored by the Holy See, the need of Christians (increasingly gentile) to polemicize against rabbinic Judaism became so strong that a series of "misinterpretations" of the New Testament text were introduced. The misinterpretations were wrongly but ultimately accepted by subsequent generations of gentile Christians as "the Gospel truth" about Judaism. These included the nefarious and insidious notion of collective Jewish guilt for the death of Jesus—as if all the Jews spread around the Roman Empire in Jesus' time had somehow learned of the trial of Jesus in time to go to Jerusalem to scream, "Crucify him!" Absurd, of course, but no more absurd than the Scripture-defying notion that such personal guilt could be handed down to succeeding generations of Jews by birth. Yet most Christians believed it. Perhaps it was comforting. If a Christian could blame "the Jews" for the death of Jesus, then one would not have to take responsibility for the real culprit, one's own sins. The awesome phrase, "Christ died for your sins" could thus be domesticated and put aside. (No matter that one thus "put aside" one's only chance for redemption and salvation, which theologically is dependent upon the extent to which one acknowledges one's own responsibility as a sinner for Jesus' death, as the Council of Trent, apparently in vain, tried to remind Catholics.)

Even more distinctions than are made in the Vatican document become necessary. While the teaching of contempt against Judaism was by the end of the third century so well developed and so widespread as to be uncontested among subsequent fathers of

not an unmitigated "anti-Judaism" but a half anti- and half philo-Judaism in Catholic theory and practice. Judaism was protected and denigrated at the same time. What word can we give to this highly ambiguous theoretical and practical posture by the church toward Jews and Judaism? Ambivalent anti-Judaism? Hesitant anti-Judaism? Certainly a qualifier is needed.

The Shift to Anti-Jewishness

In the 11th century, however, things took a decided and unequivocal turn for the worse. At the beginning of the century, or of the second millennium, apocalyptic fervor seems to have whipped up a rather large-scale "pogrom" against Jews in France. Jews were being blamed for holding back the return of the true Messiah by not acknowledging that he had already come. In 1096 the third wave of the first crusade, being leaderless because the nobility and the clergy already had gone with the first two waves, turned into a mob that massacred thousands of Jews in the Rhineland area of what is now Germany. This was over the protests of the pope who had launched the crusade and the local bishop and princes who felt an obligation since the time of Augustine and Gregory to protect the "ignorant" but theologically significant Jews. The Jews were significant because they witnessed to the authenticity of the divine revelation of Sinai, without which the New Testament would make little sense.

There are a number of theories to explain why, but what is important here is simply to note that things changed radically after the 11th century. The ambivalence on the popular level faded, replaced by an increasing negative anti-Judaism that began to take on the tinge of an anti-Jewishness. Whereas before, as in the classic French cathedral of Strasbourg, the church and the synagogue

In other words, the first millennium of Jewish-Christian relations, despite the accretion of absolute power over Jews by the church beginning with the conversion of Constantine in the fourth century, did not result in an attempt by the church to wipe out Judaism.

the church, it did not (save in far-away outposts like the Iberian peninsula) result in any large-scale violence or even forced conversions of Jews until the 11th century. In other words, the first millennium of Jewish-Christian relations, despite the accretion of absolute power over Jews by the church beginning with the conversion of Constantine in the fourth century, did not result in an attempt by the church to wipe out Judaism. On the contrary, thanks to St. Augustine and to St. Gregory the Great, who as pope instituted Augustinian and to St. Gregory the Great, who as pope instituted Augustinian theory as papal canon law, Judaism alone among the myriad ancient cults of the Roman empire that pre-dated Christianity was allowed to survive—and was accorded legal status (in virtue of which it could and did appeal to the popes for protection when civil authorities got out of hand).

So there exists for the first millennium of the Christian era

were depicted as two equally beautiful women, with the former resplendent and triumphant and the latter downcast and defeated, with the tablets of the Law falling from her hands, the cathedral at Regensburg, Germany, has the infamous "Judensau" carved on its façade, with Jews suckling at its teats. This disgusting image is qualitatively different from the theological triumphalism of the French cathedral. It seeks to dehumanize the Jews, not simply illustrate the superiority of Christianity.

But if this is anti-Jewishness, a new term needs to be concocted for the next step in which the Jews are demonized. In this step, Jews are not just collectively guilty for the death of Jesus but are out to destroy all of "Christian civilization" and are in league with the Devil. Whereas for Augustine and the fathers of the church, the Jews were pitiable in their suffering, beginning in the 11th century they are seen as a threat to Christian society.

Passion plays, beginning in the 14th century, thus go well beyond the Gospels and even the fathers of the church in depicting Jews as part of a cosmic plot led by Satan to destroy Christendom and enslave all humanity. The Protestant Reformation did not seek to reform this aspect of medieval thinking, and the Enlightenment merely secularized it, the latter taking it to a new and even more insidious stage of development.

New Racism

While the "logic" of medieval and anti-Jewishness led to very serious crimes such as forced conversion and, in Spain, an Inquisition to test the sincerity of the forced conversions (all of which was against the Jewish policy established by the popes over the centuries), the new logic wedded pseudo-science with greed to create the theory of racialism. This theory appears to have been developed initially to justify the slave trade. If Africans are a different, subordinate "race" they can be bought, sold and treated as chattel. With the breakdown of the God-centered Christian worldview, with its strong teaching from Genesis about the unity of all humanity as created in the image of God, racial theories could be acted upon without the moral constraints of traditional Christian teaching. The great tragedy inherent in the new racist theory was that the sub-humans could not simply be baptized to become acceptable and full members of the secular, "enlightened" society. They were a different species.

