

Preserving American Jewish History

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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 47, Folder 6, Vatican, 1988-1989.

Presentation of the book "FIFTEEN YEARS OF CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE Johannes Cardinal WILLEBRANDS Rome, 22 March 1988

"RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND JUDAISM:

HISTORY, THEMES, PERSPECTIVES"

I would like to recall once again, for my part 1. (adding to what those who preceded me, H.E. Monsignor Rossano and Dr. Gerhart Riegner, so rightly emphasized), how important it was for our generation to work in close contact and harmony with the great Fathers and protagonists of the Council: Pope John XXIII, Pope Paul VI, Cardinal Bea, and, Pike' the Council in its deepest and most authentic spirit, it was not a break but rather a coherent maturation, ideas already present in the preceding pontificates of Pius XI and Pius XII. The volume which we have the honour of presenting this BEARS to this maturation, which was so evening,witness rich, so exceptional and so extraordinairy that it HISTORC, signalled a true, turning point in relations between the Catholic Church and Judaisma for this we are particularly grateful to Monsignor Rossano and to the Director of the Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Fr. Giustino Farnedi, OSB, for having included this worthy publication in the prestigious collection of theological and philosophical studies, a collection which also contains several fundamental works of Karol Wotyla, Pope John Paul II. I would also like to thank the technical director of the Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, Mr. Antonio Maggiotto, and his collaborators, as well as Professor Jean Halperin, Consultor to the World Jewish Congress, and all the others who contributed to the

schedule and was reintroduced only after this decisive intervention of the Pope, THEN we can understand why John XXIII has been so rightly described as "doubly father" (cf. St. Schmidt) of <u>Nostra Aetate</u>. Faithfully interpreting the spirit of dialogue which animated the Pope's actions, Cardinal Bea a few months later, on 31 March 1963, met in New York with representatives of Jewish civil and religious organizations of various orientations (cf. St. Schmidt, "Agostino Bea", pp. 466-467; 569).

AMERICAN JEWISH

5. This volume, which is here before us, condenses the fruit of all that was carried out in the succeeding twenty years and especially since 1970, with the launching of the "International Liason Committee", destined to take its place as an effective instrument of religious dialogue between the Catholic Church and Judaism.

6. Throughout these twenty years of progress many people worked along with us, and the names of the principal protagonists - 128 of them - are listed at the beginning of the book, Some of them are no longer with us, and,

saddened that they cannot be here, we would like to remember them? They are Professor Cornelius Rijk, Fr. Pierre-Marie de Contenson, OP, Professor Sidney Hoenig, Monsignor Charles Moeller, our dear Zachariah Shuster and, finally, Joseph Lichten.

-3-

a new period, a richer phase, almost a second voyage of discovery in more open waters, and thus with even greater risks. We are already living in this second period, and we must live it if full consciousness and responsibility.

9. In the two years since the visit to the synagogue we have also witnessed the great World Day of Prayer for —Peace at Assisi. The fruits of that event have, in part, taken root before our eyes, At the same time the pope, for his part, has intensified his meetings with Jewish communities around the world, VEVER M155186 an opportunity to deepen — understanding, or clarify this or that point, a point which perhaps needed theological clarification, or application in the fields of ethics or justice, or simply on a more general ecumenical plane.

10. Out of this recent development, so rich and dynamic, I would like to pick out five programmatic points, asking the experts to reflect on them within a complete and organic synthesis, in the hope that they might also be, for all of you, a stimulus to concrete action.

The points are these: (1)A commitment against antisemitism; (2)A reflection on the Shoah; (3) A mature dialogue; (4) A foundation and a common religious hope, mutually recognizing each others' essential characteristics and <u>substantial differences</u>; (5) A common commitment for justice and peace.

-5-

sense, is also part of the larger commitment for human rights, which I will speak about shortly.

(2)

-7-

A REFLECTION ON THE 'SHOAH

14. Connected, and yet distinct from the previous 15502, this will be a mature and complete reflection on the period of atrocious persecution and suffering inflicted on European Jews during the Second World War. This period is called by its name in hebrew, the "Shoa". To bow one's head, OFTEN just in religious silence, before this endless abyss of pain and evil, is $only^{A}_{\Lambda}$ right and proper sign of respect to the living memory of so many innocent victims, as Pope John Paul II has so often said, recalling that they were exterminated becuase of their Jewish origins and identity. in the name of a perverse and diabolical ideology, an ideology both dehumanizing and anti-religious# Cardinal Lustiger has written: "Le centre de cette idéologie c'était la persécution du peuple juif, parce peuple messianique" ("The center of this ideology was the persecution of the Jewish people because they were a messianic people") [Le choix de Dieu, Paris 1987, p.126]. With this, far from any possible hint of minimalization or exploitation, we hope to carry out an act of reconciliation and spiritual conversion, before God and our Jewish brothers, for the good of all humanity.

