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National Center of Religious Education - CCD

A Division of the Department of Education—U.S. Catholic Conference



1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W. • WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

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March 20, 1972

Dr. Marc Tannenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 E. 56th Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Tannenbaum:

The appearance in 1971 of the General Catechetical Directory has provided us with a multifaceted foundation document that merits careful analysis and study. The Catholic bishops of the United States are planning a process of study and reflections on basic catechetical documents that will result, in the course of several years, in a National Catechetical Directory.

The Fall issue of The Living Light (under separate cover you will be receiving a copy of the latest issue of the journal) is planned as a special in-depth analysis and critique of the General Catechetical Directory. We are requesting scholars in their field of speciality to provide the American public with such a study. The proposed list of themes and invited authors is enclosed.

Accordingly, would you be willing to prepare a manuscript of approximately 4,000 words in length on theme of "general Jewish reaction to the entire General Catechetical Directory," a copy of which is enclosed.

It may be helpful to point out that the audience who will read your paper is presumed to have a copy of the Directory; therefore, lengthy quotes will not be necessary, although specific references would be helpful. May we also request that you submit an appropriate title for your finished manuscript. A copy of our Living Light style sheet is enclosed for your guidance in preparing the manuscript.

We will need your manuscript here at the National Center by June 1st; for your contribution, our current stipend of 5¢ per word, upon editorial acceptance, will prevail. Please use the enclosed card to notify us of your acceptance.

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We hope that you will be able to find time to give us your valued cooperation and support.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Perkins Ryan
Mary Perkins Ryan
Executive Editor, The Living Light

William J. Tobin
Rev. William J. Tobin
Acting Director, National Center

enclosures (6)



INVITED AUTHORS AND PROPOSED THEMES

for the Fall, 1972, issue of The Living Light

Adult Education - Dr. Paul Bergevin

Basic Theological Dimensions - Rev. Edward Kilmartin, S.J.

Developmental Psychology - Dr. Thomas A. Francoeur

Jewish Reaction - Dr. Marc Tannenbaum

Methodological Perspectives - Sister Mary Sarah Fasemyer

Moral Theology - Rev. John Dedek

The Origin, Context and Purpose of the General Catechetical Directory -
Rev. Berard Marthaler

Parent Education - Mr. Edmund Curley

Pastoral Aspects - Most Rev. Raymond A. Lucker

Protestant Reaction - Professor C. Ellis Nelson

Revelation - Rev. John Ford, C.S.C.

Scripture - Rev. Quentin Quesnell, S.J.

Sociology - Rev. Joseph Schuyler, S.J.

Spirituality - Rev. Earnest Larkin, O.Carm.

THE
GENERAL CATECHETICAL
DIRECTORY
IN PERSPECTIVE

Berard L. Marthaler, O.F.M. Conv.



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The General Catechetical Directory in Perspective*

BERARD L. MARTHALER, O.F.M. Conv.

In early December the official English translation of the *General Catechetical Directory* appeared.¹ The first printing counted 50,000 copies. The widespread interest generated by the Directory since it was introduced to the public by Cardinal Wright at a news conference in June of last year seems to justify the large order. The present rate of sales indicates that many more thousand will be sold. The only foreseeable development which could dampen this early enthusiasm would be widespread disillusionment growing out of a misunderstanding of what the Directory proposes to be and do.

Although the GCD deserves a full length, comprehensive commentary, my aim in these pages is more limited. As a preventative against false expectations, I aim to put the Directory in proper perspective by explaining its spirit and scope in part one. In the second part I attempt to work its chief theological and pedagogical principles into a synthesis, offering brief—hopefully constructive—editorial asides along the way. Finally, there is an "addendum" about the addendum on "The First Reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist."

I.

The immediate background for the Directory is found in the decree of Vatican II on "The Bishop's Pastoral Office" (*Christus Dominus*), article 44, which prescribed "general directories be drawn up concerning the care of souls, for the use of both bishops and pastors." The decree specified that one of these directories "should be composed with respect to the catechetical instruction of the Christian people, and should deal with the fundamental principles of such instruction, its arrangement, and the composition of books on the subject." Despite its brevity and apparent simplicity, article 44 represents an important decision taken at Vatican II that will have lasting influence on religious education for

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¹ Available from the Publications Office, United States Catholic Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. The title page carries the following aviso: "This is the only English translation of the *Directorium Catechisticum Generale* approved by the Sacred Congregation of the Clergy."

decades to come. In commissioning a directory, the council fathers backed away from a "universal catechism."

During the early stages of Vatican II individual bishops as well as several preparatory commissions advocated a universal catechism which would be uniform and, in some way, normative for the entire Church in communion with Rome. Sometime in 1962 the Commission "de disciplina cleri et populi Christiani" drafted a schema on pastoral care which included a long section on catechetics. Though it cautioned against too varied and too many diocesan catechisms, the schema omitted any reference to a single, universal catechism. Instead, it recommended that a unified plan of catechetical instruction be adopted by each ecclesiastical province. It did, however, suggest a general directory for the universal Church to be supplemented by national directories, composed under the auspices of the national episcopal conferences. In the course of the council this schema on pastoral care was subsumed into the decree on "The Bishop's Pastoral Office," and the sections on catechetics were eventually distilled into article 44 of the latter document.² It is not to the point here to discuss the reasons why the council abandoned the idea of a universal catechism but it is important for an understanding of the shape and spirit of the *General Catechetical Directory* to recognize that it was a conscious choice.³

In the wake of the council, the Congregation for the Clergy, by reason of its responsibility in pastoral matters, undertook the task of drawing up a Directory. Cardinal Villot, then Prefect of the congregation, gave an interim report to the Synod of Bishops in October, 1967, on the aim, nature and contents of the proposed directory, as well as the mode of collaboration followed in drafting the text. The published text makes the point—almost belabors it—that the GCD is the result of extensive consultation with national hierarchies and recognized experts in catechesis (cf. Foreword).⁴

Like most documents that seek to gain a consensus, it suffers from repetition and a lack of emphasis. By reason of the subject the Directory has a kind of cohesion, but it is not always clear how the various units relate to one another. Though the foreword makes it clear that "not all parts of the Directory are of the same importance," the text itself does

² This brief history is based on the account given by G. Caprile, "Il Direttorio Catechistico," in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, July 17, 1971 (n. 2906), pp. 169-171.