Within Europe there was one group above all that many in society were pre-disposed to see as different, inferior and threatening all at once: the Jews. Voltaire thus argued that no matter what one did to or for the Jews, they could never assimilate into Western society. It was not in their nature to be full and productive citizens. In the 19th century, secular Jew-haters like Chamberlain and Gobineau began to pass their hatred off as "science," euphemistically disguising it as "anti-Semitism." Nazi ideology wedded racist pseudo-science to its own neo-pagan, Romantic notion of Germany's "Aryan" past, casting the now no longer fully human but still demonized Jews in the role of the great polluter of the purity of Teutonic blood lines.

The Vatican statement's distinction between the anti-Judaism of the fathers of the church and the anti-Semitism that rationalized genocide is thus a quite cogent one. The latter on several grounds rejects theological elements central to Christianity. The one did not simply slide into the other. More than 1,500 years of historical developments intervene between the two. We need not fewer distinctions but more to do even basic justice to the complex ambiguities of Western history with regard to the Jewish people. There is patristic anti-Judaism, which is distinct from but related to medieval anti-Jewishness. Centuries

later there emerges a distinct new theory, historically related to its predecessors: modern, racial anti-Semitism, which owes its theoretical essence not to the Christian teaching of contempt, but to the dark underside of the Europe of the Enlightenment becoming rich on the slave trade and colonialism.

Responsibility for the Shoah

As Professor Yosef Yerushalmi said a number of years ago, if the logic of Christian anti-Judaism led directly to genocide, that would have happened many centuries ago when the church in much of Europe actually had the political power to carry out the logic of its beliefs. It did not. It only happened in our own secularized century, after the breakdown of the theocentric vision of Christendom and the moral restraints that vision imposed. Yet it

is unlikely that the Jews of the 20th century could have been so easily pinpointed and scapegoated by Nazi theory were it not for the traditions of Christian anti-Judaism and anti-Jewishness that preceded the 19th century invention of racial anti-Semitism. A Christian tradition of negative teaching about Jews and Judaism is thus a necessary cause for the Holocaust, Yerushalmi argued. But it is not a sufficient cause, because much more needs to be

said to begin to explain the success of genocidal anti-Semitism in the first half of the 20th century in Europe. However one defines the distinctions and causal links, the Vatican document's call for the whole church to repent its role in paving the way for the Holocaust is, at least to this reader, quite clear:

At the end of this millennium the Catholic Church desired to express her deep sorrow for the failures of her sons and daughters in every age. This is an act of repentance (*teshuvah*), since as member of the church we are linked to the sins as well as the merits of all her children. The church approaches with deep respect and great compassion the experience of extermination, the *Shoah* suffered by the Jewish people during World War II. It is not a matter of mere words, but indeed of binding commitment. . . . We wish to turn awareness of past sins into a firm resolve to build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Judaism among Christians . . . but rather a shared mutual respect as befits those who adore the One Creator and Lord and have a common father in faith, Abraham.

This is the mandate of the Holy See's statement that Catholics need to keep firmly in mind.

(The full text of *We Remember*, along with relevant statements from European and U.S. hierarchies, and the statement of Cardinal Edward Cassidy clarifying the intent of the Vatican document, is available in *Catholics Remember the Holocaust*, publication No. 5-290, Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1999.)

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1974 Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*

Preamble

The Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, issued by the Second Vatican Council on 28 October 1965, *On the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* (no. 4), marks an important milestone in the history of Jewish-Christian relations. Moreover, the step taken by the Council finds its historical setting in circumstances deeply affected by the memory of the persecution and massacre of Jews which took place in Europe just before and during the Second World War.

Although Christianity sprang from Judaism, taking from it certain essential elements of its faith and divine cult, the gap dividing them was deepened more and more, to such an extent that Christian and Jew hardly knew each other. After two thousand years, too often marked by mutual ignorance and frequent confrontation, the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* provides an opportunity to open or to continue a dialogue with a view to better mutual understanding. Over the past nine years, many steps in this direction have been taken in various countries. As a result, it is easier to distinguish the conditions under which a new relationship between Jews and Christians may be worked out and developed. This seems the right moment to propose, following the guidelines of the Council, some concrete suggestions born of experience, hoping that they will help to bring into actual existence in the life of the Church the intentions expressed in the conciliar document.

While referring the reader back to this document, we may simply restate here that the spiritual bonds and historical links binding the Church to Judaism condemn (as opposed to the very spirit of Christianity) all forms of anti-Semitism and discrimination, which in any case the dignity of the human person alone would suffice to condemn. Further still, these links and relationships render obligatory a better mutual understanding and renewed mutual esteem. On the practical level in particular, Christians must therefore strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism; they must strive to learn by what essential traits Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience.

With due respect for such matters of principle, we simply propose some first practical applications in different essential areas of the Church's life, with a view to launching or developing sound relations between Catholics and their Jewish brothers.

Dialogue

To tell the truth, such relations as there have been between Jew and Christian have scarcely ever risen above the level of monologue. From now on, real dialogue must be established. Dialogue presupposes that each side wishes to know the other, and wishes to increase and deepen its knowledge of the other. It constitutes a particularly suitable means of favoring a better mutual knowledge and, especially in the case of dialogue between Jews and Christians, of probing the riches of one's own tradition. Dialogue demands respect for the other as he is, above all, respect for his faith and his religious convictions.

In virtue of her divine mission, and her very nature, the Church must preach Jesus Christ to the world (*Ad Gentes*, 2). Lest the witness of Catholics to Jesus Christ should give offense to Jews, they must take care to live and spread their Christian faith while maintaining the strictest respect for religious liberty in line with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council (Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*). They will likewise strive to understand the difficulties which arise for the Jewish soul—rightly imbued with an extremely high, pure notion of the divine transcendence—when faced with the mystery of the incarnate Word.

While it is true that a widespread air of suspicion, inspired by an unfortunate past, is still dominant in this particular area, Christians, for their part, will be able to see to what extent the responsibility is theirs and deduce practical conclusions for the future.

