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FAX FORM

TO: RABBI HENRY D. MICHELMAN

COMPANY: SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

FROM: WILLIAM LESHER

COMPANY: LSTC

DATE: 1/22/92

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Common Good Meeting
January 17, 1992
Synagogue Council of America - New York City

LOG

Present: Dr. Joan Campbell, National Council of Churches
Rabbi Mark Tannenbaum, Synagogue Council of America
Mr. John Carr, United States Catholic Conference
Dr. William E. Lesher, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Rabbi Henry Michelman, Synagogue Council of America (part-time participant)

This planning group met from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., at the instruction of the executive directors, who at the December 1, 1991, session laid out two tasks to be accomplished: 1) to make specific recommendations regarding how a joint project of the these bodies on The Common Good could proceed; and 2) to outline the content of a proposal to the Ford Foundation for funding.

1. A plan for action was developed with the following components and rationale:

   a. A working theme: The Religious Common Ground for the Common Good

      Discussion and Rationale

      Participants felt strongly and unanimously that whatever is done by these three bodies must have a distinctively religious flavor and fervor. The religious community should not be convened solely around a document of secular origin. The Ford Foundation's Common Good Study is the occasion for us to articulate the common religious ground that is the basis for the religious communities to urgently address the issues of the common good, lifted up in the Ford Foundation study.

      What is it we all have in common? Do we, as the major faith groups in America, have a common commitment to the poor? Our involvement in addressing the common good needs to be firmly founded on the common religious ground that we share. If this is not the case, our efforts will be destroyed by the dissidents within our own groups over these issues.

      All that we do in this area needs to be of such high quality and founded on such solid religious ground that conservative detractors will say, "Don't take this one on," and liberal supporters will say, "This could really make a difference."

      The Ford Foundation has articulated a program that addresses the common good. The study does not articulate the religious and moral foundations of the common good. That's what we can do. It was observed that every lasting social welfare program in the last 25 years has been built around moral religious principles and participation. That is what we strive to add to The Common Good initiative.

   b. The Plan. Phase One - Spring 1992: Finding the Common Ground for the Common Good

      It is proposed:

      1) that a group of 10-15 people be gathered (March-April) to draft a statement of The Common Religious Ground shared by the constituents of the three religious bodies;

2) that a larger group of approximately 30 denominational religious leaders be convened before summer

   a) to be informed about this initiative;
   b) to modify, affirm, and credential The Common Ground Statement;
   c) to review and contribute to further planning strategies.

c. The Plan. Phase Two - Fall 1992: Launch Campaign - The Religious Common Ground for The Common Good

The group discussed three possible ways to launch what will be an ongoing campaign in the three religious bodies, perhaps for 3-5 years. The first option received the most attention and seems to be the preferred strategy at this point. Options two and three were discussed and are being considered. A final decision will become clear as further planning under Phase One proceeds.

1) Option 1

   a) that a major public event be held in Washington, D.C., after the presidential elections and before the Inauguration, and that approximately 200 religious leaders be selected and invited (100 from the National Council of Churches; 50 from the United States Catholic Conference; 50 from the Synagogue Council of America);

   b) that "the Religious Common Ground for the Common Good" be the theme and centerpiece of this event;

   c) that the event be high quality, well-planned, clearly religious, moral and action oriented;

   d) that it be non-traditional, non-predictable, and non-political;

   e) that it include religious leaders from a wide range of backgrounds, including strong minority and evangelical representation;

   f) that it be planned from the beginning to have maximum media exposure;

   g) that there be an advocacy component to the event, with visits to the newly elected President, key staff members, and Congressional leaders.

2) Option 2

   a) that an advocacy event be held in Washington, D.C., between the Presidential election and the Inauguration;

   b) that it focus on 6-10 high profile religious leaders in America who are not normally seen together or associated with one another;

   c) that the event center on a visit to the newly elected President and other key administration and congressional leaders;

   d) that the Religious Common Ground for the Common Good be the theme and the statement be the centerpiece;

e) that the event be widely publicized and promoted by the media.

3) Option 3: that the campaign begin and be built around a team of organizers who would develop local support in key communities throughout the country. (This option was suggested but not discussed. It is listed here as an option that could be developed further if the preferred option is not supported.)

d. The Plan. Phase II - 1993 and Beyond: Campaign: The Religious Common Ground for the Common Good

It is proposed:

1) that each religious group use existing social action channels to publicize and support the Religious Common Ground for the Common Good;

2) that a high quality video (7-10 minutes), entitled "The Religious Common Ground for the Common Good," be produced and widely distributed throughout the nation's parishes and synagogues;

3) that other printed material be developed by the three faith groups, both jointly and separately, to describe and promote the campaign;

4) that the many denominational programs that address issues of the Common Good (i.e., child welfare, health care, homelessness, etc.) be linked to the Common Good;

5) that local ministries be organized and encouraged to visit Governors and state legislators, perhaps in a coordinated nationwide effort;

6) that congregations be engaged through their denominations to see their own social outreach as part of the Common Good movement;

7) that a simple mechanism be developed among the faith groups to monitor, stimulate, respond and adjust actions and activities as the campaign takes hold.

2. Staffing the Project. Representatives of all three faith groups made it plain that participation in this effort is dependent on adding staff for this purpose.

a. Current staffs are already reduced in number and overworked.

b. Recent experience has shown that ecumenical endeavors of this kind that are not well staffed can be disastrous.

c. The clear commitment of this planning group to a creative, quality series of events and activities will require substantial new staff support.

d. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that if this project is to go forward as envisioned and if it is to be a campaign to shape and focus the religious and moral conscience of America on the Common Good, each faith group will need to add one full time staff person and office support for at least one year, beginning March 1, 1992.

e. It is anticipated that the labor intensive part of this effort will be in the first year, especially in the first six months, before people have been informed and are convinced and committed. Gathering the leadership group in Phase I and organizing a public event in Fall 1992 will require the sustained efforts of a full time person in each of the three bodies.

f. As the campaign moves into the mainstream of the denominations, it is anticipated that the Common Good emphasis will become part of the way current staff members plan and carry out their work, and the need for a special staff person will be reduced.

3. Funding

a. Given the staffing requirements described above, the planning group recommends that a proposal to The Ford Foundation include a figure of $75,000 for each of the three faith groups in order to meet the added staff needed to launch this campaign. This additional staff support would need to begin about March 1, 1992.

b. Phase I planning will require financial support for travel, meetings, promotional materials, and a video. More careful calculations need to be done as we move toward a proposal. The planning group discussed a figure in the $125,000 range for these expenditures. (The production of a high quality video and a large volume of cassettes could increase this cost substantially.)

c. It was noted that all religious organizations are severely strapped for funds. The financial crisis will make participation at a large gathering in Washington impossible for a number of people who must be present if the event is to be inclusive. Therefore, approximately $150,000 needs to be provided for travel to insure that this event will take place.