³ D. Grasso, "Riflessioni sul Direttorio Catechistico Generale," in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, Oct. 22, 1971 (n. 2911), pp. 57-59.

⁴ Pietro Palazzini, "Report on the Catechetical Activity of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy," an address delivered to the International Catechetical Congress in Rome, Sept. 23, 1971. Archbishop Palazzini is Secretary of the Congregation for the Clergy.

not make it readily evident which sections are normative and which are merely suggestions. The foreword continues:

Those things which are said about divine revelation, the criteria according to which the Christian message is to be expounded, and the more outstanding elements of that same message, are to be held by all. On the other hand, those things which are said about the present situation, methodology, and the form of catechesis for people of differing ages, are to be taken rather as suggestions and guides, for a number of them are of necessity taken from the human sciences, theoretical as well as practical, and these are indeed subject to some evolution.

The Directory is intended chiefly "for bishops, Conferences of Bishops, and in general all who under their leadership and direction have responsibility in the catechetical field" (Foreword). The overall purpose is to set down the basic principles which govern "pastoral action in the ministry of the word." More immediately, however, the Directory's purpose is "to provide assistance in the production of catechetical directories and catechisms." It establishes guidelines, broad directives on the nature, goals, contents and means in catechesis. The Directory does not have and was not intended to have the imperative tone of legislation.⁵

THE SPIRIT OF VATICAN II

The letter and spirit of Vatican II are obvious throughout. There is hardly a page of the Directory that does not make reference to one of the conciliar statements. *Dei Verbum* ("On Divine Revelation") is quoted at length especially in part two which has a long section on "The Ministry of the Word and Revelation." God's revelatory activity in the world is a recurring theme in the Directory. Given the stress that the guidelines put on the need to adapt to the contemporary world and divergent cultures, it is not surprising that the most frequently cited are *Gaudium et Spes* ("The Church in the Modern World") and *Ad Gentes* ("The Church's Missionary Activity"). To me the passage that most succinctly captures the overall tone and orientation of the Directory reads: "...the ministry of the word is not a mere repetition of ancient doctrine, but rather it is a faithful reproduction of it, with adaptation to new problems and with a growing understanding of it" (par. 13).

The framers of the Directory were very sensitive to the catholicity of the Church. Broad but firm guidelines are provided regarding the

⁵ Cf. the account of Cardinal Wright's press conference in *L'Osservatore Romano*, June 18, 1971. He made the same point in a meeting with the English-language delegates to the International Catechetical Congress in September, cf. *National Catholic Register*, Oct. 10, 1971.

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contents of catechesis, while leaving maximum latitude in presenting it. On the one hand diligent care must be taken to present "the entire treasure of the Christian message," (par. 38) and on the other it must be "accommodated to the ability of the people to be taught" (par. 33). The Directory speaks of "the need for and the usefulness of formulas" which make possible "a uniform way of speaking among the faithful" (par. 37). The reference is to both dogmatic and prayer formulas. The Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary "are to be taught with special care." The Directory never loses its pastoral orientation. Preference is to be given to "those formulas which, while expressing faithfully the truth of the faith, are adapted to the capacity of the listeners" (*ibid.*). Catechesis cannot be restricted to traditional formulas: "The language will be different for different age levels, social conditions of men, human cultures, and forms of civil life" (par. 34).

While it sets down pastoral guidelines in broad terms, the Directory acknowledges that it is not possible "to deduce from those norms an order which must be followed in the exposition of content" (par. 37). One has to take into account the circumstances of the ecclesial community and the individuals to whom the catechesis is directed. "It is right to begin with God and proceed to Christ, or to do the reverse; similarly, it is permissible to begin with man and proceed to God, or to do the reverse; and so on" (*ibid.*). Citing *Unitatis Redintegratio* ("On Ecumenism," par. 11), the Directory recognizes "a certain hierarchy of truths" which catechesis reckons with on all levels. This does not mean to say that "some truths of faith pertain to the Christian message while others do not; rather it suggests a priority, some truths are based on others... and are illumined by them" (par. 43).⁶

Similarly, the Directory makes room for a variety of approaches and creative teaching. It speaks of "a differential methodology" which "varies according to the age, social conditions, and degree of psychological maturity of those who are to be taught" (par. 70). No method, however, even one of proven success, "frees the catechist from the personal task of assimilating and passing judgment on the concrete circumstances, and from some adjustment to them" (par. 71). Part four ("Elements of Methodology") covers a variety of issues, always urging adaptation and adjustment to the concrete situation; e.g., peer-learning (par. 76); catechesis according to age levels (pars. 77ff.); family catechesis (pars.

⁶ "Hierarchy of truths" is a new phrase, if not an entirely novel idea, in official Church documents. The way it is used in the GCD (cf. also par. 27) resembles the wording in the *Directorium Oecumenicum II* issued by the Secretariat for Christian Unity in April, 1970. Cf. G. Tavard, "Hierarchia Veritatum: A Preliminary Investigation," *Theological Studies*, 32 (June, 1971), pp. 278-289.

80, 81); special forms of catechesis for adults (pars. 96, 97, 130); special education (par. 90); catechesis for the aged (par. 95).

CATECHETICAL AIDS

Several paragraphs (116-124) are devoted to "catechetical aids"—directories, programs, catechisms, textbooks, audio-visual aids, mass media and programmed instruction. There is no attempt to relate them to each other. In fact, the description of catechisms in this context is confusing (I suspect it was inserted after the rest of the text was drafted), for they are not clearly distinguished from catechetical directories and programs on the one hand, nor from textbooks and manuals for catechists on the other. Certainly the "catechisms" spoken of here are broader in scope than the Baltimore catechism or the "Penny Catechism" in the English speaking world, and even the Dutch Catechism. "Their purpose is to provide, under a form that is condensed and practical, the witness of revelation and of Christian tradition as well as the chief principles which set out to be useful for catechetical activity, that is, for personal education in faith" (par. 119). Much the same is said about textbooks with the additional comment that they make a "fuller exposition" possible (par. 120). After reading this section several times in the light of the overall orientation of the guidelines, I judge that the Directory simply recognizes that in many areas of the world "catechisms" continue to be a basic catechetical tool.⁷

It is obvious that the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy is more concerned with living witness than the printed word. "The work of the catechist must be considered of greater importance than the selection of texts and other tools" (par. 71). The Directory goes into some detail about the training of catechists (pars. 108-115), including the need for continuing education. A suitable formation of catechists is given top priority. It "must come before reform in texts and strengthening of the organization for handling catechesis" (par. 108).