In addition to friendly talks, competent people will be encouraged to meet and to study together the many problems deriving from the fundamental convictions of Judaism and Christianity. In order not to hurt (even involuntarily) those taking part, it will be vital to guarantee, not only tact, but a great openness of spirit and diffidence with respect to one's own prejudices.

In whatever circumstances as shall prove possible and mutually acceptable, one might encourage a common meeting in the presence of God, in prayer and silent meditation, a highly efficacious way of finding that humility, that openness of heart and mind, necessary prerequisites for a deep knowledge of oneself and of others. In particular, that will be done in connection with great causes such as the struggle for peace and justice.

Liturgy

The existing links between the Christian liturgy and the Jewish liturgy will be borne in mind. The idea of a living community in the service of God, and in the service of men for the love of God, such as it is realized in the liturgy, is just as characteristic of the Jewish liturgy as it is of the Christian one. To improve Jewish-Christian relations, it is important to take cognizance of those common elements of the liturgical life (formulas, feasts, rites, etc.) in which the Bible holds an essential place.

An effort will be made to acquire a better understanding of whatever in the Old Testament retains its own perpetual value (cf. *Dei Verbum*, 14-15), since that has not been canceled by the later interpretation of the New Testament. Rather, the New Testament brings out the full meaning of the Old, while both Old and New illumine and explain each other (cf. *ibid.*, 16). This is all the more important since liturgical reform is now bringing the text of the Old Testament ever more frequently to the attention of Christians.

When commenting on biblical texts, emphasis will be laid on the continuity of our faith with that of the earlier Covenant, in the perspective of the promises, without minimizing those elements of Christianity which are original. We

After two thousand years, too often marked by mutual ignorance and frequent confrontation, the Declaration Nostra Aetate provides an opportunity to open or to continue a dialogue with a view to better mutual understanding.

believe that those promises were fulfilled with the first coming of Christ. But it is nonetheless true that we still await their perfect fulfillment in his glorious return at the end of time.

With respect to liturgical readings, care will be taken to see that homilies based on them will not distort their meaning, especially when it is a question of passages which seem to show the Jewish people as such in an unfavorable light. Efforts will be made so to instruct the Christian people that they will understand the true interpretation of all the texts and their meaning for the contemporary believer.

Commissions entrusted with the task of liturgical translation will pay particular attention to the way in which they express those phrases and passages which Christians, if

not well informed, might misunderstand because of prejudice. Obviously, one cannot alter the text of the Bible. The point is that, with a version destined for liturgical use, there should be an overriding preoccupation to bring out explicitly the meaning of a text,¹ while taking scriptural studies into account.

The preceding remarks also apply to introductions to biblical readings, to the Prayer of the Faithful, and to commentaries printed in missals used by the laity.

Teaching and Education

Although there is still a great deal of work to be done, a better understanding of Judaism itself and its relationship to Christianity has been achieved in recent years thanks to the teaching of the Church, the study and research of scholars, as also to the beginning of dialogue. In this respect, the following facts deserve to be recalled:

- It is the same God, "inspirer and author of the books of both Testaments" (*Dei Verbum*, 16) who speaks both in the old and new Covenants.
- Judaism in the time of Christ and the Apostles was a complex reality, embracing many different trends, many spiritual, religious, social and cultural values.
- The Old Testament and the Jewish tradition grounded upon it must not be set against the New Testament in such a way that the former seems to constitute a religion of only justice, fear and legalism, with no appeal to the love of God and neighbor (Dt. 6:5; Lv. 10:18; Mt. 22:34-40).
- Jesus was born of the Jewish people, as were his Apostles and a large number of his first disciples. When he revealed himself as the Messiah and Son of God (Mt. 16:16), the bearer of the new Gospel message, he did so as the fulfillment and perfection of the earlier Revelation. And, although his teaching had a profoundly new character, Christ, nevertheless, in many instances, took his stand on the teaching of the Old Testament. The New Testament is profoundly marked by its relation to the Old. As the Second Vatican Council declared: "God, the inspirer and author of the books of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and Old be made manifest in the New" (*Dei Verbum*, 16). Jesus also used teaching methods similar to those employed by the rabbis of his time.

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- With regard to the trial and death of Jesus, the Council recalled that "what happened in his passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, nor upon the Jews of today" (*Nostra Aetate*, 4).
- The history of Judaism did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather went on to develop a religious tradition. And, although we believe that the importance and meaning of that tradition were deeply affected by the coming of Christ, it is still nonetheless rich in religious values.
- With the prophets and the apostle Paul, "the Church awaits the day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and 'serve Him with one accord' (Soph. 3:9)" (*Nostra Aetate*, 4).
- Information concerning these questions is important at all levels of Christian instruction and education. Among sources of information, special attention should be paid to the following: catechism and religious textbooks; history books; and the mass-media (press, radio, cinema, television).

The effective use of these means presupposes the thorough formation of instructors and educators in training schools, seminaries and universities.

Research into the problems bearing on Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations will be encouraged among specialists, particularly in the fields of exegesis, theology, history and sociology. Higher institutions of Catholic research, in association if possible with other similar Christian institutions and experts, are invited to contribute to the solution of such problems. Wherever possible, chairs of Jewish studies will be created, and collaboration with Jewish scholar encouraged.

Joint Social Action

Jewish and Christian tradition, founded on the Word of God, is aware of the value of the human person, the image of God. Love of the same God must show itself in effective action for the good of mankind. In the spirit of the prophets, Jews and Christians will work willingly together, seeking social justice and peace at every level—local, national and international. At the same time, such collaboration can do much to foster mutual understanding and esteem.

Conclusion

The Second Vatican Council has pointed out the path to follow in promoting deep fellowship between Jews and Christians. But there is still a long road ahead.