4. Next Steps

a. The three Executive Directors need to meet in person or in conference call as soon as possible to affirm, modify, or reject the directions recommended by this planning committee report.

b. A concept paper needs to be prepared from this log. (Joan Campbell will provide for this.)

c. The planning group proposes:

1) that a meeting be scheduled with Franklin Thomas, President of The Ford Foundation and members of the Foundation staff, to include the three Executive Directors and one additional representative from each of the three faith groups;

2) that the concept paper be the focus for the discussions; that the crucial and urgent need to undergird any policy proposals for the Common Good with religious and moral foundations be clearly articulated;

3) that the substantial contribution that the churches and synagogues of American can make to this effort be described;

4) that these organizations demonstrate their joint commitment to a plan that lifts up the religious common ground that requires us to seek and support the common good;

5) that The Ford Foundation be asked to receive a proposal for the initiation of a campaign in the range of $400,000 to $500,000.

6) Drafting of the Common Ground Statement should begin right away. John Carr will prepare a list of items that might be included and will circulate his draft among the planning group.

5. Other Items of Discussion

a. The Contribution of Churches and Synagogues. Throughout the planning discussion, references were made to the gifts the religious communities have to give to the development of the Common Good in American Society.

1) In a real way, the religious communities are the keepers of social values and the national social vision. These communities also have experience in encountering the crisis in American society today. It is the churches and synagogues of America that are, in large measure, providing the kitchens and the places where the poor and the homeless are being fed and given shelter. It is these religious communities that are providing volunteers and the facilities and that have earned a right to say, "the need is greater than our resources." It is time to mobilize the whole nation to address the Common Good.

2) There was also a refrain in our discussion that continued to fix the problem of the Common Good at the moral and spiritual level. The Ford Foundation study addresses well what needs to be done. The challenge now is to change the public will and to build a strong constituency, beginning with the religious communities of America, to support Common Good initiatives and legislation by public officials.

3) The churches and synagogues of America form the largest single network of people in the country who can shape and form public opinion. All the organizational structures are in place and in use. The hope and promise of this effort is that we can articulate with authentic, prophetic power the common ground in our faith traditions that compel us to action for the common good and send that message out loudly and clearly over all the existing networks.

4) What is so lacking in the public arena today is a strong moral vision of an America that cares about the common good. The Reagan/Bush years have done much to erode this historical national value. The involvement of these religious communities in the common good effort is to provide an alternate vision or, better, to restore a lost vision based on the religious ground we hold in common.

5) The churches and synagogues have an opportunity to demonstrate how concensus is shaped in a democratic society. In seeking and articulating common ground, it must be clearly acknowledged that the religious communities do not hold all ground in common. There are things we do not agree on. But what is common is far more extensive, and this is what we communicate and what we build on.

b. Obstacles to This Plan

1) Bishops and other religious leaders don't want to get in over their heads. They want to look good. They want to be presented as people with pastoral and moral concern.

2) Workers are overworked. They must be persuaded that this effort will make a difference, to help them accomplish their own agendas.

3) If funding is not forthcoming, this project cannot go forward.

4) Despair over the failures of ecumenical efforts in the current religious climate needs to be overcome.

5) Getting the wrong participants can be detrimental. The official people are not always the effective people. The key participants in this project must be by invitation.

6) Inclusivity must be a factor in selection at every point, or some constituencies will subvert the activity.

7) A consensus needs to be found among people in each of our groups who see the challenge of the common good as the "restoration of values" and those who see it as "policy formation". We need to affirm both. Traditional values need to be reasserted, and new policies need to be formulated for new situations and circumstances. The trouble comes when people take a rigid stand on one of these approaches, and oppose the other.

8) What is to be done with neo-orthodox voices in our constituencies? Hopefully, the quality and breadth of participation and focus on common religious ground can be so good that they will be convinced to join in or will remain silent.

c. Role of the Media

It was agreed that media will be a key to this activity. Bill Moyers and Jane Pauley were mentioned as people accessible to us who should be asked to plan with us from the start. William Lesher was asked to consult with Martin E. Marty as well.

d. Participants

The role of the Evangelical community was referred to regularly. Billy Graham was identified as a spokesperson for that segment of the religious community who should be drawn in early. His participation in shaping and articulating the religious common ground for the common good, with our three religious bodies, would be news.

WEL
1/22/92

AN ANALYSIS OF "THE CATECHISM FOR THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH"

BY

RABBI A. JAMES RUDIN
NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER, 1990

The Catechism for the Universal Church is, of course, intended for use by Roman Catholics throughout the world, but even in its current provisional form, the document is of significant importance for the Jewish community.

The Catechism raises many critical themes and issues that are central to Catholic-Jewish relations, and this analysis will focus on those specific interreligious concerns. It is also understood that the document is subject to possible rewriting and change, and it is hoped that this analysis will be useful to the Catechism's authors in any revision effort.

On March 16, 1990 during a private audience at the Vatican with an American Jewish Committee Leadership Delegation, Pope John Paul II declared:

> We must also be united in combatting all forms of racial, ethnic or religious discrimination and hatred, including anti-Semitism...In the new and positive atmosphere that has developed since the (Second Vatican) Council, among Catholics it is the task of every local Church to promote cooperation between Christians and Jews. As the Successor of Saint Peter, I have a special concern for all the Churches, and am therefore committed to furthering such a policy throughout the world.

These two central concerns of the Pope: a continuing opposition to anti-Semitism and a commitment to promoting constructive Christian-Jewish cooperation at "every local Church" have been kept in mind

during the preparation of this analysis. Unfortunately, the Catechism, as presently written, falls short of these twin goals.

At first glance, the document is overwhelming in size. It numbers 434 pages, 4126 paragraphs, and contains 1831 Biblical quotations with an additional 1704 Biblical references. Yet, despite its immense size, a close study reveals several key areas of interest and concern for Catholic-Jewish relations including the Catechism's basic attitudes and teachings about Jews and Judaism, the extensive use of typology throughout the document, the description of the Pharisees, the life and death of Jesus, the description of Pontius Pilate, the Messianic ideal in ancient Israel, the interpretation of the Exodus experience, and the view that the New Testament is a total fulfillment of the Old Testament, i.e. the Hebrew Scriptures. In such a large and complex work, it is difficult to analyze every relevant theme or issue, but the following analysis covers some of the core issues raised by the Catechism vis a vis Catholic-Jewish relations.

I. Typology is extensively used in the Catechism, and this term needs to be carefully defined if one is to understand the message and the methodology of the document. Paragraphs 0291 and 0293:

> . . .the Church has shed light on the unity of the divine plan in the two Testaments by use of typology. The works of God in the Old Testament can in this way be seen as *prefigurations* (emphasis added) of what God has accomplished in the fullness of time...Typology signifies, finally, the orientation towards the accomplishment of the divine plan...That is why the calling of the patriarchs and the Exodus from Egypt, for example, do not lose their proper value in God's plan, because they are at the same time *intermediate* (emphasis added) stages toward it.

By using typology the Catechism's authors see the entire Hebrew Scriptures as a clear "prefiguration", an "intermediate" step, a prelude to the coming of Jesus. Paragraph 1364:

> The coming of the Son of God on earth is so considerable an event that God wished to make ready for it during long centuries before; through rites and sacrifices, figures and symbols, he has made *everything* (emphasis added) converge upon Christ; he foretells him, announces him by the

mouths of a succession of prophets; he stirs up in the hearts of the human race a burning expectation of that coming.