It is left to national and regional directories, commissioned by various episcopates, to apply the principles and guidelines in the General Directory to local needs and concrete situations. The directories are to propose programs of action (par. 103ff.), determine goals, indicate norms for sacramental catechesis, and clarify the distribution of tasks and responsibilities. The fact that "regional directories" are mentioned as a pos-

⁷ There is a degree of ambiguity in the word "catechism," especially on the continent. In German as in English usage, a catechism is a manual of Christian doctrine, frequently in question and answer form. In French and Italian, "the term also signifies the act of catechizing, the work of presenting Christian doctrine or an individual lesson, especially to the young." Cf. G. S. Sloyan in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 3:225.

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sibility, and the fact that catechists are called upon to adapt and adjust to particular individuals and ecclesial communities, suggest even the national directories must allow proportionate latitude and freedom.

II.

From the ecclesial point of view, the GCD sees catechesis as one form of the ministry of the word. From the point of view of the human sciences it is described in the language of socialization. In effect the Directory uses two master models to explain the goals and processes of religious education. They must be read as complementary, each illuminating a different dimension.

The Directory quotes *Christus Dominus* (14) which says that the catechetical ministry "is intended to make men's faith become living, conscious and active, through the light of instruction." It distinguishes catechesis from 1) "evangelization or missionary preaching" which has as its purpose announcing the word of God and the beginnings of faith; 2) liturgical preaching which is primarily within the setting of the eucharist; and 3) theology, that is, "the systematic treatment and the scientific investigation of the truths of faith." Though the Directory makes these distinctions (par. 17), it recognizes that in the concrete reality of the pastoral ministry they cannot be separated. What is said of the ministry of the word in general applies also to catechesis.

The ministry of the word not only recalls the revelation of God's wonders which was made in time and brought to perfection in Christ, but at the same time, in the light of this revelation, interprets human life in our age, the signs of the times, and the things of this world, for the plan of God works in these for the salvation of men (par. 11). Because of Christ's central role "catechesis must necessarily be Christocentric" (par. 40). It is through him that men are led to the Father in the Holy Spirit. "For this reason the structure of the whole content of catechesis must be theocentric and trinitarian" (par. 41; cf. 47).

Thus the ministry of the word aims "to stir up a lively faith" (par. 16), a personal and communitarian response to God's revelation. Quoting *Gaudium et Spes* (11) the Directory says, "faith throws a new light on everything, manifests God's design for total vocation, and thus directs the mind to solutions which are fully human" (par. 15). Catechesis is carried on both in and for the Church. It is "that form of ecclesial action which leads both communities and individual members of the faithful to maturity of faith" (par. 21).

Although the only explicit treatment of ecclesiology in the GCD is found in the chapter dealing with "the content of the faith," it is clear

that the principles enunciated in this section (pars. 65-68) fix the girders for the entire Directory. They summarize the chief themes of *Lumen Gentium*: the Church had its origin in the death and resurrection of Christ, it is the new People of God; a faith community; a saving institution carrying on the mission entrusted to it by Christ; and the sacrament of salvation in the world. Mary, the virgin mother of God, is "a model of the Church," "the sign of a secure hope and solace for the pilgrim People of God" (par. 68).⁸

The Directory quotes Pope Paul expressing the deep concern of the Church for "the needs of men, for their joys and hopes, their griefs and efforts" (par. 67; cf. 28). Catechesis, especially adult catechesis, should respond to the more urgent demands of our time: sociological and cultural change; contemporary religious and moral issues; relations between temporal and ecclesial actions; and the need to develop the rational foundations of the faith (par. 97).

The Church's concern for Christian unity also turns up in several places. Catholics are reminded "to be solicitous for the separated Christians... by praying for them, communicating with them about Church matters, and taking the first step towards them" (par. 66). Religious education should assist the cause of unity "by clearly explaining the Church's doctrine in its entirety and by fostering a suitable knowledge of other confessions" (par. 27).

COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL

The more one scrutinizes and studies the various sections of the Directory, the more its strengths emerge (unless one considers it a weakness to take into consideration widely different points of view). What the GCD says of catechesis can be said of the Directory itself: it "is concerned with the community, but does not neglect the individual believer" (par. 31). Though the term socialization is not used, catechesis is depicted as a gradual assimilation of the individual believer into the life of the ecclesial community. "At one and the same time it performs the functions of initiation, education, and formation" (*ibid.*). The socialization model is most striking in part five, "Catechesis according to Age Levels," but it is implicit elsewhere too, especially in the passages which speak of maturing in faith and the ecclesial community.

⁸ The paragraph on Mary, Mother and Model of the Church, is borrowed from *Il Rinnovamento della Catechesi* (Rome, 1970), the national directory prepared under the auspices of the Italian Episcopal Conference. Though there are important differences, there are enough similarities to indicate that the Italian directory greatly influenced the GCD. Cf. B. L. Marthaler, "The Renewal of Catechesis in Italy," *Religious Education*, 66 (Sept.-Oct., 1971), pp. 357-363. The Australian Episcopal Conference has added a supplement and adopted the Italian directory as its own: *The Renewal of the Education of Faith*, (Sydney, 1971).

While it is recognized that some children grow up in families affected by religious indifference (par. 81) and that adults come to the Church from a variety of backgrounds (pars. 19; 130), the ideal is described in terms of a thriving ecclesial community made up of informed adults and families of believers. Without pretending that the ideal exists anywhere, the Directory presents, by way of example, some general principles. They are, I believe, *mutatis mutandis* applicable in all but the most primitive societies.

An infant absorbs, "as through an 'osmosis' process, the manner of acting and attitudes of the members of his family" (par. 78). The development of "a Christian personality" begins in the earliest years as the child unconsciously adopts the religious orientation and moral values of his parents. It is a growth process, nourished by joyful and harmonious family relationships (*ibid.*).

When the child begins formal schooling (though the directory recognizes that there are areas where schools do not exist, par. 80), he is introduced into the society of grown-ups. The family gradually loses its exclusive role in mediating between the child and the people of God. He participates in the sacramental life of the adult community. Nor can parents and teachers—nor the Church as a whole—be satisfied with external expressions only. Their efforts must be directed "to bring a faith response from the heart and a taste for prayer" (par. 79).