The problem of Jewish-Christian relations concerns the Church as such, since it is when "pondering her own mystery" that she encounters the mystery of Israel. Therefore, even in areas where no Jewish communities exist, this remains an important problem. There is also an ecumenical aspect to the question: the very return of Christians to the sources and origins of their faith, grafted on to the earlier Covenant, helps the search for unity in Christ, the cornerstone.

In this field, the bishops will know what best to do on the pastoral level, within the general disciplinary framework of the Church and in line with the common teaching of her magisterium. For example, they will create some suitable commissions or secretariats on a national or regional level, or appoint some competent person to promote the implementation of the conciliar directives and the suggestions made above.

On 22 October 1974, the Holy Father instituted for the universal Church this Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, joined to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. This special Commission, created to encourage and foster religious relations between Jews and Catholics—and to do so eventually in collaboration with other Christians—will be, within the limits of its competence, at the service of all interested organizations, providing information for them, and helping them to pursue their task in conformity with the instructions of the Holy See.

The Commission wishes to develop this collaboration in order to implement, correctly and effectively, the express intentions of the Council. ♦

Given at Rome, 1 December 1974.

Johannes Cardinal Willebrands
President of the Commission

Pierre-Marie de Contenson, OP
Secretary of the Commission

¹ Thus the formula "the Jews," in St. John, sometimes according to the context means "the leaders of the Jews," or "the adversaries of Jesus," terms which better express the thought of the evangelist and avoid appearing to arraign the Jewish people as such. Another example is the use of the words "pharisee" and "pharisaism" which have taken on a largely pejorative meaning.

Crosscurrents

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.
The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous.

—Psalm 34:14-15

I am always with You and You hold my right hand.
You guide me with Your counsel and will receive me into
glory.

Psalm 73:23-24

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crooked-
ness of the treacherous destroys them.

Proverbs 11:3

They shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor
sun shall smite them, for he who has pity on them will lead
them, and by springs of water will guide them.

Isaiah 49:10

God be in my head and in my understanding.
God be in my eyes and in my looking.
God be in my mouth and in my speaking.
God be in my heart and in my thinking.
God be at mine end and my departing.

Sarum Primer, 1527

Every believer in this world of ours must be a spark of
light, a center of love, a vivifying leaven amidst others.

Pope John XXIII

I hear from within me, as from a spring of living water the
murmur: "Come to the Father."

St. Ignatius of Antioch

May I know You more clearly,
Love You more dearly,
And follow You more nearly,
Day by day.

St. Richard of Chichester

Now has a light and a clear Book come to you from God, by
which God will guide him who shall follow after his good
pleasure, to paths of peace, and will bring them out of the
darkness to the light, by his will: and to the straight path
will he guide them.

—Sura 5:18

It is wise to listen to the Word and to assert that all
things are one.

Heraclitus

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Flower in the Crannied Wall*

On the challenge of pluralism and dialogue:
This difference is only sensed as something vague in virtue
of the experience of a mutual state of alienation and dis-
parity through the experience that one's partner in the dia-
logue constantly proceeds in the dialogue from starting
points which are alien to oneself, or which seem less impor-
tant to one, and that he presents the subject matter under
discussion, in other words speaks of points which he
regards as established, which likewise seem alien or less
important to oneself.

Karl Rahner, *Pluralism in Theology and
the Unity of the Creed in the Church*

It is a point of wisdom to be silent when occasion requires.

Plutarch

In the month of Elul when men prepare their souls for the
days of judgment, Rabbi Hayyim was in the habit of telling
stories to a tune that moved all his listeners to turn to God.
Once he told this story: "A man lost his way in a great forest.
After a while another lost his way and chanced on the first.
Without knowing what had happened to him, he asked the
way out of the woods. 'I don't know,' said the first. 'But I can
point out the ways that lead further into the thicket, and
after that let us try to find the way together.'"

"So, my congregation," the rabbi concluded his
story, "let us look for the way together."

As told by Martin Buber

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NOW AND THE FUTURE

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, Executive Director
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*Paper submitted for Presentation at the
International Conference Human Rights and Our
Responsibilities Towards Future Generations: an
Inter-Religious Perspective*

Organized by the Future Generations Programme in collaboration with UNESCO and the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies at the Foundation for International Studies Valletta, Malta 6 - 8 May 1999

The UNESCO Declaration (art. 6) reads, "The human genome, in full respect of the dignity of the human person and human rights must be protected and biodiversity safeguarded." First blush, after initial examination of the topic, my response was, in Biblical Judaism there are no "human rights." Scripture is much more explicit in outlining human responsibilities. It is for this reason that my approach from a religious perspective may not address human rights, although the net result may not be too different.

In the first part of this presentation, I would like to single out two biblical verses that govern and guide my approach to this topic:

Genesis 1:27: The human being is created in the image of God.

Genesis 1:28: "Be fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth and conquer it."

Maimonides (Guide of the Perplexed, I:1) writes that the characteristic endowment of a mentally normal human being is his intelligence. When the Bible speaks of God creating the human in His image, it first refers to the human capacity to know and understand and appreciate abstract conception, apart from particular physical objects. This gift of intelligence equips humans to be creative and loving beings. Our likeness to God expresses itself in our striving and ability to love, to create, to contemplate the outside world, to inquire into its state of being and concern ourselves with its complexities and our possible involvement in problem solving. Our intellectual ability gives us the ability to understand spirituality, moral reasoning, proportion, law, vision, art, music, and the desire to educate our young in the Wisdom tradition.

An important corollary to this interpretation of human in the image of God is stressed

by the sages of the Talmud (Tractate Sotah, 14a), who discuss the concept of *imitatio Dei* (the imitating of God). This principle is also found in the Bible passage: "After the Lord your God you shall walk" (Deuteronomy X:10). Humans are created in the image of God and are endowed with a superior status that enables them to faithfully imitate the ways of God. The rabbis of the Talmud, in their discussions of *imitatio Dei*, stress the fact that it is only in conduct, not in terms of essence, that we are to imitate God. Thus the Bible commands us to be Holy for God is Holy. In other words, we must conduct ourselves vis-à-vis the rest of the world as we believe God would. We are placed here on earth to be a partner in creation with Him. He started the creation and we continue the process.

