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MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 34, Folder 10, John Paul II [Pope] - meeting with Jews, 1985.

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Pope meets with Jewish leaders

VATICAN CITY — In a private audience Friday with leaders of the American Jewish Committee, Pope John Paul II celebrated the 20th anniversary of the second Vatican Council's rejection of anti-Semitism by reaffirming the council's statement "as a word of divine wisdom." "He emphasized to us that the council document, which has led to more progress in Catholic-Jewish relations in the last 20 years than in the previous two millennia, is not just another formal statement ... but a teaching which must be followed," Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, the committee's director of international relations, said. The document, produced in 1965 by Vatican II, emphasized the spiritual patrimony common to Jews and Christians, rejected anti-Semitism and repudiated historic attempts to blame all Jews for the death of Christ and to justify anti-Semitism through the Scriptures.

Pope John Paul II



POPE CONDEMNS ANTI-SEMITISM—In a recent private audience with leaders of the American Jewish Committee, Pope John Paul II strongly reaffirmed the condemnations of anti-Semitism issued in 1965 by Vatican Council II, which changed the direction of church teaching about Jews and Judaism. Added the Pope: "Anti-Semitism has been repeatedly condemned by Catholic tradition as incompatible with Christ's teaching and with the respect due to the dignity of men and women created in the image...of God." With the Pope are, left to right, David M. Gordis, American Jewish Committee executive vice-president; Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, AJC director of international affairs and *Messenger* columnist; and Howard I. Friedman, AJC national president.

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Pope Comes Close

But Not Close Enough on Israel

By MARC TANENBAUM

VATICAN CITY — (JTA) — At a private audience with American Jewish Committee leaders Feb. 15 held in the resplendent Apostolic Palace, Pope John Paul II went further than any other pope in recent memory in affirming that improved Catholic-Jewish relations is now an article of Catholic doctrine, "an expression of the (Catholic) faith, a word of the Divine Wisdom."

At the same time, he remained cautious and vague about the relationship of the Holy See to Israel.

Howard Friedman, AJC president, led an eight-member AJC delegation in an audience devoted to commemorating the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II and the defeat of Nazism and the 20th anniversary of the adoption by Vatican Council II of *Nostra Aetate*, the declaration which opened a new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations. It was the first



Pope John Paul

audience in 1985 of any Jewish group with the Polish pope devoted to examining the impact of the Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations during the past two decades.

"AS THE Nazi trauma ap-

palled us with despair over human evil," Friedman said in his prepared text, "so the 20th anniversary of the close of Vatican Council II inspires all of us with hope and promise for a more humane future . . . It is no exaggeration to state that as a result of these far-reaching pronouncements and the practical actions they have inspired, greater progress in improved Catholic-Jewish relations has taken place during the past two decades than in the past two millennia."

Friedman then said that "the American Jewish Committee shares" the pope's vision "of upholding human dignity by vigorously advocating the universality of civil and political liberties, and, in particular, religious liberty for all peoples everywhere, especially those in oppressive totalitarian societies."

The AJC president then referred to his agency's "close cooperation with Catholic Relief Services in seeking to relieve the suffering, hunger and deprivation of millions of fellow human beings in Ethiopia, and in Africa generally."

Continued on Page 8-A

Quad City Times
Davenport, IA
52801

Pope, Jewish leaders condemn anti-Semitism

(C) The New York Times

ROME — Pope John Paul II met Friday with a group of American Jewish leaders and issued a ringing condemnation of anti-Semitism, which he called "incompatible with Christ's teaching."

The pope made his statements to a delegation from the American Jewish Committee, which called on John Paul to grant formal diplomatic recognition to Israel.

But though the pope is scheduled to see the Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres next week, neither members of the delegation nor Vatican officials expect the Holy See to change its approach to Israel in the near future.

The American Jewish Committee leaders came to the Vatican seeking a reaffirmation of the declarations of the Second Vatican Council on the Jewish people, statements made two decades ago that changed the direction of Church teaching on Jews and Judaism.

At a news conference after the Papal audience, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, the American Jewish Committee's director of International Affairs, said the Vatican Council

had created "a revolution" — for the better — in Christian-Jewish relations.

"Literally, for the last 1900 years, Jews had existed as objects for conversion. Somehow Judaism was inadequate," Tanenbaum said. "Vatican II has made possible the emergence of a whole new theology in which Jews and Judaism are respected in their own terms."

The Vatican document had helped end the stereotyping of Jews as "the wandering Jews, Shylocks," he said, and added: "It was a kind of rehumanization of the Jews."

The Vatican Council document in question, "Nostra Aetate," was adopted on Dec. 28, 1965 and dealt with Catholic relations with non-Christian religions.

Tanenbaum, who was an observer at the Second Vatican Council, said the delegation was hoping that the extraordinary Bishops' Synod the pope has called for this November would reaffirm or even strengthen the original declaration. The Synod was called to examine the results of Vatican II

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Reaffirms Vatican II Act

Pope Decries Anti-Semitism

Los Angeles Times Service

VATICAN CITY — In a private audience Friday with leaders of the American Jewish Committee, Pope John Paul II celebrated the 20th anniversary of the second Vatican Council's rejection of anti-Semitism by reaffirming the council's statement "as a word of divine wisdom."

"He emphasized to us that the council document ... is not just another formal statement ... but a teaching which must be followed," said Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, the committee's director of international relations.