The extensive use of typology in the Catechism is highly problematic both in itself, and for building positive Catholic-Jewish relations. The typology of the Catechism runs counter to much of contemporary Biblical scholarship. In addition, the 1985 *Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church* (published by the Vatican) specifically noted that typology, although a part of Catholic tradition, is "a problem unresolved."

The *Notes* were careful to warn that one should be exceedingly careful in viewing the New Testament as a fulfillment of the Old Testament. The *Notes* further asserted that although Christians "read the Old Testament in the light of the event of the dead and risen Christ", such an interpretation is a "Christian reading of the Old Testament which does not necessarily coincide with the Jewish reading."

One example of how the Catechism's use of typology does not "coincide with the Jewish reading" occurs in paragraph 3110 that describes the Hebrew Exodus from ancient Egypt as a "deliverance from the slavery of sin." Jews have always seen the Exodus as a transcendental event in their history, a moment of liberation from physical, psychological, and spiritual slavery. The Exodus has not been viewed as a liberation from the "slavery of sin." That is a Christian typological overlay that runs counter to authentic and traditional Jewish self understanding.

One looks in vain for any recognition by the Catechism's authors of the "Jewish reading" of Scriptures. And while the Catechism does acknowledge that the Hebrew Scriptures have their own unique value (paragraph 0292), a dominant supersessionist theme permeates the Catechism. In such a view, the Old Testament is only a typological prefiguration, a preparation for the ultimate revelation contained in the New Testament.

By relying so heavily on such a narrow typology, the Catechism leaves little or not room for the views

that are articulated in the *Notes*, the 1975 Vatican *Guidelines* on Catholic-Jewish Relations, and the 1965 *Nostra Aetate* Declaration that emerged from the Second Vatican Council.

This is most unfortunate, and is a glaring deficiency of the Catechism. Hopefully, a revised Catechism will reflect an enlarged and enriched view that will acknowledge the integrity of the Hebrew Bible, and the Jewish people's self understanding of their Scriptures.

Another deficiency is the failure to mention anti-Semitism as a continuing problem in the world. As noted earlier, Pope John Paul II has been particularly emphatic in repeatedly calling anti-Semitism an evil that is "incompatible with Christ's teaching". The commitment to oppose all forms of anti-Semitism should be incorporated into any future revision of the Catechism.

II. The Catechism's views on the Pharisees are especially troubling. The document echoes the 1985 *Notes* by asserting that Jesus' relations with the Pharisees were "not entirely or always polemic" (Paragraph 1415), but only 5 paragraphs later (1420), the Catechism reverts back to an earlier and negative Christian view of the Pharisees:

> Their (the Pharisees) emphasis on it (the Law) led the Jews at the time of Christ to a level of extreme religious zeal (cf. Romans 10.2). In such a situation, the only alternative to *hypocritical casuistry* (emphasis added), rejected by Jesus (cf. Matthew 15:3-7) was an opening to an unheard of intervention from God: the perfect carrying-out of the Law in the place of all sinners by the only Just One (cf Isaiah 53.11).

Sadly, the Catechism's authors fail to describe the rich spiritual tradition of the Pharisees, nor do the authors describe the vibrant and varied religious life that permeated ancient Israel during the lifetime of Jesus. The U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy has recently asserted that "Jesus was perhaps closer to the Pharisees in his religious vision than to any other group in his time." That appropriate and helpful

view of the Pharisees is absent from the Catechism. Instead, we are left with the old canard that the Pharisees were filled with "hypocritical casuistry." Once again, the Catechism's authors missed an important opportunity to strengthen the text with positive references to the Pharisees. A call for a new view of the Pharisees would have been a significant contribution by the Catechism's authors.

For many centuries the Pharisees have been portrayed by Christian teachers in a harshly negative light, and sometimes that hostility spilled over to various Jewish communities. Indeed, the verbal attacks that were made upon the Pharisees were often used throughout history, either consciously or subconsciously, as a justification for physical assaults upon Jews.

III. While the Catechism's authors place enormous emphasis upon Jesus as Messiah, their description of the Jewish idea of the Messiah in the first Christian century is all too brief and incomplete. In paragraph 1441 we read that the "Christian faith in a suffering Messiah, still more in a crucified God, seemed a scandal for the Jews, who put their hope in a glorious Messiah."

This is an inadequate description of the totality and the richness of the messianic idea in ancient Israel. Once again, the Catechism's authors have failed to provide, even in such a lengthy document, a balanced and accurate understanding of an important Jewish religious belief that is germane to the Catechism's teaching.

It is an interesting commentary on the Catechism that the only mention of the 1985 *Notes* in the entire document (paragraph 1422) describes the future "point of convergence" for Christians and Jews as the "coming or the return of the Messiah, even if it is from two different points of view."

Indeed, the *Notes* are given short shrift in the Catechism, and this is a serious deficiency. The *Notes*, as well as the *Guidelines* are particularly useful in providing the mandate for teaching the proper Catholic

understanding of Jews and Judaism. Both documents urge Catholics to understand Jews in their own (Jewish) terms and the Vatican documents encourage the Catholic community to accept Jewish self definitions of important religious beliefs and traditions. The failure to adequately use these teachings in the Catechism is a major flaw.

IV. The description of Pontius Pilate in the Catechism is most disappointing. In paragraph 1451, there is a welcome affirmation of the Second Vatican Council's *Nostra Aetate* Declaration:

> Neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his [Jesus] passion. . .the Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or accursed...

And in the same paragraph of the Catechism: While "...one cannot attribute responsibility for it [the death of Jesus] to the Jews in Jerusalem as a whole, in spite of the cries of a manipulated crowd (cf Mark 15.11)". But despite these useful statements, the Catechism has almost nothing to say about the important role of Pilate. The historical record clearly indicates that he was a bloody tyrannical Governor of a brutal occupation force. Indeed, Pilate's superiors recalled him to Rome from Jerusalem because of his excesses.

Yet, the Catechism presents the traditional and historically unsound view that Pilate was a weak and willing pawn in the hands of the Jews. The Catechism gives the distinct impression that the Roman ruler of Jerusalem had almost no interest in the trial, crucifixion, and death of Jesus. One wishes that the Catechism's authors had linked their positive affirmation of *Nostra Aetate* and its repudiation of the infamous deicide charge with an equally clear and accurate picture of Pilate.

V. Sadly, *Nostra Aetate* and its important teachings are given scant attention in the Catechism, and this represents a major flaw in the document. *Nostra Aetate*, the Vatican *Guidelines*, the Vatican *Notes*, and the many constructive statements that have been issued by various national Bishops' conferences since

06 DIC. 1990

Short address to the Holy Father by His Excellency Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy on the occasion of the Audience granted to the participants of the Jewish-Catholic meeting in connection with the XXVth anniversary of **Nostra Aetate.** (6th December 1990)

Most Holy Father,

It is with great joy and profound satisfaction that I have the honour of presenting to Your Holiness the eminent personalities from World Judaism who have come to Rome on the occasion of the XXVth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration **Nostra Aetate,** which was promulgated by your venerated predecessor Pope Paul VI on October 28th, 1965.