The very first sentence in the Bible tells us that God created the heavens and the earth. When He turns the world over to us He commands us to "be fruitful," i.e., continue the process of creation. "Replenish the earth and conquer it" is an appeal to us to cultivate the world and safeguard the world. God serves as a model for our behavior and invites us to speak justice and life into chaos and darkness. He gave us examples in the Biblical stories such as clothing the naked (Adam and Eve) and visiting the sick (Abraham) so that we may follow His example. This is why social justice is an essential element of the Jewish faith and we are told by God to offer hospitality to the stranger, bind the wounds of the broken hearted, give

Social justice is an essential element of the Jewish faith and we are told by God to offer hospitality to the stranger, bind the wounds of the broken hearted, give hope to the spiritually deaf and blind, and proclaim truth and peace in the face of violence, hatred, prejudice, poverty, ignorance, oppression, corruption, and abuse.

hope to the spiritually deaf and blind, and proclaim truth and peace in the face of violence, hatred, prejudice, poverty, ignorance, oppression, corruption, and abuse.

While it is true we cannot control natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, or hurricanes, we can share the knowledge of how to predict where and when these events may occur in order to give ample warning to a pop-

ulation to secure life in the face of danger. Underlying the principle of *imitatio Dei* is the concept that not only are the actions of God ideals for human conduct but that God, unlike human rulers, does not reserve all the glory for Himself. God is most eager to share these ideal qualities with all those created in His image and delights when humanity responds with generosity.

The phrase in Genesis 1:27 "conquer it" is rather puzzling at first glance, bearing as it does a bellicose significance which is at variance with the peaceful ideals that are considered by the sages to be the goal of humankind. Indeed, the very origin of humanity as one single pair was, according to the Rabbis, activated by the divine wish to prevent war between peoples:

Man was created alone in the world to prevent interfamily feuds. Now if in spite of the fact that he was created alone, strife has developed between them, all the more so if two pair had been created simultaneously. Therefore, man was created alone for the sake of peace between mankind, so that one man should not be able to say to his fellow: 'My father was greater than yours.' (Tractate Sanhedrin)

The phrase "conquer it" therefore cannot refer to man being invited to make war on his neighbor. Man was not given dominion over the earth to do as he pleases with the earth's resources, to destroy or contaminate or spoil the earth. Rather, the phrase refers to man's conquest of the desert and his constructive and creative endeavors to build and inhabit the world by harnessing and cooperating with the forces and resources of nature for the use of generations to come. God's purpose was to instruct generations how to use the earth and the fullness thereof for a harvest of plenty to satisfy the needs of earth's inhabitants.

We see in Isaiah XIV:19 that the world was not created to be a wasteland but to be developed and inhabited. The order of creation in Genesis also sets up man as the pinnacle of it all, as he comes after the fishes on the fifth day and the animals on the sixth day. Man is not to be subservient to the world. The forces of nature are not supernatural ones that are superior to him. We are in cooperation with God when we make wise use of nature. Just as God created the world and placed the first pair of humans in the Garden of Eden, so too must we strive to

make the world a real and living paradise for the generations to come. It is our "responsibility to bequeath to future generations an Earth which will not one day be irreversibly damaged by human activity" (UNESCO Declaration, art. 4).

At its March 23-26 meeting at the Vatican, the Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee discussed creation as God's gift and the place of humanity in the responsible care of the earth with God. The final section of their excellent statement reads:

Our responsibility for all that dwells in the earth and for the earth itself extends into the future. The earth is not ours to destroy (cf. Deuteronomy 20:19) but to hand on in trust to future generations. We cannot therefore recklessly consume its resources to satisfy needs that are artificially created and sustained by a society that tends to live only for the present. We also need to act, together whenever feasible, to assure that sound practices, guaranteed by law, are established in our countries and local communities for the future preservation of the environment.

Care for the creation is also a religious act. Both Catholics and Jews use water, fire, oil, salt as signs of God's presence among us. As part of God's creation we offer its fruits in prayer and worship, and the psalmist does not hesitate to summon all creation to join in praising God (Psalms 96, 98, 148).

The second part of this paper focuses around Genesis II:15 which reads: "And God put man in the Garden of Eden to work therein and to watch over it," i.e., to guard it. One might ask if it is true that after creation God saw all that He had created was very good, why was it necessary for humans to work? Simply put: One of the components of a perfect world in accordance with God's design is productive human activity. Part of a perfect world is the active engagement of humans who do not simply exist as biological beings enjoying the world, but rather as functional beings who contribute, create and work. The need for man to work is not part of the curse subsequent to the sin; man was originally placed in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it. The curse was that man would have to battle with an unwilling earth ("By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread - thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you"). But the fact that one needs to work altogether is part of divine plan, regardless of any element of

sin. This was God's intention from the outset and this is, indeed, a perfect order, provided that we do our part. If we do not work, then one of the pieces of the puzzle will not fit and the world will not be perfected or completed as God intended.

Pope John Paul II supports these ideas when he writes in the Introduction of an encyclical entitled *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work, September 14, 1981):

Through work man must earn his daily bread (Ps. 127; Gen. 3:17-19; Prov.10:22; Ex.1:8-14; Jer. 22:13) and contribute to the continual advance of science and technology and, above all, to elevate unceasingly the cul-

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ture and moral level of the society within which he lives in community with those who belong to the same family. . . . Man is made to be in the visible universe an image and likeness of God himself, (Gen. 1:26) and he is placed in it in order to conquer the earth (Gen. 1:28). From the beginning therefore he is called to work. Work is one of the characteristics that distinguished man from the rest of creatures. . . . Thus work bears a particular mark of man and of humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And this mark decides its interior characteristics; in a sense it constitutes its very nature.