Though the GCD does not attempt to establish age limits for the various stages of growth, it does say that "in sophisticated regions where the point is raised," national directories should distinguish pre-adolescence, adolescence and early adulthood (par. 83). It is a point well made. The special needs and difficulties of these groups, especially pre-adolescents and young adults, are not sufficiently recognized everywhere (cf. par. 82).

The adolescent (and young adult) is looking for his place in society. Although he is no longer content with the religious forms of his childhood, he has not yet reached the maturity of faith proper to an adult; and therefore he seeks a basic orientation by which he can unify his life anew. But this searching often leads to a religious crisis (par. 84).

The Directory confirms a view of many teachers: "Adolescents and young adults are less exposed to the danger of violently opposing the Church than they are to the temptation of leaving it" (par. 82).

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND EVANGELIZATION

Logically evangelization precedes catechesis but in reality, in the context of the Christian community and Christian families, religious education prepares for evangelization. Catechesis is often directed to

people "who, though they belong to the Church, have in fact never given a true personal adherence to the message of revelation" (par. 18). The Directory warns against fideism (par. 97), and recognizes that the faith of many Christians is straining to a critical point because they have never internalized and ratified their beliefs in personal terms. In the modern world of change and pluralism, "the prerogatives of certain social classes . . . ancestral customs and . . . regional unanimity in religious profession" are no longer sufficient to sustain one's faith (par. 6).

The Directory devotes more space to adolescents than any other group (pars. 82-91). It is the adolescent particularly who "feels himself immersed in 'values' that are opposed to one another" (par. 85), a fact which acerbates his relationship with the adult community. Despite the problems presented by the notion of apologetics, catechesis must "provide the rational foundations for faith with the greatest care" (par. 83).⁹ "Witnessing is not enough." A kind of scientific rigor is needed if the adolescent is to appreciate the Christian mysteries and profess them out of personal conviction.

Catechesis aims to educate individuals to a maturity of faith within the Christian community. This implies conversion (par. 75), the adoption of a life style that conforms to the Gospel ideal. It is a function of catechesis to dispose men "to receive the action of the Holy Spirit and to deepen their conversion" (par. 22). Though maturing in the faith is a growth process which begins in the very earliest years of life, it peaks in adulthood. Since a man's capacities and aptitudes reach their full potential as he reaches maturity, catechesis for the adult "must be considered the chief form" (par. 20; cf. 92). As he approaches adult age a man tries "to reduce to a unified whole all the experiences of his personal, social, and spiritual life" (par. 94). A satisfying synthesis cannot be had merely by conforming to the mores of society. It must be internalized.

The perfect attainment of personality does not consist in a merely exterior balance between personal life and its social context, but it looks especially toward the attainment of Christian wisdom (*ibid.*).

The Directory has something to say about the special needs of adults, old age and maladjusted youth. Though I would have liked to see a more explicit treatment of the catecheses for other groups (notably, the mentally handicapped), the Directory does not claim to be comprehensive. The general principles that it draws from pastoral theology and the human sciences are offered as guidelines which catechists, parents and pastors must apply in concrete situations.

⁹ D. Grasso, *loc. cit.*, p. 61.

THE HEART OF THE DIRECTORY

The helpful insights in methods and approaches notwithstanding, the heart of the *General Catechetical Directory* is part three

where the criteria which should govern the presentation of the truths to be taught through catechesis are set forth and where a summary of essential elements of the Christian faith is also given, so as to make fully clear the goal which catechesis must of necessity have, namely, the presentation of the Christian faith in its entirety (Foreword).

The foreword says that special pains were taken in the composition of this section. Upon reading it the first time, frankly I was disappointed. Compared with an earlier draft of the Directory circulated to Episcopal Conferences for their comments in 1969, the GCD appears disjointed. The grand architectonic design of the 1969 draft with its clear Christocentric emphasis is gone. As I reflected longer, however, I realized that the present Directory is locked in by its own principles. In their desire to allow maximum freedom in presenting the faith, the authors could not impose one particular approach. Although the Directory is insistent on the fact that the Christian mysteries form an organic whole, it deliberately refrains from endorsing "a suitable way for ordering the truths of faith according to an organic plan in a kind of synthesis. . ." It leaves this task to others—even to the catechists themselves who must adapt the message to specific groups and individuals.

"The More Outstanding Elements of the Christian Message" are stated in a readable idiom. It is the language of Scripture and Vatican II with a minimum of technical formulae. Besides the expected emphasis on the basic credal statements, there seems to have been a conscious effort at least to mention every theme highlighted in contemporary theology. In the context of the Directory's spirit and orientation, this section could not have been done differently. The tone is positive; the contents, comprehensive; and the presentation, pastoral.

III.

Unfortunately the General Catechetical Directory is being overshadowed by its own tail. It is as if an important, lengthy, and carefully framed letter came to be unread or misrepresented because of a short postscript added to it almost as an afterthought. The postscript in this case is a four page *addendum* dealing with "The First Reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist." (It is significant that there is no mention of the *addendum* in the Foreword to the Directory.)

BERARD L. MARTHALER, O.F.M. Conv.

The key to understanding this brief appendix, it seems to me, can be found in the GCD itself:

The norms that can be given with regard to catechesis are many and they vary with the ends to be attained. In comparison with the others, the norms for preparing the faithful for the sacraments have a special importance. These include, for example, norms for the catechumenate of adults, for the sacramental initiation of children, and for the preparation of families for the baptism of children.

To be effective, all such norms should be few in number, simple in character, and set external rather than internal criteria.

As is obvious, no particular norm can derogate from the Church's general laws and common practice without the approval of the Apostolic See (par. 106).

The *addendum* refers several times to "experiments," which in the context means departures from the decree of Pius X, *Quam singulari*. The norms laid down in 1910 and reaffirmed in the Code of Canon Law are the basis for "the Church's general laws and common practice" regarding the sacraments of the eucharist and penance for children. The focus of the addendum is primarily on two "experiments": 1) a practice, growing in Canada and the United States, of admitting children to first Communion without first receiving the sacrament of Penance;¹⁰ and 2) allowing some years to elapse between first Communion and first Confession.