A MATURE DIALOGUE

expound the many common elements which unite us at the period level of our shared religious identity, elements such as the faith of Abraham and the Patriarchs, the commitment of faith and to the gift of the Alliance, the call to holiness and the ethical imperative of the Commandments, veneration of the Holy Scriptures, the tradition of prayer, of hospitality and love for our neighbour, respect and responsibility towards all creation, and the desire for peace and the welfare of all humanity, without discrimination.

17. Conscious of these common roots, we Christians will be able, in an open and respectful dialogue, to fully express our faith in Christ the universal Redeemer, in terms which, while recognizing the substantial differences with the Jewish faith, lead us not to hostility or mutual isolation, but rather to a fraternal emulation in fulfilling all that we believe essential to the mission and witness of the Church in the world. Likewise, we hope that on the Jewish side, taking into proper consideration the "asymmetries" which qualify our relations, it might still be possible to continue an analogous effort of conceptual clarification and opening to religious cooperation.

18. We will thus be able to clarify, without fear of being misunderstood, that our Christian faith does not exclude either hope or responsibility in building the Kingdom of God. The hope and expectation for the Kingdom of Heaven had become even more intense at the time of

this reflection: the document "Plures nostrae aetatis", on the Bible and Christology (Bible et Christologie, Du Cerf, Paris 1984) and the document "In hac relatione", on Selected themes of Ecclesiology, published 7 October 1985 by the International Theological Commission. This last text leads us to consider the "novelty" of the Church as a "people of the Trinity" (cf. par. 3.2) on a pilgrimage through history, and as "a communion of faith, hope and charity" (par. 6.1), Within this perspective, limiting itself to dealing only with certain questions - among them the issue of enculturation - the document leaves open and unprejudiced the possibility of a reflection on the "mystery of Israel" (using the expression Jacques Maritain was so fond of) and on the Jewish people as a ""mmunity of faith"" and "People of God", a reflection in keeping with the train of thought which emerges from the development of Catholic-Jewish dialogue, 10 which the volume we are presenting today bears witness.

(5)

A COMMON COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE AND PEACE

19. Among the program atic points which the International committee for Catholic-Jewish cooperation has emphasized since the beginning and reconfirmed at each plenary session, is cooperation in various fields: education, ethics, the

⁴MORDECHAI WAXMAN, Miami, 11 September 1987.

-11-

foundation of our common brotherhood, deriving from the common fatherhood of God recognized by Jews and Christians, we express the wish that, overcoming any painful misunderstanding, the invocation of the Psalm might be fulfilled:

> "Let your servants see what you can do for them, let their children see your glory. May the sweetness of the Lord be on us! Make all we do succeed."

> > (Psalm 90: 16-17) Jerusalem Bible - Ed.

AMERICAN

RELIGION

JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS: Achievements and an Unfinished Agenda

"If, after two millenia of estrangement and hostility, Christians and Jews can create a genuine culture of mutual esteem and reciprocal caring, [it] could become a sign and an inspiration of hope to other religions, races, and ethnic groups....

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

INCE the adoption of Nostra Aetate by Vatican Council II in 1965, The Catholic church and the Jewish people have experienced what rightly has been called a "revolution in mutual esteem." That transformation of a 1,900-year-old encounter between Christians and Jews, which had been characterized mainly by a culture of contempt-a deicide culture against the Jews-into a radically new culture of "covenantal partnership" and growing mutual esteem is a momentous achievement in its own terms. It is an accomplishment, even in its infancy, that also resonates with moral and spiritual meaning for enabling us to understand and cope constructively with the enormous challenges and threats posed by the immense diversity of religions, races, ethnic groups, and political ideologies in the pluralistic world we inhabit.

Today, there are about 12,000,000 refugees scattered throughout the world, some 6,000,000 in Africa alone. Many, if not most, are victims of profound religious, racial, and tribal conflicts. In a large number of these tragedies, religious fanaticism and absolutistic, messianic nationalism have become the terrible chemistries which resulted in these explosions, causing so much human devastation and pain.

The late psychoanalyst Eric Fromm, a great humanist, became disturbed deeply by the growing pattern of violence and fanaticism throughout so many parts of the world. At the time of the strife between Hindus and Muslims in India, he carried out a clinical psychoanalytic study of that

Rabbi Tanenbaum is International relations consultant, American Jewish Committee, New York.

intergroup violence. In The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness, Fromm concluded that there is "a pathological dynamic" at work in such religious-political conflicts, which he termed "Group Narcissism." As is the case with individual narcissism, groups that are narcissistic attribute to themselves all the virtue and ultimate value, while denying value to the outside group--- "the other." The narcissistic group views itself as superior and regards the other as inferior. This mentality leads to a process of dehumanization or "monstorizing" in which the so-called superior group feels justified in emptying the alleged inferior group of all human dignity and value. Such dehumanization becomes the precondition, as well as the justification, for destroying the other.