One might maintain that "work and watch over" are designed to maintain the world at its present level, which entails the two components of passively guarding against damage and actively working in order to replenish. We need to work in such a way that the natural processes repeat themselves and flourish. If we do not contribute our share, the seasons will come and go, but nature will not be able to easily replenish itself, let alone flourish. My personal approach is that "to work in the garden" is an invitation and challenge by God to begin with the original state of creation, but not to simply maintain the original standard. It means that we have been given

the duty to try to transcend it. I believe that we were empowered and enjoined by God to create something better, a world that improves on the beautiful world that He created.

Although this approach is audacious, we find a similar kind of approach in the Talmud where a Roman governor contended with Rabbi Akiva during the Roman occupation of Israel:

If God wanted man to be circumcised, why didn't he create him that way? Why do you try to improve upon God's creation? Rabbi Akiva responded, 'Bring me some wheat and then he said bring me a loaf of bread.' He then asked the Governor, 'What do you prefer to eat, the wheat or the bread?' Naturally he replied that he preferred the bread. The rabbi replied, 'It is quite obvious that the works of flesh and blood are intended to improve on the works of the Creator.'

What this story asserts is that human effort, ability and planning can significantly improve the world. Implied is that there is a human responsibility to engage in this kind of improvement. What results from this interpretation is the importance of man placing his imprint upon the world, improving it and building it soon. We must emphasize the human responsibility and the recognition of the importance of laboring, working, building the world and improving society. Work is a central human value. Where the Bible tells us that it is our duty to rest on the Sabbath it says, "Six days shall you labor and do all your work and on the seventh day you shall rest" (Exodus XX:9). Work and rest; the two are always interrelated.

We can now view work as part of the collective human responsibility to establish human leadership and infuse appropriate moral character into nature as a whole. For me, this is not simply engaging in a great idealistic quest to place the world under a human thumbprint. This is part of what I am doing for God, part of my relationship with Him: I am His guard and His laborer. This perspective removes work from any achievement or success in order to build one's ego. Our attempt to place the human imprint on nature is part of our mandated mission as God's co-creators and we engage in this work as humble servants.

A major force that works against this healthy and holy view of work is the notion of excessive leisure. Leisure has suddenly become a sig-

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nificant problem in sociological and moral terms. There is an entire body of literature concerned with the problem of leisure, precisely because work is perceived as a kind of necessary evil, and not as a spiritually redemptive category. For us, however, the sense of effort and striving, above all to work (in Milton's phrase) "as ever in my great Taskmaster's eye," is essential. The sense of the importance of work and a work-oriented life is part of the universal mandate; it is part of what we understand to be central to our being.

I would like to mention kosher hedonism in particularly here. In recent years, one observes on the American scene a terribly disturbing phenomena: the spread of hedonistic values, but with a kind of kosher packaging. There was a time when the problem of hedonism for religious Jews did not amount to much, because even if you wanted to have the time of your life, there was not very much that you could do about it. The country clubs were all barred to Jews; there were few kosher restaurants; and no kosher nightclubs. In the last decade or two, a whole culture has developed geared towards observant Jews, where the message is 'splurge, indulge, pamper yourself'—and everything with a kosher certification. The message is that whatever anybody else has, we can have it too! They have trips to Las Vegas, we have trips to Las Vegas. Anything you want! Consequently, there has been a certain debasement of values, in which people have a concern for the minutiae of legal observance but with a complete lack of awareness of the extent to which the whole underlying message is totally against the very spirit of our religious existence.

Do not misunderstand—I am not opposed to people enjoying themselves. To life! I am not arguing for a totally ascetic approach to life; I do not live that way myself because I do not think that it is demanded. The question is something else entirely. The question is not whether there is room in human life for a person to have a certain measure of enjoyment. Rather, the question is are we able to see our authentic mandate to work as God's co-workers or does excessive pleasure obscure this Biblical mandate?

There is nothing wrong with a person wanting to enjoy, to have a good meal. But if you open up to read certain columnists writing in the New York Times or other major papers on these matters, it is simply revolting! A per-

son who is morally sensitive finds it impossible to read those columns. Admittedly, this attitude of hedonism has permeated our world, where not simply the ability to enjoy, but a whole culture of excessive pleasure has begun to take hold. This is something which is recent, and with which anyone who is religious certainly should in no way identify or associate. We have to know that "Man is born to do labor" (Job 5:7). In contrast, that whole culture advocates that man is born for pleasure, but unfortunately has to work if he wants to enjoy.

Having outlined the origins of our responsibility to exercise our intellect and

Part of a perfect world is the active engagement of humans who do not simply exist as biological beings enjoying the world, but rather as functional beings who contribute, create and work.

energy to "replenish" the world, I would like to explore the likelihood of achieving this goal in a single lifetime. Part of intelligence is knowing not to undertake a task which spells sure failure. Although there is no reference to the Messiah in the Pentateuch, Moses Maimonides in the "Thirteen Principles of the Jewish Faith" writes: "I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah; and, though he tarry, I will wait daily for his coming." (Hertz, J. H. *The Authorized Daily Prayer Book*. (Rev. ed.). London: Shapiro Vallentine & Co., 5719/1959, p. 255). But we cannot "pass off" the preparation for the Messiah to the next generation. Instead we must "pass on" a better world with protected environmental resources, infused with our values, wisdom, Tradition, and scientific advances. No single individual can accomplish the restructuring of a world in turmoil, bent upon war and focused so often on greed. No genius could institute a plan that would solve all the world's problems. Strength of character, determination, and ability does not exclusively reside in any one person or group.