The issues raised in the *addendum*, touching as they do canon law, sacramental and pastoral theology, and the behavioral sciences, deserves a fuller treatment than is possible here. Suffice it to say that the appendix, however much it frowns on these departures from a practice that goes back to the turn of the century, does not rule them out altogether. As Cardinal Wright comments, "Perhaps, the authors of this New Catechetical Directory have found it necessary to reaffirm the norms of Pope Pius X, while recognizing the possibility of such experimentation as is made legitimate, in Catholic faith and order, by the approval of local hierarchies in consultation with the Holy See."¹¹ Though the issues are many and involved, the decisive point is "no particular norm can derogate from the Church's general laws and practice without the approval of the Apostolic See."

¹⁰ In April, 1970, the Reverend John Quenneville of Toledo ran a survey: Of 112 dioceses responding 62 have directives which emphasize first Communion before first Confession. (Information supplied by the National Center of Religious Education—CCD.)

¹¹ In *L'Osservatore Romano*, English language edition, Oct. 7, 1971.

DON'T LOSE PERSPECTIVE

Whatever one's bias about first Communion and the Sacrament of Penance for children, it is important to keep the *addendum* in perspective. The *General Catechetical Directory* is far too important to have its usefulness vitiated by becoming a maelstrom of controversy around questions that are peripheral to the central aims and themes of catechesis. The age for and sequence of these two sacraments, in comparison to the divine mysteries, cannot have very high priority in the hierarchy of truths.

The general guidelines of the Directory, addressed as they are principally to bishops, do not attempt answers for every concrete situation. They do, however, picture catechesis in realistic and, at times, exciting terms. If catechists come to see their role and aims along the lines sketched by the GCD, they can indeed help make "the ecclesial community come alive, so that it will be able to give a witness that is authentically Christian" (par. 35).



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GENERAL CATECHETICAL DIRECTORY: A JEWISH RESPONSE

An invitation extended by the editors of The Living Light to a Rabbi asking for a critique of The General Catechetical Directory that was prepared by the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Clergy is in itself a most significant commentary on the new spirit animating this important document. Only in the era of Vatican Council II!

Having been privileged to count the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, His Eminence John J. Cardinal Wright, as cherished friend and inspiring collaborator in the cause of advancing Jewish-Christian understanding literally from the inception of the dialogue, my renewed association with him through this essay affords me much personal satisfaction, but at the same time, I confess, this challenge fills me with substantial hesitation, if not outright anxiety.

Since this is probably the first time that a Rabbinic commentary has been written on a Papal-approved catechetical guide for the Church Universal, I must submit several essential disclaimers at the outset. First, it must be stressed that I speak only for myself, not for the Jewish community. My reactions are personal, rather than

institutional. Equally important, I want to disclaim any intention of sitting in judgment on fundamental doctrines ^{or} of theological tenets of Roman Catholicism, since I believe that the inner mystery ^{and} ~~ex~~/meaning of any ^ffaith tradition cannot be comprehended from the outside. I wish to raise, therefore, only such questions in this regard as reflect, directly or indirectly, upon the faith of Judaism and the religious or civic role of the Jewish people.

As an overall impression of the Directory, speaking in broadly general terms, I would say that both the vitality and the weakness of the document spring from the same source: it is, as Fr. Berard Marthaler has pointed out, a consensus document, qualified by "repetition and a lack of emphasis...it is not always clear how the various units relate to one another. Though the foreward makes clear that 'not all parts of the Directory are of the same importance' the text itself does not readily make it evident which sections are normative and which are merely suggestions."

Yet, given the herculean task of putting together a document intended to assist "...all who under their leadership and direction have responsibility in the catechetical field" (Foreward) and given the enormous diversity of cultural, ethnic, and language backgrounds, differences of education training, age groups, and varieties of life style comprised by the Roman Catholic community throughout the world, and add to that the degree of consultation with national episcopacies and catechetical experts, it is questionable whether a tighter document would have achieved any goal whatever. Thus, to the extent that the Directory is open-ended, pastorally-oriented, aware of the

complex diversity of the Roman Catholic community, and accepting of pluralism, its values outweigh by far the weaknesses inherent in any consensus-seeking document.

That conclusion is strengthened by my speculating on what might be the outcome of an analogous enterprise were it undertaken to serve world Judaism (or "catholic Israel" as Jewish theologian Solomon Schechter was wont to characterize "the Synagogue Universal.")¹ Given the complexity of Jewish life throughout the world, and the broad spectrum of diverse religious and cultural commitments within the various branches of Judaism, I would regard it as a milestone achievement were world Jewry able to produce a consensus document of such theological and intellectual subtlety and richness, cogency, and wide applicability.

While the Directory is obviously addressed to Catholic Christians, there is much in it that will strike a responsive chord in the Jewish reader, particularly those passages relating to (a) "the urgent duty of collaborating in the solution of human questions" (p. 40) in the modern world; (b) an acceptance of a theology of pluralism and religious freedom; and (c) the need to overcome "the crisis of faith" and to combat religious illiteracy in contemporary society. There are other aspects of the document that relate directly to the Hebrew Bible, Judaism, and the role of the Jewish people that I found deeply troublesome, which require serious attention.

To make intelligible a Jewish comment on these themes in the Directory, it is necessary to expatiate briefly on the assumptions which underlie these observations, and which derive from distinctive emphases within Judaism. Jewish Heilsgeschichte perceives the Exodus from Egypt and the Covenant at Mount Sinai as the crucial mythos which undergird the faith and life of Israel as a messianic people. The Exodus brought about a spiritual transformation, but the preconditions for the liberation of the spirit involved an actual, physical liberation from the material conditions of slavery. The Exodus in itself was incomplete, Jewish tradition asserts, without its culmination at Sinai. At Sinai, God and Israel were bound to each by an Eternal Covenant. Under the terms of the Covenant, (in Hebrew, Bris), Israel has agreed, in return for God's providential care, to serve "as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" - that is, to seek to realize the Divine Will by carrying out a task of redemption in the world, to be climaxed by the coming of the Kingdom of God. The holy task to which the Jews committed themselves at the foot of Mount Sinai is to live as a model society, a concrete, existential fulfillment of the teachings of the Torah, so succinctly summarized in the words of the prophet Micah: "to do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with thy God." Thus, the essence of Judaism is the hallowing of this life, and messianic redemption^(of the future,) which is patterned on the Exodus redemption, cannot be genuine if it does not involve both physical as well as spiritual liberation.