With these distinguished Jewish representatives, Your Holiness sees before you Cardinals, Bishops and scholars from the Catholic Church who for many years and with particular competence have been deeply committed to promoting dialogue and cooperation with Jews throughout the world.

Our coming together here in Rome in these days is itself an eloquent witness to the very significant progress that has been made in such dialogue and cooperation over the past twenty-five years. **Nostra Aetate** was indeed a milestone in this respect, opening the way to a new spirit in our relations, one which you yourself, Holy Father, have described as being characterized by "mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect". There is now, as you stated on that same occasion, "love between us" (Address to Jewish leaders on February 15th, 1985).

Holy Father, on behalf of all here present, I wish to express the most sincere and heartfelt gratitude for your constant and untiring teaching and pastoral guidance aimed at fostering an ever more brotherly relationship between the Church and the Jewish people.

May God be praised for the way in which Your Holiness leads the Church on the way of reconciliation with the Synagogue!

I should like on this occasion to thank you particularly for the generous gift which the Holy See has recently placed at the disposal of those responsible for the construction of a centre of prayer and dialogue not far from Auschwitz, and of a Carmel Convent which will be established there. It is hoped that this centre will not only recall, with veneration and emotion the memory of the victims of the Shoah, as well as others who suffered with them from among the polish people and from other nations, but will be an inspiration for all who seek to promote reconciliation and peace for all the nations of the world.

The Commission of the Polish Bishops' Conference, responsible for relations with the Jews, is happy on this occasion to present to Your Holiness the first copy of a volume entitled: **Jews and Judaism in the Church's documents and in the teaching of John Paul II**, which has been prepared with the cooperation of our Commission and printed in Cracow for the 25th anniversary of **Nostra Aetate**.

Holy Father, may I now introduce the Chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, Mr. Seymour Reich.

XXVth ANNIVERSARY OF "NOSTRA AETATE"

Rome, December 5-6, 1990

PROGRAMME

Wednesday, December 5, 1990

10:00 am - Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, via dell'Erba, 1

PRIVATE SESSION "The Meaning and Impact of Nostra aetate, N° 4 on Catholic-Jewish Relations"

Speakers: Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy
Mr. Seymour D; Reich
Johannes Cardinal Willebrands
Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner
Bishop Pietro Rossano
Dr. Sergio Minerbi

DISCUSSION

1:30 pm LUNCH at Santa Marta, Vatican City

6:00 pm - Pontifical Lateran University, Aula Paolo VI
Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano, 4

CONFERENCE "Perspectives and Orientations for the Future of the Catholic-Jewish Relations"

Speakers: Franz Cardinal König, Vienna
Rabbi Jack Bemporad, New York

Welcome and Greetings: Archbishop Edward Cassidy
Prof. Elio Toaff
Mrs. Tullia Zevi

Closing Remarks: Mr. Seymour D. Reich
Bishop Pietro Rossano

Thursday, December 6, 1990:

after 11:~~00~~ 15 am. Pope John Paul II will meet the Delegates.

11/45

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5. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION, a list (1986-1990)

6. PRESENT STAGE OF PREPARATION OF THE UNIVERSAL CATECHISM (Card. J. Ratzinger, October 25th, 1990)

7. PROGRESS IN CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE (P.F. Fumagalli, October 28th, 1990)

8. MESSAGE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK BISHOPS' CONFERENCE TO THE 13th SESSION OF THE I.L.C. MEETING IN PRAGUE

* * *

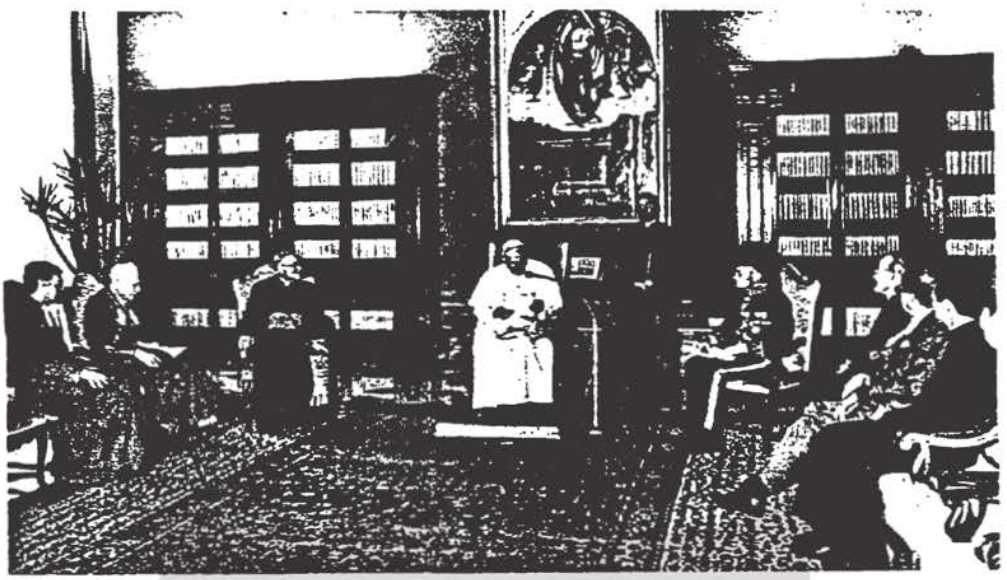
Recent speechs of the Holy Father on Christian-Jewish relations

1. In general: November 16th, 1990, to leaders of UK Council of Christians and Jews

2. On Shoah and repentance: November 8th, 1990, to the new Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See

3. On Holy Land: November 18th, 1990, at the Angelus message

GIOVANNI PAOLO II AL «BRITISH COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIANS AND JEWS»



Come ogni forma di razzismo l'antisemitismo è un peccato contro Dio e contro l'umanità

Possa Dio concedere che non tardino a giungere progressi verso la pace in Terra Santa

Giovanni Paolo II ha ricevuto in udienza, nella mattinata di venerdì 16, i responsabili del « British Council for Christians and Jews ». Durante l'incontro il Santo Padre ha pronunciato le seguenti parole:

Your Excellency,
Distinguished Visitors,

I am pleased to welcome to the Vatican the members of the British Council for Christians and Jews, *and I greet you with a joyful word that has profound significance for us all: Shalom!*

Peace is, before all else, a gift of God: *the fullness of redemption for humanity and for the whole of creation. That peace, which is so seriously threatened today, is at the same time something which is integral to the rational and moral nature of men and women, created as they are in the image and likeness of God. In the human order, peace requires and implies justice and mercy, and culminates in the love of God and of neighbour which is the high point of the teaching of the Torah and of the Prophets.*

On this matter Jesus Christ himself affirms: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them" (Mt 5:17). *Truly great is the spiritual patrimony shared by Christians and the Jewish people (cf.* Nostra Aetate, *4)! For this reason, in the period after the Second Vatican Council, cooperation between Christians and Jews has become ever more intense, and I am very pleased that important contacts continue, such as the recent meetings which took place in Prague.*

At the thirteenth meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee the themes of anti-semitism and of the Shoah were addressed, as well as the wider question of human rights. It was rightly acknowledged that anti-semitism as well as all forms of racism are "a sin against God and humanity", and as such must be rejected and condemned. In a renewed spirit of collaboration, Catholic and Jewish delegates set out new orientations for joint efforts aimed at defending human rights, safeguarding freedom and dignity where they are lacking or imperilled, and promoting responsible stewardship of the environment. *I offer my heartfelt encouragement to the British Council of Christians and Jews to continue actively to foster friendly dialogue, brotherly understanding, and the exchange of spiritual values at the national level, as well as at the level of the International Council of Christians and Jews of which you form part.*

Finally, I take this occasion to express once again the sorrow — but also the hope — that I share with the peoples of the Holy Land, the land of our fathers in faith. With you and with all who are heirs to the faith of Abraham — and I am thinking also of our Islamic brothers and sisters — I raise up the prayer of the Psalmist:

"For the peace of Jerusalem pray. / Peace be to your homes, / May peace reign in your walls, / In your palaces, peace' " (Ps 121:6-7).