Unfortunately, hatred still pervades in so many of the world's trouble spots. Is it not discouraging to have a clear concept of one's responsibilities and know that it is impossible to discharge the task God has assigned us? The answer is no, not at all. Once again our cue comes from the Talmud, wherein the Tractate called "Ethics of the Fathers" (Chapter II:21),

Rabbi Tarfon is quoted as saying, "It is not your duty to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it." We recognize from the start that we do not have the power or knowledge to accomplish everything that needs to be done. But that fact must not deter us from attempting to make a difference now. We cannot be disheartened by the greatness and difficulty of the task. We must do as much as is in our power. Joy does not come from changing the world as much as it comes from the knowledge that we walk in God's path. Happiness comes from the knowledge that we make a difference, however small, in the lives of others who are created in God's image.

In the same Tractate, (Ethics of the Fathers, Chapter III:13), it is written: "He is whom the spirit of his fellow creatures take delight. In him the spirit of the Almighty takes delight." We acknowledge that our responsibility is to bring about a better world now and for generations to come, while at the same time recognizing our limitations.

This can be applied to the field of medicine where someone discovers a cure for a particular disease and this discovery immediately impacts our surrounding society. We easily comprehend that many lives will be influenced for generations to come. Equally, in the field of human relations, the skill and wisdom of conflict resolution influences not only the immediate contestants, but sets a standard for other conflicts to be resolved peacefully in the future. Our sages teach that God first created only one person so that we may understand that to save a single life is as if we have saved the whole world. Every decent act has an impact, and more often than not that impact can be a lasting one, even unto distant future generations. Again, we see the importance of social justice and our work to create a better future.

In Psalm CXXVI:1, the psalmist recalls the return of the exiles from Babylon after Cyrus, King of Persia conquered Babylon: "When the Lord brought back those that returned to Zion, we were like unto them that dream." In one Tractate (Ta'anit: 23a), Rabbi Yochanan poses the question, "Is it possible for a man to dream continuously for 70 years?" One day he was journeying on the road and he saw a man planting a carob tree. He asked the man, "How long does it take for this tree to bear fruit?" The man replied, "70 years." He then further asked him, "Are you certain you will live another 70 years?" The man replied, "I found

ready grown carob trees in the world, as my forefathers planted these for me, so I too plant these for my children. This short story pinpoints our responsibility to labor on behalf of future generations even when it is obvious that the generation in which we live cannot benefit from our actions.

We are living in an age of frightening technological advances which has collared world wide attention. Digital, cellular, cyberspace, web-sights, e-mail, stealth bombers, and smart bombs are all words that capture our imagination and fill us with fear. I would best title this modern reality as the Age of Destructive Potential. It is, therefore, difficult to deny that the cardinal duty of collective human action is to care for the future of humankind.

My good friend, Dr. Samuel Pizar, recently spoke at an international conference at Auschwitz, Poland sponsored by the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding, where he reminded all of the participants: "We dare not forget that the past can also be prologue, that here we can discern the specter of doomsday, a warning to humankind, of what may still lie ahead." This warning means that although I have needs—even just ego needs—to act as an individual, for the sake of all humanity (which includes my grand and great grandchildren), I must search for the groups (religious groups, institutions, and organizations) that promote this cause in the most professional and equitable manner. It is vital that we submerge our own individuality for the sake of efficient direction and righteous action.

Who is going to focus our scientific and technological insights into constructive and moral channels? Have religious leaders identified the danger and recognized the direction political leaders have embarked on? Can there be a convergence of thought from the centers of the three monotheistic religions? Are we drifting towards our calamitous end?

There are voices, not the loudest voices and not those of the majority spokesmen for religions; but sane voices crying out for the need for a unified religious voice to steer all people of good will to strive for the goals of peace and harmony. There are centers of Christian-Jewish understanding and interreligious dialogue beginning to emerge in communities throughout the United States and throughout the world. These centers are usual-

ly housed in universities and they give voice to the forces that work for peace and cooperation. They jointly have the awesome task of reaching the person in the pew with the revelation that religions are reaching out in a revolutionary way in their attempts to change teachings, language, and the perceptions that have formerly divided and hurt people for centuries.

By asking the right questions that bring people together in mutual understanding and respect, we can be the ones who set the world agenda of peace rather than of war and military action. How do we rally the masses to recognize that change? So many centuries of hostility and fear have led us to mistrust one another. People are hardened in their prejudice. Unfortunately, the media focuses far more attention on violence than peace. Bombs in Serbia, stabbings in Hebron, illegal immigrants, train disasters, tornadoes, all these seem to capture the headlines. Peaceful declarations, conferences centered on tolerance, tranquillity and peaceful accord are relegated to secondary coverage. The media cannot and does not focus on the good that is being accomplished by those working for peace in the next millennium. There is no more important work to assure ourselves of a future than the work of interreligious harmony.

There is one more stumbling block: we do not possess enough healthy fear. What is standing in our way that prevents all people with education and intellect from identifying the goal of peaceful coexistence and pursuing that

quences. For instance, I believe that the medical world should not focus an all-out effort to identify causes of Alzheimer's disease or a cure for it unless and until it perceives it as a major threat to all people. But war, especially in this century, has been devastating. The more technology we possess the more easily we are able to destroy human life and property. At one time we confronted one another with swords; today with atom bombs and tomorrow—who can predict? In Hiroshima we witnessed the deadly strength of a single bomb. Why does the fear of devastation not drive us to design a solution to conflicts that rules out military action?

It is doubtful whether anyone would ever have praised health without at least the sight of sickness, praised sincerity without the experience of trickery, and praised peace without knowing of war's misery. Is there a generation since the beginning of time that has experienced the ravages of war more than we have? World War II was so devastating that it destroyed 10's of millions of people. That is so frightening it would seem that all efforts would be focused on solutions to prevent war. Unfortunately, the opposite is true. In the last half century there have been and continue to be a multiplicity of wars that still treat human life as if it is superfluous. The United Nations, formed almost exclusively for the purpose of saving human life, seems to be paralyzed when it comes to preventing war. Furthermore, the world religions which speak so eloquently about peace and love have accomplished little

in their efforts to stem the tide of war. Northern Ireland, India, Israel and Yugoslavia, just to name a few, are countries where religious leaders are accomplishing mighty little to help their people live together in peace.