There are two corollaries to this process which Fromm characterized as the engine of such vast destructiveness. First, physical violence against a person or group invari-

ably is preceded by verbal violence. White racist segregationists in the American South invariably abused blacks verbally before carrying out their lynchings. The Nazis engaged in systematic verbal violence against the Jews, the Polish people, and gypsies, among others, reducing them to dehumanized untermenschen as a cultural precondition for their systematic pogroms. In every instance, it becomes

easier to destroy human beings when they are reduced to caricatures filled with contempt and hostility.

Second, in practically every major religious, racial, and tribal conflict, there is nonexistent or seriously undeveloped religious ideology or political doctrine of coexistence in a pluralist society. There are simply no religious or ideological resources for living with differences that invariably are experienced as a threat, rather than the possibility of becoming a source of enrichment.

A great reversal of historic proportions has taken place in the Church's relationship to Judaism and the Jewish people since the adoption of Nostra Aetate. Pope John Paul II expressed that new spirit powerfully during a Feb. 15, 1985, audience with the American Jewish Committee: "I am convinced and I am happy to state on this occasion that the relationships between Jews and Christians have radical-

In March, 1963, a historic meeting occurred between Vatican and Jewish leaders to exchange views about the text that was being prepared by Cardinal Augustin Bea's Vatican Secretariat on Jewish leaders to exchange views about the text that was bei prepared by Cardinal Augustin Bea's Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations for consideration and final adopti prepared by Cardinal Augustin Bea's Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations for consideration and final adoption Vatican Council II. (Lett to right) The Rev. Stephen Schmidt, Secretary to Cardinal Bea; Rabbi Leon Fram, president Abraham Secretary to Cardinal Bea; Rabbis; Rabbi Abraham Joshua Hes Conference of American Rabbis; Rabbi Abraham Jewish Theologic Conference of Jewish ethics and mysticism. Jewish Theologic Conference Sor of Jewish ethics and mysticism. Conference of American Rabbis; Rabbi Abraham Joshua Hes-chel, professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism, Jewish Theolog. chel, professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism, Jewish Theolog. ical Seminary; Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, then national interreli-ical Seminary; American Jewish Committee; and Cardin-gious affairs director. American Secretariat for the Promotion of gious affairs director. Vatican Secretariat for the Promotism Relia al Bea, president of the Vatican Secretariat on Reliaious Rela-christian Unity and of the Vatican Secretariat on Reliaious Relaal Bea, president of the vatican Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity and of the Vatican Secretariat on Religious Rela-tions with the Jewish People.

pg.1

* REL, 5-8-89, Jewish-Christian Relationships

RELIGION

ly 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." Then, as if to suggest his idea of pluralism between Christians and Jews, he added, "Love involves understanding. It also involves frankness and the freedom to disagree in a brotherly way where there are reasons for it."

Pope John Paul II, building on the foundations laid by his predecessors, Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI, personally has made a singular contribution in redefining and advancing on deep theological, moral, and human levels improved understandings between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people. That should not obscure the fact that there are significant differences regarding certain policies and actions-relating mainly to some interpretations of the Nazi Holocaust and the state of Israel. However, anyone who wishes to speak seriously about the role of the Pope in his inspired commitment to fostering genuine solidarity and mutual respect between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people has a moral duty to study the texts of his numerous addresses and declarations contained in On Jews and Judaism, 1979-1986.

Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, president of the Holy See's Commission on Religious Relations with the Jews, recently affirmed that "the Pope was consistent and untiring in his efforts to spread the teachings of Vatican Council on Jews and Judaism elaborated in the foundation documents of Nostra Aetate, the Vatican Guidelines in Catholic-Jewish Relations (1974), and Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judiasm in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church (1985)." In their essence, these themes embody the central theological and practical achievements in Catholic-Jewish relations since Vatican Council.

The Church and the Jewish people

The spiritual bond with Jews is understood properly as "a sacred one, stemming as it does from the mysterious will of God," Pope John Paul II stated in 1985. The relationship is not marginal to the Church. It reaches to the very essence of the nature of Christian faith itself, so that to deny it is to deny something essential to the teaching of the Church.