The document, produced in 1965 by Vatican II, emphasized the spiritual patrimony common to Jews and Christians, rejected

anti-Semitism and repudiated historic attempts to blame all Jews for the death of Christ and to justify anti-Semitism through the Scriptures. It called for "mutual understanding and respect ... and ... brotherly dialogues."

The pontiff, spoke in English to a group that included American Jewish Committee President Howard I. Friedman of Los Angeles, board Chairman Theodore Ellenoff of New York, and Executive Vice President David M. Gordis.

"Where there was distrust and perhaps fear, there is now confidence," the pope said. "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," the pope said.

The committee officials also urged the pope to establish formal diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Israel, rejected until now ostensibly because of a Vatican desire to see Jerusalem internationalized and not recognized as the capital of Israel.

Asked later how the pontiff reacted to the request, Friedman said that in a private chat after the formal audience John Paul "simply acknowledged that there are enormous complexities, but that he understood our concern for Israel. We acknowledged that most of reality has a degree of complexity about it."



POPE JOHN PAUL II

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Pope Hails Improved Relations

Without Publicity and

Head Benefit Affair

Calls on Church To Halt Anti-Semitism

By Marc Tanenbaum

(Editor's note: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, was a member of the AJC delegation which met with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.)

VATICAN CITY, (JTA) — At a private audience with American Jewish Committee leaders February 15 held in the resplendent Apostolic Palace, Pope John Paul II went further than any Pope in recent memory in affirming that improved Catholic-Jewish relations is now an article of Catholic doctrine, "an expression of the (Catholic) faith, a word of the Divine Wisdom.

At the same time, he remained cautious and vague about the relationship of the Holy See to Israel.

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RABBI TANENBAUM

which opened a new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations. It was the first audience in 1985 of any Jewish group with the Polish Pope devoted to examining the impact of the Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations during the past two decades.

Statement by AJC President

"As the Nazi trauma appalled to us with despair over human evil," Friedman said in his prepared text, "so the 20th anniversary of the close of Vatican Council II inspires all of us with hope and promise for a more humane future... It is no exaggeration to state that as a result of these far-reaching pronouncements and the practical actions they have inspired, greater progress in improved Catholic-Jewish relations has taken place during the past two decades than in the past two millennia."

Friedman then said that "the American Jewish Committee shares" the Pope's vision "of upholding human dignity by vigorously advocating the universality of civil and political liberties, and, in particular, religious liberty for all peoples everywhere, especially those in oppressive totalitarian societies."

Maccabiah Games, the world Jewish Olympics, which begins in Israel on July 15th.

The Jewish Sports Hall of Fame will sponsor special tours to Israel leaving on July 11th which will include the main events of the Maccabiah and the dedication of the Hall of Fame. Marty Glickman and Dolph Shayer will accompany the groups.

Those interested in participating in these groups can get further information from Rabbi Leonard Goldstein. He can be reached at (212) 751-3250 or (718) 769-5952; (800) 442-4481 in N.Y. State; (800) 223-7606 elsewhere or write to 126 Kensington Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11235.



MAR-14-85

POPE GREETS JEWISH LEADERS



HISTORIC VISIT took place recently when Israel's Unity P.M. Shimon Peres met with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican to discuss the Mideast, Jewish-Christian relations and Jerusalem (as Israel's political capital). (JWB March 7, 1985.) Peres' meeting was the first for an Israeli leader since Golda Meir met with Pope Paul VI in 1973.

Israel Sun Photo

Affirms improved relations with Jews-Catholics now an article of Catholic faith

By RABBI MARC TANENBAUM

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It was the first audience in 1985 of any Jewish group with the Polish Pope devoted to examining the impact of the Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations during the past two decades.

"As the Nazi trauma appalled us with despair over human evil," Friedman said in his prepared text, "so the 20th anniversary of the close of Vatican Council II inspires all of us with hope and promise for a more humane future. It is no exaggeration to state as a result of these far-reaching pronouncements and the practical actions they have inspired, greater progress in improved Catholic-Jewish relations has taken place during the past two decades than in the past two millennia."

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The AJC president referred to his agency's "close cooperation with Catholic Relief Ser-

vices in seeking to relieve the suffering, hunger and deprivation of millions of fellow human beings in Ethiopia, and in Africa generally."

The climax of Friedman's statement concentrated on the importance of establishing "diplomatic ties between the Holy See and the State of Israel and her people."

He said: "Such an historic act, we believe, would be a watershed event in Catholic-Jewish relations. It would help create the sense of reality (in the Arab world) which is indispensable to peace, and we would consider it a happy development and confirmation of the decisions of Vatican Council II."

In response, the Pope declared: "I wish to confirm, with utmost conviction, the teaching of the Church proclaimed during the Second Vatican Council in the *Declaration Nostra Aetate*. . . remains always for us, for the Catholic Church, for the Episcopate. . . and for the Pope, a teaching which must be followed — a teaching which it is necessary to accept not merely as something fitting, but much more as an expression of the faith, as an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as a word of Divine Wisdom."

Vatican authorities commented later the Pope regards improved Catholic/Jewish relations as an "article of faith, of permanent value, and its progress is irreversible."

That assumed importance in light of anxiety in Catholic circles that the Vatican Synod called for November may lead to reversal of progressive achievements of Vatican Council II.

Asserting "relationships between Jews and Christians have radically improved in these years," the Pontiff stated: "Where there was distrust and perhaps fear, there is now confidence. 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."

The Pope condemned anti-Semitism, saying, "Anti-Semitism, which is unfortunately still a problem in certain places, has been repeatedly condemned by Catholic tradition as incompatible with Christ's teaching."