At the aforementioned conference held in Auschwitz in May, 1998 under the auspices of the Center for Christian-Jewish

Understanding, Rabbi Sirat of Paris said, "There are no holy wars; there is only Holy Peace." How much more bloodshed, how much more human suffering before every synagogue, church and mosque will hear the voices crying for the paths to peace? How much more destruction must we see before every university and house of study mandates a course in "Peaceful Coexistence" for degree completion where tolerance, understanding, and respect

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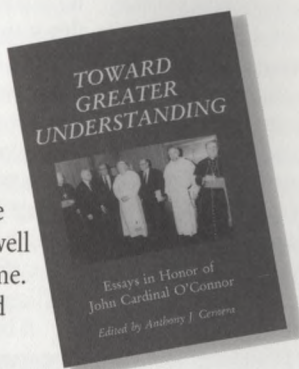
goal to the exclusion of all else? What obstacle prevents the academicians in our universities from inspiring the young budding genius assigned to their care that the overruling duty of collective human action is to shield us from the potential destruction stemming from technological development? Hans Jonas, in a paper delivered at Technion in 1974 titled "Ethics in an Age of Pervasive Technology" posits that one cannot direct his or her attention to solving a problem unless one has a fear of the conse-

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can be the virtues that strengthen the intellect and character of all young people. Pope John Paul II in his 1997 World Day of Peace message said:

The time has come for a resolute decision to set out together on a true pilgrimage of peace, starting from the concrete situations in which we find ourselves. . . . The sincere desire for peace has to be translated into a firm decision to remove every obstacle to achieving peace. Here the various religions can make an important contribution as they have done in the past by speaking out against war and bravely facing the consequent risks.

Permit me to turn to my own field of endeavor, Christian-Jewish understanding. Christian-Jewish history is replete with confrontations that decimated the Jewish people, i.e., the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, and to some extent even the Holocaust. In the document from the Vatican in 1998, "We Remember: A Reflection on the *Shoah*," the Catholic Church acknowledged "the sins of her sons and daughters" that allowed for the perception that Jews should be punished for their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. The bitter memories of the fate of Jews under the Nazi regime has left the scars of fear and mistrust in the hearts of many. And yet, no generation has been as privileged as ours to witness the extraordinary attempt of the Catholic Church and many Protestant denominations to learn from the mistakes of the past, and to acknowledge their complicity that resulted in anti-Semitic procedures so as to set upon the task of reconciliation.

If it is so clear that every effort by every thinking person ought to be directed toward securing a peaceful future for our grandchildren and their grandchildren; if it is so clear that until and unless we focus our genius and our complete attention to peacefully solving inevitable conflicts; then why do we hesitate in directing all our resources and efforts in this direction? Why do we continue to drift toward conflict? Perhaps it is human nature or hedonism, or even the selfish drives of power and wealth. Whatever the multitudinous causes, we have an opportunity today to teach our children another way. Religious leaders can speak with authority and truth and love and we can bring people of good will together. All the major religions have published documents which confidently proclaim, "Never Again!" We never have to live in the fear and horrible reality of violence. It is our choice and we must teach our young people that peace and living mutual respect are the only viable ways to live in the next millennium.

I would like to conclude by again citing Pope John Paul II in his Jan 1, 1996 World Day of Peace message:

Let us give the children a future of peace! This is the confident appeal which I make to men and women of good will, and I invite everyone to help children to grow up in an environment of authentic peace. This is their right, and it is our duty. . . . If children are properly helped and loved, they themselves can become peacemakers, builders of a world of fraternity and solidarity. With their enthusiasm and youthful idealism, young people can become witnesses and teachers of hope and peace to adults.

One way that our responsibilities for now and the future can take root in our hearts is to read the honest and courageous statements written by several religious traditions concerning interreligious harmony and the work of peace. [Ed. note: For complete statements and documents please visit the CCJU web site at www.ccju.org and click on "Official Documents."]. ♦

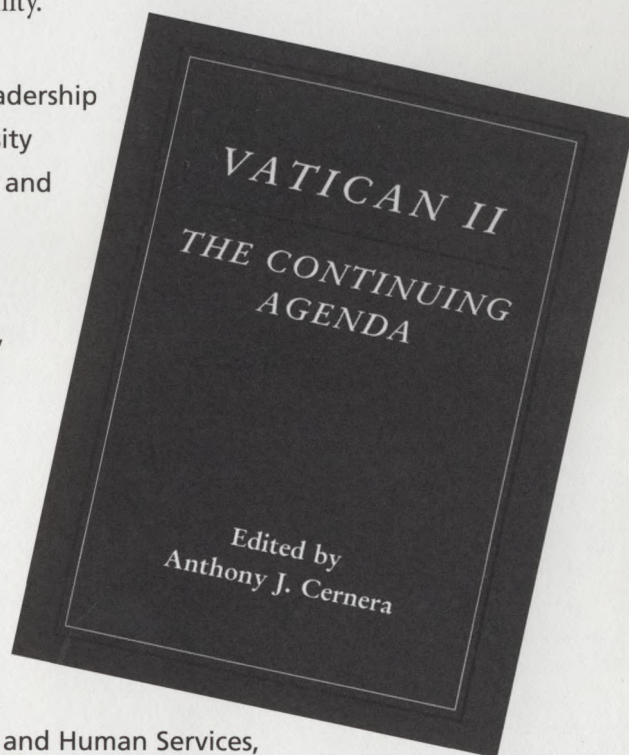
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