The Torah, which comprises the Five Books of Moses, detailed the religious commandments (mitzvos) and the moral and legal precepts of Judaism. Regarded as the supreme authority for all human conduct, the Torah is conceived of by Jews as dynamic since its teachings

are developed continuously throughout the ages. These teachings are supplemented by the wisdom and insights of successive generations, the Oral Tradition, or ~~Emak~~ Torah She' be'al Peh. The capstone of this oral tradition is the Talmud, which is a vast compendium of the discourses of the Rabbis and their decisions covering the creative period of Pharasaic Judaism from roughly 30 BC to 500 AD.² It is regarded as the guide in religious practices and ethical behavior, covering with a network of morality all the circumstances and ever-changing situations of daily life and moment-to-moment conduct.

~~Emak~~ Crucial to the religious commitment of every Jew is the study and interpretation of the Torah and the Talmud, which is no less important than prayer or ritual observance. The esteem associated with study is reflected today in Jewish devotion to the life of the intellect.

Thus, Rabbinic Judaism - on which all versions of contemporary Judaism ~~is~~ founded - is a fusion of various currents: the Pentateuchal codes; the teachings of the Prophets of Israel regarding justice, ~~Emak~~ compassion, lovingkindness; the emphasis of the Psalms on individualistic piety and passion for God; and the practical, homely wisdom of Proverbs. The total result of this Rabbinic synthesis was the unique development of a system of ethical and spiritual teachings that covered all the ordinary conditions of life, seeking to render these conditions decent, just, kindly, and honorable. There would be an incredibly happier and lovelier life in the world to come or ~~then~~ in the day of the resurrection of the dead, the Rabbis³ believed, but meanwhile there was life on earth, and this life has its value and its happiness, its justified blessings and enjoyments which could be hallowed and sanctified by religion.

One of the great religious figures of the 20th century was the late Chief Rabbi of Israel, Abraham Isaac^C Kook. A mystic who yearned for complete, harmonious holiness, he refused to differentiate between the sacred and the secular. Rabbi Kook taught that "all things essential to human life were potentially sacred." He viewed scientific progress as part of the intellectual growth of mankind. If science appeared to undermine religion, this was no reason, in itself, to suspect its ultimate value. What was wrong was not the advance of science but the fact that religious thinking had not kept abreast intellectually, nor had learned how to harness its findings for human purposes.⁴

"Normal mysticism" was the phrase coined by Rabbi Kook to describe the mystical urge for unity that was meant to combine the communicable with the ineffable, and to infuse the physical life of man with religious purpose. He taught that the Jewish religion embodies the twin elements of prophecy and halacha (religious law). The prophetic tradition has given to Judaism its passion, its preoccupation with human affairs, its criticism of social evils and abuses. Halacha has furnished discipline, a pattern of conduct which involved Judaism inextricably in human civilization. As an exponent of Hasidism, the Chief Rabbi emphasized the need to seek to "bring heaven down to earth," teaching that the meaning of mystical experience is to acquire the ability to savor heaven in everyday life, because nothing mundane is alien to the holy.

One of the decisive creations of Rabbinic Judaism was that of the Jewish liturgical calendar which became the unique^{"catechetical"} instrument in the formation of Jewish^{the personality and of} religious-communal life. All of the Jewish festivals, fasts and holy days have been celebrated for more than

2,500 years as living experiences, acts of present-day commitment, rather than nostalgic reminiscences. Passover, the celebration of the exodus from Egypt, is thus conceived of by Jews as a present-day reenactment of the liberation from slavery. "For we were slaves to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt..." declares every Jew during Passover at the annual ~~for~~ family Seder service. Similarly, Shavuot (Pentecost) epitomizes an annual reaffirmation by every Jew of his acceptance of the Covenant revealed at Mount Sinai and a recognition that the Revelation is continuous.⁵

The observance of these festivals, fasts and holy days is a collective act of the community of Israel, the people of God, and not a performance of private devotion. It is for this reason that the Jewish Sabbath and holidays, as well as the personal events of birth or marriage, are never restricted to the home or to the synagogue but are celebrated partly in each. Some are ~~centered~~ centered more in the home and some more in the community, but any major event is shared with the group as the extended family of ^{God.} ~~Israel.~~

This central emphasis in Judaism on the community of Israel led Martin Buber to observe that in Jewish theology the organized Jewish community has religious significance. The injunction to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," Buber noted, involved not only the behavior of individual members of the people, but the dedication to God of the nation, "with all its substance and all its functions, with legal forms and institutions, with the organization of its internal and external relationships." The idea of nationality accordingly belongs to the divine scheme of things. There is no

virtue in nationalism as such, Buber declared; it is "holy and righteous" only if it is animated by the longing for perfection.⁶

Jewish nationality whose origins are grounded in the Biblical concept of the "chosen people" was conceived of by the Rabbis not as a reward or special privilege but as a Divine claim and challenge which required of the people of God the obligation to work and toil with utmost devotion to further the Divine ideal of human perfection.

This conception of the particular vocation of the nation of Israel is ~~in~~ inextricably linked with the Jewish theology of pluralism. As an ethical monotheistic religion, Judaism is universalistic in its vision of the ultimate future of humanity. Chief Rabbi Kook stated, "Mankind should unite as one family and then all strife and vice that are born of division of the peoples will disappear." ~~But~~ But, he added, it would be disastrous to mistake the hoped-for vision for the present reality. "Man cannot fly off to paradise simply by uttering a word of faith." Much educational work must be done before men are able to reach out to ~~a~~ the visionary universalistic future. This work, he noted, should be done through existing national communities, each striving toward the future and final messianic goal.⁷

Presupposed in these views is the classic Rabbinic discussion over Judaism's views toward conversion and salvation. There is no unanimity in Judaism regarding the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles for which the Synagogue daily prays:

"Let all the inhabitants of the world perceive and know that unto Thee everyk knee must bend and every tongue give homage. Before Thee, O Lord our God, let them bow down and worship; and unto Thy

glorious Name let them give honor."