May God grant that progress towards peace in the Holy Land will not be long in coming!

New Ambassador to the Holy See

The Federal Republic of Germany

On 8 November the Holy Father received H.E. Mr Hans-Joachim Hallier, the new Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See. This is a translation of the Pope's address, given in German:

Mr Ambassador,

Thank you very much for the kind words which accompanied the presentation of the letters accrediting you as the new Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See. I welcome you to the Vatican as you begin your mission and I express my wishes for your noble task, so laden with responsibility.

I also thank His Excellency the President of the Republic as well as the Government for the very friendly greetings you have conveyed.

1. Our first meeting today, as you yourself mentioned, takes place under the influence of the political events of recent months and the completion of German unity on 3 October of this year; it was achieved not least of all through the collaboration of the Churches in your country. It is a special joy for me to be able to greet in your person the first representative of united Germany. This is an occasion for profound, but happy and hopeful thoughts which do not extend to Germany alone, but also to East and West Europe, and finally to the whole world, North and South.

It was really the Second World War which came to an end on 3 October and made many people aware of what fate and guilt mean to all peoples and individuals. We think of the millions of people, most of them totally innocent, who died in that war: soldiers, civilians, women, the elderly and children, people of different nationalities and religions.

In this context we should also mention the tragedy of the Jews. For Christians the heavy burden of guilt for the murder of the Jewish people must be an enduring call to repentance; thereby we can overcome every form of antisemitism and establish a new relationship with our kindred nation of the old Covenant. The Church, "mindful of her common patrimony with the Jews, and motivated by the Gospel's spiritual love and by no political considerations,... deplores the hatred, persecutions and displays of antisemitism directed against the Jews at any time and from any source" (Vatican II, Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, n. 4). Guilt should not oppress and lead to self-agonizing thoughts, but must always be the point of departure for conversion.

Throughout the last 40 years the German people and their government have shown that a new Germany has come into being, one which, as you have pointed out already in your speech, is motivated by the endeavour to foster a responsible coexistence in peace and wellbeing throughout all of Europe. You have done this also out of responsibility towards the 17 million citizens of the Eastern part of your country, who until recently could not participate in the economic progress and development of freedom in the postwar era. In view of the confidence which the Federal Republic of Germany has earned throughout the world since the war, in the future your country will be aware of its great responsibility towards its immediate neighbours, towards Europe and the whole family of nations. With great satisfaction I can affirm that your Government has clearly expressed that it will make every effort to reconstruct the eastern part of your country as well as Central and Eastern Europe while continuing to be aware of its responsibility towards the Third World.

2. The breakthrough in Europe also raises questions about the spiritual forces which influence our history. Totalitarian ideologies from now on are permanently discredited. Reconstruction is not easy. The material need is great, and the spiritual hunger even greater. This especially presents new tasks to the Church, and the ever-new evangelization efforts will have to reckon with this state of affairs. The national motivation stemming from 3 October should also spring from the recognition that God is the unchanging foundation of the life of individuals and peoples alike. The socialized market economy system which your country, most of all in consideration of the weaker social stratas, has continually built up and improved over the years, has proved successful, as has your democratic form of government which has weathered many storms. The ordered and well-channeled participation of all the citizens has won the ideological struggle which shook the 20th Century. The battle was won in a peaceful and orderly way, which only serves to increase the value of the democratic system.

The free exercise of rights for everyone has been the goal of the unions and the Church's social movement since the end of the last century. I can affirm this with satisfaction also in light of the coming centenary celebrations of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII. The reconstruction of a part of your own country as well as Central and Eastern Europe is now going to require much energy. That, however, should not prevent you from continuing to be attentive to the social structure and from deciding to stand up for the preservation of basic values in society, values which are basic to the West. The protection of life, both born and unborn, is a great good, which must not be sacrificed to superficial considerations. This is not a question of fulfil-

challenges it because of her own mission and the Gospel's humanizing influence, as well as its ethical demands.

Convinced of the continuing fruitful and responsible collaboration between Church and State resulting in the continuation of the friendly diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Holy See, I ask God's blessing and help for you and your embassy collaborators in your important task, and for your distinguished family as well.

//

The Pope and Amb. Hallier

[+ Ipothek des Morders]

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JOHN PAUL'S ANGELUS MESSAGE 18 NOV.

End the injustices in the Middle East!

Before the private audience he granted to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, the Holy Father focused on the Middle East in his Angelus message for Sunday, 18 November:

Dearest brothers and sisters,

Today I want to invite you to raise your voices in prayer with me to the Lord that He may grant the gift of peace to all peoples in the Middle East.

Some of them have been bearing a heavy burden of suffering and injustice for years, and no one can remain indifferent to that. In that region many young generations have not yet experienced the basic blessing of peace: up until now they have known only violence with its painful consequences of grief, uncertainty and fear.

My thoughts go, first of all, to the *Holy Land*, so dear to every Christian's heart. Let us together ask the Lord to inspire in leaders a real will for peace so that, with the help of the international community, the Palestinian people and the Israeli people may obtain the justice and security they aspire to.

Our solidarity is directed, next, towards the populations in *Lebanon*, who once again in recent days were put to the test by war and who ask to be able to live in a country which is at long last peaceful, free and sovereign. May God hear these intentions and enlighten leaders of nations so that they may foster an international order in which all peoples are given respect and in which each of them can make its contribution to the progress of the one human family!

The situation in the *Persian Gulf* also continues to be a cause for serious concern and anguish. May the merciful God give light and strength to those who are called to respect the ethical principles which must serve as the basis for relations among States, and may He grant all humanity the grace of not experiencing the horrors of another conflict!

May the Lord inspire in everyone the conviction that we need to sincerely seek an honest and open dialogue! Peace is a blessing for everyone, and every human being of good will must feel a commitment to preserve it wherever it is threatened.

Finally, I wish to make an appeal to the human sensitivity of those who have the power to end as soon as possible the sufferings of those who have been struck by the crisis and by the measures which followed upon it. This appeal is made on behalf of the civilian populations, especially the children and the sick, as well as the people involved against their will in these sad events and who are being held there unjustly.

Let us entrust our intentions confidently to the Most Holy Virgin, Mother of Mercy and Queen of Peace.