To most Rabbis this "conversion" implied conversion to Israel's God rather than to Israel's cult. There is no Jewish counterpart to salus extra ecclesiam non est. It is a fundamental doctrine of Judaism that "the righteous men among the nations" will be saved, and therefore from this point of view of the Synagogue, it was made unnecessary to convert non-Jews to Judaism. "Whoever professes to obey the seven Noahide laws (of universal morality) and strives to keep them is classed with the devout among the Gentiles, and has a share in the world to come," the great 12th century Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, taught (Mishneh Torah IV). The salvation of the children of Noah - that is, pre-Israelite mankind - depended on the observance of the following seven commandments: to practice justice; to avoid blasphemy, idol-worship, ~~murder, theft, sexual immorality~~ ^{murder, theft, sexual immorality}, and cruelty to animals. ~~Whoever kept these laws was called a "God-fearer". It was the duty of the Jews to encourage the universal acceptance of the "Seven Laws of the Sons of Noah." Theologically speaking, Judaism does expect a redeemed mankind to be strict monotheists - in the Jewish sense.~~ 8

The ultimate conversion of the world was understood by the Rabbis as one of the "messianic events". While there have been many differing conceptions of the Messiah in Judaism, all Jewish concepts share in common the view that the Messiah brings about a change in the kind of life being lived on earth and not just in the inner life of the individual. Wars and persecution must cease, and justice and peace must reign.

In this context there developed in Rabbinic Judaism the seeds of a Jewish theology of Christianity which held that a righteous Gentile Christian would qualify as "a righteous man among the nations of the ~~xxx~~ world" and therefore has "a share in eternal blessedness." Maimonides spoke of Jesus (and of Mohammed) as being preparatio messianica in that they and their adherents have brought the words of the Torah to the distant ends of the earth. (Hilkhoth Melakhim, Chapter 11, Constantinople edition).⁹

"The Christians believe and confess, as do we," Maimonides wrote (Pe'er Ha'dor 50), "that the Bible is of Divine origin and was revealed to our teacher Moses; only in the interpretation of Scripture do they differ." In a letter to his pupil, ~~xxxx~~ ^{sage} Hadai ha-Levi, the great ~~sevent~~ added, "In regard to your question concerning the Gentile nations, you should know that God demands the heart, that matters are to be judged according to the intent of the heart. There is, therefore, no doubt that everyone from among the Gentiles who brings his soul to perfection through virtues and wisdom in the knowledge of God has a share in eternal blessedness." 10

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With this understanding of major features of Biblical and Rabbinic Judaism, it should be clearer why aspects of the Directory would be welcomed as congenial to the Jewish ethos, and why other parts raise some fundamental problems.

Those passages relating to the modern world that is in the process of emerging will strike a responsive chord in many Jewish

hearts. For example, the observations:

In times past, the cultural tradition favored the transmission of the faith to a greater extent that it does today

and

In Christianity of old, religion was regarded as the chief principle of unity among peoples

apply similarly to Jews. In times when Jews were restricted to ghettos in the Christian West, the tightly-knit ghetto communities provided an overarching religio-cultural system with a rather uniform structure of meaning which gave the Jew his identity, integrated by the bonds of religion and tradition. This ghetto society, very much like the medieval Christian society with its encompassing meaningful reality, also sustained the continuity of traditional Jewish religious belief and practice. Having been denied entry into civic society - as a result of restrictions frequently imposed by ecclesiastically-inspired legislation - Jews depended upon communal institutions which both created and reflected their life-style. Behind the ghetto walls, children were educated in heder (the religious school) and yeshiva (the talmudic academy), fathers and sons gathered ~~xxx~~ daily in the Synagogue which served as "the house of prayer, study, and assembly," ~~xxx~~ and the Sabbath and festivals were almost universally observed both in the Synagogue and the home, which became a portable sanctuary with the family table serving as the "mini-Temple altar."¹¹ (Those who have seen "Fiddler on the Hoof" will have some idea of the binding force of that tradition.)

Yet, despite the unity fostered by that self-enclosed Jewish culture, Jews fought against the humiliating restrictions of ghetto life, struggled fiercely for their emancipation, and have

welcomed the challenge to sustain their faith ~~in~~¹² in the free environment of a democratic and pluralistic society. Pluralism, as Dr. Martin Marty, the Lutheran church historian, sets forth in his brilliant study, The Righteous Empire, assured that "no religion was to have a monopoly or a privileged position and none should be a basis for second-class status for others." That tradition of pluralism has made possible the Christian ecumenical movement and the ~~which~~ Jewish-Christian dialogue, which are based on the shared convictions "that people could have ~~EXPOSURE~~ to each other across the lines of differing faiths without attempting to convert in every encounter, without being a threat, and with the hope that new understanding would result. The goal would be a richer participation in the duty of man, the republic or the human family."

Thus, pluralism if it does not automatically nurture Jewish identity, does nothing to impede it. Therefore, it was particularly heartening to find a similar acceptance of that challenge in the Directory, asserting that pluralism

is ~~now~~ no longer viewed as an evil to be eliminated, but rather as a fact which must be taken into account; anyone can make his own decisions known without becoming or being regarded as alien to society.

And I was similarly heartened by the affirmation which flows from that acceptance:

Therefore, those engaged in the ministry of the word should never forget that faith is a free response to the grace of the revealing God.

Recalling the centuries of terrible ^(anti-Semitism and) Christian hostility directed at Jews and Judaism, the threat of forced conversion or the sword, the compulsory sermons, the expulsions, the burning of the Talmud, I could only be gratified by this emphasis on faith

as a free response, on the themes of justice and charity, and by the acceptance (albeit sometimes a bit grudgingly) of the authentic pluralism of the modern world.

I reacted most sympathetically to Part Five of the Directory (Catechesis According to Age Levels), and liked its rather pragmatic approach to the special problems of childhood, adolescence and early childhood, adulthood and old age. We in the Jewish community face many of the same problems touched upon in this section. We, too, are concerned about ~~at~~ our alienated young people. For many of our youth, probably the majority, formal religious training ends after the bar mitzvah or confirmation. This means that young people going on to college or post-graduate study -- and a high proportion (estimated at about 80 percent) of our youth does so -- are exposed, on the one hand, to highly sophisticated, intellectually challenging study in a variety of secular subjects while, on the other hand, their Jewish education has ended just at the point where it might become similarly challenging and stimulating. Thus, many ~~of~~ young Jews reach adulthood nurtured on "juvenile Judaism" with little or no awareness of the spiritual richness, scholarship, and complex diversity of their own religious and cultural tradition. Therefore, it is evident that we share problems in common, especially that of overcoming religious illiteracy. Catholic and Jewish educators, together with other concerned persons, might profitably examine these problems in concert and ascertain whether more effective ways might be found to reinforce each other in our common task of reaching our young people and making connections between them and our respective communities of living faith. ¹³

friendships in regard to the Jews" (specifically the testimonies in Nostra aetate), asks Father Gregory Baum, "if the Church is unable to acknowledge the independent validity of Judaism and other religions? If the Church upholds ~~these~~ one true religion and makes an unqualified claim to absolute truth, then it is inevitable that despite assurances of dialogue and brotherhood, the Christian community will generate a world view and a language for dealing with the world, in which there is no room for ~~dealing with~~ other religions. The claim of absoluteness will inevitably translate itself into social attitudes and actions. If this were the only Christian position, then the Church would be the necessary enemy of religious pluralism and have to identify itself with the political regimes and cultural trends that try to preserve something of the traditional hegemony of the Christian West." ("The Jews, Faith and Ideology," The Tablet, June 1972, London.)