CARDINAL RATZINGER'S REPORT TO SYNOD

Status of universal catechism

On 25 Oct, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, gave a report in French on the status of the universal catechism. The project came out of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod.

Five years ago the Extraordinary Session of the Synod of Bishops, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the end of the Council, expressed almost unanimously the desire that a "*Catechismus sive compendium totius doctrinae catholicae, tam de fide quam de moribus*" (Catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrine both as regards faith and morals) be prepared. Today, we shall summarize before the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops what has been achieved over the last five years in order to fulfill that desire.

1. Origin of text

1.1. Proposal of the Synod of Bishop welcomed by the Holy Father

The Synod Fathers of the 1985 Extraordinary Session of the Synod formulated their proposal in the following manner: "There is almost a unanimous desire that a catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrine be drawn up, both as regards faith and morals, in order to act as a point of reference for catechisms or compendiums prepared in different countries. The presentation of the doctrine must be biblical and liturgical, offering sound doctrine, and at the same time, one that is adapted to the actual life of Christians" (Final Report).

The Holy Father made this request his own and on 10 July 1986 formed a Commission made up of Bishops from different continents and those in charge of departments of the Roman Curia having competence in this area, under the chairmanship of the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Holy Father charged this Commission with preparing a "Catechism for the Universal Church".

1.2. Bodies that have collaborated with the Commission

In carrying out its task the Commission has been assisted by the following bodies:

a) *An editorial committee* made up of Bishops (all residential) and an editing secretary.

b) *A Secretariat*, coming from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, for the purpose of offering technical services for the co-ordination of work.

c) *An advisory group* (about 40) selected from different linguistic and cultural areas, on the basis of their pastoral, catechetical and theological skills.

1.3. Characteristics of this catechism and to whom it is addressed

On the basis of the Synod of Bishops' directions, the Commission initially laid down the drafting criteria which can be summarized under three points:

a) This catechism should present an organic and synthetic treatment and, at the same time, be as complete and concise as possible with regard to the essential elements and foundations of Catholic doctrine on faith and morals. All the aforesaid is in the light of Vatican Council II and in relation to the Tradition of the Church, drawing in abundance on the sources of Sacred Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, and the Magisterium of the Church.

b) *The addressees* are those who have the task of compiling and approving diocesan and national catechisms; therefore in first place come the Bishops, doctors of faith, and through them the catechism writers, the catechists and the People of God.

c) After an examination of the various possible procedures, the Commission decided to give the Catechism a *three-fold structure* (Credo, Sacraments, Commandments), being of the opinion that this division had already proved its worth in the catechetical tradition.

1.4. Stages and methods followed in the compilation

On the basis of these directives, the editing Committee worked out, by the first semester of 1987, a first and then a second *schema of the catechism*. The Commission examined it in its second session (May 1987) and indicated to the Editorial Committee the line to follow.

In December 1987, the drafters completed a first draft of a complete text, which was then submitted to the forty members of the Advisory Group for their examination. The results of this consultation were appraised in the Commission's third session (May 1988) together with the Editorial Committee. On this occasion it was decided to add a treatment on the Our Father as an epilogue to the three parts of the catechism.

Between June and December 1988, the Editorial Committee submitted the entire text for review, bearing in mind the many suggestions of the Commission.

In February 1989, this text was presented to the Commission as a *draft*. The Commission gave its approval in principle, but nevertheless asked the Committee to introduce further improvements and to see to the greater editorial unity of the whole. This *revised draft* was presented to all the Bishops of the Catholic Church during November 1989.

The *revised draft* is, therefore, the fruit of an intense process of rewriting, of consultation, and of re-workings. The many suggestions made by the Commission and the Advisory Group were of great use. The compilers made use of many adult Catechisms, treatments of the Faith and other catechetical works. They were very careful to present the Eastern Tradition of the Church adequately.

1.5. Limits of the Revised Draft

Sending this text to all the Bishops, the Commission was well-aware that there were defects in the revised draft.

— The draft is not the definitive text. Nevertheless, the Commission considered it sufficiently developed to serve as a basic text for consultation towards further elaboration of the "Catechism for the Universal Church".

— The revised draft is not as homogenous as hoped. The work of editorially unifying the text, although at an advanced stage, has not been carried through sufficiently. There are repetitions and inconsistencies. This situation has advantages as well: the text is sufficiently open to allow for modifications.

Differences in style enable preferences to be expressed for this or that style of writing.

1.6. Breadth of the consultation on the Revised Draft

The effort to implement this consultation was notable, also from the material and financial point of view. Around 5,000 copies in three official languages (Spanish, English, French) were printed thanks to the exemplary collaboration of the Vatican Publishing House and the Vatican Press. With the assistance of the Holy See Representations, they were sent to every part of the world.

2. Results of the consultation of the Episcopate

2.1. Basic Data

a) From 10-15 September 1990, the Commission gathered in Rome to look at the results of the consultation. Its task was facilitated by notable preparatory work:

— In May, the Secretariat embarked on a first study of all the replies that were gradually coming in. The replies were put into a computer with a quantitative analysis system. A search key enables all the thematic notes to be easily found. All the documentation was filed, and all the "*modi*" classified.

— In July, the Editorial Committee, assisted by a group of experts, proceeded to make a more rigorous and detailed examination of all the replies to synthesize into a series of proposals the main criticism made by readers of the revised draft. With the help of this carefully prepared documentation, the Commission was able to look at the results of the Episcopal Consultation.

The report presented here is based on all the replies received by the Commission until 15 October; there were 938 answers originating from these groups: 16 Curia Dicasteries; 747 individual Bishops and 23 Groups of Bishops outside the Episcopal Conferences, representing 295 Bishops (thus, a total of 1,092 Bishops); 28 Episcopal Conferences; 12 Institutions and 62 other correspondents.

b) From the *quantitative* point of view, the sum total of replies (individual Bishops, groups of Bishops, Episcopal Conferences) covers about one-third of the worldwide Episcopate (about 40 percent of the replies come from the two Americas, 31 percent from Europe, 15 percent from Asia, 11 percent from Africa, 3 percent from Australia and Oceania). Yet there is a great variety in responses from country to country. Some countries present a very elaborated position in the name of the entire Episcopate (this is, for example, the case in regard to England, Argentina and Switzerland). In some countries, many Bishops sent individual replies in addition to that of their Episcopal Conference (this was the case in regard to England and Italy, which also responded through Regional Conferences, as well as Canada). Other Episcopates have not yet given common replies. Sometimes it was the competent commissions of the Episcopal Conferences that replied (Philippines, France) and at times ad hoc Committees (as in the United States); some Conferences sent reports by experts (Japan, Germany). Clearly, the majority of replies came from individual bishops.

On several occasions the Secretariat proceeded to quantitatively evaluate the replies, beginning at the end of May with a first sample. The most recent, that of 15 October, is based on 939 replies. In the course of these analyses, one fact is surprising: the percentage of those who judge the revised draft as very positive, positive, satisfactory, rather negative or very negative has remained constant, despite an increase in the number of replies. We give below the data as of 15 October and, within brackets, as of the end of May: consider draft to be "very good": 18.6 percent (26.8 percent); consider it to be "good": 54.7 (51.1); consider it "satisfactory" with reservations: 18.2 (12.1); judge it in a very negative way: 5.8 (4.8); reject it as being unacceptable: 2.7 (5.2).

c) However, the quantitative aspect is not everything. The *quality* and the seriousness of those who examined the draft and commented on it allow me to assert that the consultation has reached a *representative point regarding the contents*. One could rightly consider that almost a thousand replies, of which many are very complete, and about 24,000 "modi" express in a sufficiently representative manner the entirety of the topics and proposals which serve to improve the text. It was not a matter of taking a vote on the draft, but rather of a participation by the entire Episcopate in the elaboration of the definitive text for the Catechism. This participation has already proven to be very fruitful.

In view of all the above, the results of the revised draft consultation may be termed "representative".

2.2. General Results

Before going into detail on the questions of content and composition, the two results that could be considered the principal ones of this consultation are the following:

a) *The validity of the idea itself of the "Catechismus sive compendium de doctrina catholica", launched in 1985 by the Synod of Bishops, is clearly confirmed by the consultation of the Bishops.*

b) *The revised draft has been widely accepted by the Bishops as a possible basis for the elaboration of the definitive text. Nevertheless, it is admittedly clear that much remains to be done in order to achieve the final product.*

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to thank all those who have replied and who, despite their numerous tasks, found the time to study this draft, to discuss it with their colleagues, in groups or in various Episcopal Conferences along with their collaborators and experts. In the Commission, we have and will continue to do our best to make good use of the contributions given in their replies.

3. The main problems raised by the consultation and the decisions made by the Commission to solve them

Below are summarized some of the major problems raised by the Bishops' replies. Firstly, we shall indicate them (a), then we shall give the replies (b) that the Commission feels it can give.

3.1. Aim of the Catechism

a) The problem concerning the *aim* of the Catechism has raised many comments. Some have remained disappointed since something of more immediate utility "in the field" was expected. They find the text too theological, not sufficiently "experiential", and little suited to life today. Others are disappointed because they were thinking of something shorter, more concise, in the form of a short catechism. However most appear to be in agreement with the basic schema of the current text. The problem of the *title* is highly tied-up with that of the aim. The great majority have not faced this problem. The current title is sometimes criticised as being too pretentious. A good number are in favour of a "compendium". Some ask that what the 1985 Synod asked for, a "Catechism or compendium of Catholic doctrine", should be adhered to.

b) The Commission has expressed itself in favour of the current title. Indeed historical research, but also contemporary usage show that the term "catechism" should be understood in an analogical sense: there is the "small catechism" and the "large catechism", the catechism for children and for adults, but also the catechism for use by those in charge of catechesis (this is the case of the "Catechism for parish priests" issued by the Council of Trent). As for the size of the document, it is comparable to that of other catechisms, old and modern (such as, the "Dutch Catechism" or that of the German Conference). For what it is, the Catechism is a "compendium" of truths of Faith. The term "catechism" therefore expresses the purposes, the aim of the document.

3.2. Hierarchy of truths

a) A recurring criticism, which has had wide echo in the mass media, is that the text does not properly respect the principle of the *hierarchy of truths*. It is not always easy to know what everyone means by this formula, and even less to find clear guidelines as to the manner of accomplishing it. However, the connection of all truths with the nucleus of Revelation constitutes a serious issue. This problem is often confused with that of *theological notes:* some would like degrees of certainty as regards the different doctrines to be given.

b) In the preface to the Catechism, the term is to be explained in the light of Vatican Council II and by the General Catechetical Directory. It is not a matter of establishing a criterion for the elimination of some truths, but of organic unity, the "symphony" of truth, the central reference of which is Jesus Christ. The four-part structure of the Catechism is itself already an organic articulation of the truths of faith. In the text

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● Continued from Page 9

of the catechism, the truths solemnly defined will be given in an explicit fashion.

3.3. Use of the Sacred Scripture

a) The way *Sacred Scripture* is used in the revised draft has been greatly criticised. However, the reproach of using the Scripture simply as *dicta probantia*, as "proof texts", is often done without much explanation and examples. Certainly, this is one of the greatest problems to be solved. It is necessary that criteria for the use of the Scripture in the definitive text be proposed.

b) The Commission will carefully examine all comments concerning this problem, bearing in mind the Catechism's aims (which are not a scientific study of exegesis). The methods indicated in *Dei Verbum* must guide the use of Scripture in the final version of the Catechism. The problem is to be examined by a mixed group of experts, theologians and exegetes.

3.4. Reference to Vatican Council II

It is generally recognised that Vatican Council II is presented well and in full detail in the draft. On the other hand, all are aware that the document's aim is not to be a "Compendium of Vatican II" and it is not the number of citations that guarantees fidelity to the teachings of the Council. Yet, having said this, it has to be admitted that there are some gaps. Some stress that *Ad Gentes* and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* are little utilized, and this is true. *Gaudium et Spes* could inspire the Christocentric vision of the whole of the Catechism and the treatment of morals in particular. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* should be cited to a greater extent in the second part. Also other conciliar and post-conciliar documents deserve greater attention. The Commission recognizes the validity of these comments.

3.5. The Summaries

a) The summaries have been the subject of a vast debate. Many appreciate them, others feel it would be sufficient to publish only them as a Catechism, whereas others fear that this is impossible. As for presentation, opinions vary: some find that the "precis" in the second part better correspond to what is required: a clear and complete summary of what is stated in the text. Others find them too long. Some would like formulas in the form of "question-answer"; others still hope that they will be placed at the beginning and not at the end of each article. It is necessary to eliminate the citations, say others; others ask that references be put in footnotes.

b) The Commission considers that the "precis" are to be kept. They are needed to condense the essential in the doctrine in concise formulas which preferably use words of Scripture, the Liturgy, the Fathers and the Magisterium. As far as possible they should be able to be memorized (even if this demand falls more within the ambit of local catechisms). They should be drawn up in collaboration with catechetical experts.

3.6. Non-Christian religions

a) The presentation of non-Christian religions has aroused much comment. Some criticize the fact that they are placed within the setting of "man in search of God": Don't they already benefit possibly by the light of Revelation? However, dialogue among religions has not been mentioned.

b) The presentation of non-Christian religions will be modified. The introduction will present those elements which are common to religious expression in the perspective of man "capable of seeking God". We must forego a description of the different religions, since it would be too superficial. In the chapter on the Church, the relationship between Christian faith and non-Christian religions is discussed in the perspective of Vatican II. As for the question whether or not non-Christian religions are already participating in Revelation, the Commission feels that the Magisterium has still not made any sufficiently clear pronouncement.

3.7. Exposition on Christian morals

a) This part has been a particular target of criticism, often orchestrated, in regard to the Catechism project. The press has fully played on it. It was to be expected that the mass media would be particularly interested in the moral part and, since the revised draft proposes to give the entire Catholic doctrine in this field, it is not surprising that it has aroused the same criticism that moral teachings encounter today. Nevertheless, it is also true that this is the part that receives the most criticism also in the reports of Bishops and Episcopal Conferences. After all, this is explained by the fact that no other area of Catholic doctrine is so controversial, so difficult to treat, as that of morals. All the same, there is wide acceptance of this section as a basic text, and many have praised the effort to present Catholic moral teachings in a synthetic manner, open to contemporary problems.