In the same vein, the role of the Jewish people and their Sacred Scripture, the Hebrew Bible, in the Divine economy is seen as only preparatory, nothing else:

In the history of revelation God used pedagogy in such a way that he announced his plan of salvation in the Old Covenant prophetically and by means of figures, and thus prepared the coming of his Son...(p. 26)

The Church, instituted by Christ, had its origin in his death and resurrection. She is the new People of God, prepared for in the course of the history of Israel...(p. 51)

With no disrespect to Catholic doctrine intended here, was the function of the prophets only to predict? Is their manifold role as critics and comforters of their own people, their fearless calls to righteousness and moral behavior to be ~~totally~~ ^{completely} subsumed under the

totalistic category of preparation? If so, Jewish history is deprived of its integrity, and the prophets ~~xxx~~ have nothing more to say.

Similarly, at a time when many Catholic scholars are affirming on the basis of their scientific studies that the Hebrew Scriptures must be understood in their own integrity, that the "Old Testament" simply cannot be reduced to a forerunner of the New, it is distressing beyond measure to find the formulation above, which seems to deprive my Bible of any inherent value of its own, and my religious community, myself included, of any valid reason for continued existence.

It may very well be that, in the desire to emphasize the Christocentric nature of the Catholic faith, these expressions are inadvertent. Certainly, I do not believe they are deliberately intended to offend the sensibilities of Jews. I believe that the Catholic faith can be expounded in ways that do not ^{negate} ~~ignore~~ the integrity of the "Old Testament," nor the continued existence of Israel according to the flesh. To this end, the network of fraternal, mutually respecting dialogues now developing between scholars in our various faith communities, and the illuminating results of their scholarship should find some resonance in the consciousness of those who bear the historic responsibility of preparing or revising similar catechetical directories which will help shape the mentalities of future generations of members of the ^{interdependent} ~~united~~ human family.

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While the Directory is obviously addressed to Catholic Christians,
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sustained the continuity of traditional/religious belief and practice.

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upon communal institutions which both created and reflected ^{their} life-style.

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sons gathered in the synagogue for study, Sabbath was ^{almost} universally observed.

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Jews fought against the humiliating restrictions of ghetto life, ^{struggled} fought

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Therefore, those engaged in the ministry of the word should never forget that faith is a free response to the grace of the revealing God.

And:

The greatest way the faithful can help the atheistic world for coming to God is by the witness of a life which agrees with the message of Christ's love and of a living and mature faith that is manifested by works of justice and charity.

~~Recalling the centuries of terrible Christian hostility directed at Jews and Judaism, the threat of conversion of sword, the forced sermons, the expulsions, the burning of the Talmud, I could only be gratified by this emphasis on faith as a free response, on the themes of justice and charity, and by the acceptance (albeit sometimes a bit grudging) of the authentic pluralism of the modern world.~~

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do not ignore the integrity of the Old Testament, nor the continued existence of Israel ~~in the flesh~~ according to the flesh. ~~In this respect~~ ~~as respect for~~ To this end, ~~it might be helpful~~ the kind of fraternal, mutually respecting dialogues now going on between scholars in our various faith communities ~~and~~ be ~~re~~ borne in mind as ~~the~~ similar catechetical directories are developed by national hierarchies.



(nurtured on "juvenile Judaism,")

young Jews reach adulthood with little or no awareness of the richness, scholarship, and complex diversity of their own tradition. ^{Thus} ~~So~~ we do share some problems in common, especially that of overcoming religious illiteracy.

Still, the Jewish home, the focal point of so many holy day observances and celebrations, provides something of an antidote to this process of alienation. (MHT --- you fill in here: Sabbath, passover, hanukkah, etc.)

I would be less than honest if I concluded this response without raising some serious questions which concern me as a ^{an American and as a} Jew. ~~Consequently~~ ~~Directly associated with the~~ First, there is what I have noted as a rather "grudging" acceptance of religious liberty, as exemplified in the passage:

Catechesis should help ^h these communities to spread the light of the Gospel and to establish a fruitful dialogue with men and cultures that are not Christian, preserving here religious freedom correctly understood.

I am troubled by that "correctly understood." Is it a modification of the Church's commitment to religious liberty for all men, a retreat to the earlier argument that "error" does not have the same rights as "truth?"

I should like to see it either spelled out or eliminated.

Insert attached see p. 9 of directory
^{Second} ~~Last~~, I searched the Directory assiduously for some ~~indication~~ acknowledgement of the permanency of the Jewish religion and people, but

found none. By that I do not mean that I expected a specific section on Judaism — obviously, the ~~five~~ chapter dealing with The More Outstanding

Elements of the Christian Message is perhaps too general for such treatment. ~~But~~ ^{Judaism and the Jewish people} But the very formulations, the use of language, is such that ~~we~~ are completely

eclipsed. Throughout the document, the expression "people of God" is used to refer to the Church, or to "the whole Christ." (p.41) I thought, as I read it, "Where does that leave me?" I ~~would~~ consider myself also a member of the "people of God," and I thought that developing Roman Catholic

theology also regarded me as such. If the Church is fully and co-extensively the People of God, where am I -- and what has happened to the affirmations of Nostra aetate?

and their sacred scripture

In similar vein, the role of the Jewish people/in the divine economy is seen as only preparatory, nothing else;

In the history of revelation God used pedagogy in such a way that he announced his plan of salvation in the Old Covenant prophetically and by means of figures, and thus prepared the coming of his Son... (p.26)

The diverse elements -- biblical, evangelical, ecclesial, human, and even cosmic -- which catechetical education must take up and expound are all to be referred to the incarnate Son of God. (p.33)

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see CTS p. 100

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