Some say that it is the part of the revised draft that is best suited to modern Christian life.

b) The Commission has decided to proceed with a general revision of the third part. Although integrating the essential parts of the actual text, this revision will follow the following criteria:

— give greater importance to the perspective of man's final destiny;

— develop the theme of moral growth by means of virtue and grace;

— show more explicitly how moral actions are incorporated in the life of individuals, in history and in the cosmos;

— to keep in sight the Ten Commandments, presenting them as development of the two-fold commandment of love in teaching specific moral points;

— articulate more explicitly the link between virtues and the Commandments, between the practice of the Commandments and evangelical perfection.

3.8. The fourth part on Christian prayer

The epilogue on the Our Father has aroused much enthusiasm. Nevertheless, some reject it. Others would like it shorter. Many ask that this part should also include the themes of meditation, other prayer forms, popular devotions and Marian prayer. Many want the "Our Father" to be not only an epilogue but to become the fourth section.

b) The actual epilogue will be changed into a fourth section devoted to Christian prayer. This part will have two sections: the first will deal with "prayer in Christian life"; the second, based on the current epilogue, will be a commentary on the "Our Father". We shall not undertake to lengthen the Catechism, and we will avoid useless repetition. Some parts from other sections of the text will be incorporated into the new section on Christian prayer. The "Hail Mary" will be dealt with in the section on Christian prayer in an article on prayer to Mary and to the saints.

3.9. Gaps to be filled

In the revised draft, there are some gaps to be filled, themes to be developed, aspects to be better emphasized. The Commission will bear in mind in the final draft the following points:

— the consecrated and religious life (evangelical counsels);

— references to levels of authority of documents of the Magisterium (avoiding theological notes, but making a distinction in Christian doctrine between that which is essential and that which is derived);

— the vocation of all the baptized to holiness;

— the role of the laity in the Church;

— the social doctrine of the Church;

— the missionary dimension of the Church;

— the ecumenical dimension (uniting ecumenical sensitivity and a clear exposition of Catholic doctrine).

4. Perspectives

Here, therefore, is a brief description of the road taken after the 1985 Synod. With the help of God and the generous collaboration of many people, the great project conceived five years ago by the Synod Fathers and taken up by the Holy Father has begun to take shape. Many stages have been completed and it is now, with the help of God, entering the final stage of completion. The question is: what are, as far as we can see, the next steps? After the careful study of the replies to the revised draft, implemented between May and September, it is now a mater of examining the many proposals for changes to the text (24,000). To this end, the Commission has asked the help of experts in various fields. Their task will be above all the analysis of the proposals and the formulation of a corrected text. The final writer, with the collaboration of the Editorial Committee, is to integrate these texts in a "pre-definitive" version of the catechism, which will be submitted to the judgment of the Commission; when it will have finished the last corrections, the Commission will forward the text to the Holy Father. It is he who has the authority to publish it.

It is still premature to say how much time is needed to complete these stages. The many words of encouragement expressed by so many brothers in the Episcopate, by priests and by the faithful who await this work, allow us to hope that the text could be published in 1992. So that this work may be carried out "for the glory of God and the salvation of the world", please continue to offer support through your prayers for all those who are working on it.

PROGRESS IN CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE

New spirit should extend to Eastern Europe

The International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, instituted in 1970, held its 15th meeting in Prague, Czechoslovakia, from 3-6 September; at the end of the meeting the Catholic and Jewish delegations published a joint statement.

The Catholic delegation was headed by Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy, President of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, and was composed of 25 members, including Bishop Pierre Duprey, Vice President of the Commission, Archbishops William Keeler of Baltimore, U.S.A., and Marcos McGrath of Panama, and Bishops Henryk Muszynski, Frantisek Lobkowicz and Frantisek Radkowski.

The Jewish delegation was composed of 35 members, including Mr Seymour Reich, President of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations; Prof. Israel Singer, Secretary of the World Jewish Congress, Dr Gerhart Riegner and Rabbis Mordecai Waxman, René S. Sirat, Walter Wurzburger and Leon Feldman.

The delegations were received by the President of the Union of Jewish Communities of Czechoslovakia, Dr Desider Galski, and were also visited by Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek, who encouraged them in their work. The main theme of the reports and discussions was "*The Historical and Religious Dimensions of Antisemitism*". Ten major reports were presented, all of them of noteworthy scientific value. These reports provided background information for the preparation of the final document, which condemns "antisemitism and all forms of racism as sins against God and humanity", affirming that "one cannot be authentically Christian and practise antisemitism", as the Popes had already expressed in the first half of this century (Pius X, Letter of 3 December 1905; Pius XI, 6 September 1939; see also the Holy Office's condemnation of 25 March 1928).

Preparations for the Prague meeting required many years of deeper analysis and research, and was a moment of synthesis of the progress made since the 12th meeting held in Rome in 1985.

Even the obstacles and difficulties which had to be overcome in the interim proved to be opportunities for the further maturation of the Catholic-Jewish dialogue, as was shown by the atmosphere of complete trust and frank confrontation which characterized all the meetings. A new and decisive turn has been taken, as Pope John Paul II stated on 15 February 1985: "Relations between Jews and Christians have radically improved in these years. ...Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotypes, there is now growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is, above all, love between us, that kind of love, I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old."

In its final document, "the Committee acknowledged the basic role of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, and of all the subsequent efforts of the Popes and Church authorities to give a substantial improvement to Catholic-Jewish relations."

The new attitude, the fruit of this first 25 years of patient dialogue following the Second Vatican Council, was expressed by the delegates, who "desire a further development of such a spirit in Catholic-Jewish relations, a spirit which underlines cooperation, mutual understanding and reconciliation, goodwill and common purpose, in place of the former spirit of suspicion, resentment and mistrust."

This new spirit should also be manifested in the work which the two faith communities could do together in order to respond to the needs of today's world: *the need to obtain rights, freedom and human dignity wherever these are lacking or threatened*, the need to behave responsibly towards the environment. A new image and a new attitude are needed in Catholic-Jewish relations in order to spread worldwide the pioneering work which has been done in many communities in various parts of the world."

Most of all, in the current context of serious tensions and violations of basic human rights, we can hope that the commitment expressed in the document may be realized concretely in all cases where Jews and Christians live together side by side.

Consistent with these principles, the delegates also examined some particular situations and outlined some practical ways of action and cooperation: "Besides the study of the history of antisemitism, the meeting devoted special attention to recent manifestations of antisemitism, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Emphasis was placed on the need to spread the results of *Nostra Aetate* and successive Catholic-Jewish dialogues in those nations in which new political developments have created the opportunity for joint work."

From this perspective some concrete recommendations were made which could serve to guide and help those who have the responsibility to promote this new spirit.

In fact, it was recommended that, "in order to facilitate and promote these objectives, the proper authorities of the respective communities in each region of Central and Eastern Europe should establish a special joint committee. The Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations are ready to assist in these efforts."

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