The dialogue between Catholics and Jews is not one between past (Judaism) and present (Christianity) realities, as if the former had been superseded or displaced by the latter. "On the contrary," the Pope declared to the Jewish community of Mainz in 1988, "it is a question rather of reciprocal enlightenment and explanation, just as is the relationship between the Scriptures themselves." Instead of the traditional terms of Old Testament and New Testament, which might be understood to imply that the "old has been abrogated in favor of the new," the Pope, in a 1986 address to the Jews of Australia, suggested the use of "the Hebrew Scriptures" and "the Christian Scriptures" as appropriate alternatives.

In his historic visit to the Great Synagogue of Rome in 1986, the first such visit since Apostolic times, the Pope asserted, "The Jewish religion is not 'extrinsic' to us, but in a certain way is 'intrinsic' to our own religion. With Judaism, therefore, we have a relationship which we do not have with any other religion. You are dearly beloved brothers and in a certain way, it could be said that you are our elder brothers."

Speaking to the Jewish community of Mainz, he cited "the spiritual heritage of Israel for the Church" as "a living heritage, which must be understood and preserved in its depth and richness by us Catholic Christians." The "common spiritual patrimony" of Jews and Christians is not something of the past, but of the present which includes an understanding of postbibical Judaism and "the faith and religious life of the Jewish people as they are profesed and practiced still today," he declared in 1982.

The Pope teaches that the Jews remain God's chosen people in the fullest sense ("most dear") and this in no way diminishes the Church's own affirmation of its own standing as "the people of God." In Mainz, the Pope addressed the Jewish community as "the people of God of the Old Covenant, which has never been revoked by God," referring to Romans 11:29, and emphasized "the permanent value" of both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Jewish community that witnesses to those Scriptures as sacred texts.

In his very first audience with Jewish representatives in 1979, the Pope reaffirmed the Second Vatican Council's repudiation of anti-Semitism "as opposed to the very spirit of Christianity" and which "in any case, the dignity of the human person alone would suffice to condemn." He has repeated this message in country after country throughout the world.

In 1985, on the 20th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the Pope stated that "anti-Semitism, in its ugly and sometimes violent manifestations, should be completely eradicated." He called the attention of the whole Church to the mandate given in the 1985 Vatican Notes to develop Holocaust curricula in Catholic schools and catechetical programs: "For Catholics, as the Notes . . . have asked them to do, to fath-

Ì.

125/disk 2

pg.2

many millions of Jews during World War II and the wounds thereby inflicted on the consciousness of the Jewish people, theological reflection is also needed.'

The complexities of the Middle East situation and the differences between the Holy See and Israel on the issue of establishing full diplomatic relations are wellknown. The Pope has expressed generally positive views on a moral plane toward the state of Israel, as disclosed in his Apostolic Letter of April 20, 1984: "Jews ardently love her [Jerusalem] and in every age venerate her memory, abundant as she is in many remains and monuments from the time of David who chose her as the capital, and of Solomon who built the Temple there. Therefore, they turn their minds to her daily, one may say, and point to her as a sign of their nation. For the Jewish people who live in the state of Israel and who preserve in that land such precious testimonies of their history and their faith, we must ask for the desired security and the due tranquility that is the prerogative of every nation and condition of life and of progress for every society."

Beyond the rethinking of the traditional understanding of Jews and Judaism, he has called upon Catholics to undertake a major effort: "We should aim in this field, that Catholic teaching at its different levels, in catechesis to children and young people, presents Jews and Judaism, not only in an honest and objective manner, free from prejudices and without any offences, but also with full awareness of the [Jewish] heritage."

The Pope repeatedly affirms his vision for Jews and Christians of joint social action and witness to the One God and the reality of the Kingdom of God as the defining point of human history. This way of collaboration "in service to humanity" as a means of preparing for God's Kingdom unites Jews and Christians on a level that, in a sense, can be said to be deeper than the doctrinal distinctions that divide them historically. His views have been reinforced by pronouncements issued by National Bishops Conferences in the U.S., Austria, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Colombia, and Brazil. Individual cardinals and bishops, as well as theologians, have made pronouncements on a variety of religious and moral issues relating to Catholic-Jewish bonds that have enlarged the culture of mutual esteem.

To appreciate the dramatic changes in Catholic teaching about Jews and Judaism, one needs only to examine the contrasts in educational materials published since the Vatican Council with textbooks and teaching manuals in common use into the 1960's. The St. Louis University textbook studies conducted in the U.S. by three Catholic sisters under the supervision of Jesuit Father Trafford Naher revealed om the depths of the extermination of _____ teachings of hostility and contempt that 1

RELIGION

lent credence to Jewish concerns about Christian polemical traditions as a source of anti-Semitism.

In Europe, the Louvain and Pro Deo University studies which examined Catholic educational materials in a variety of languages—Italian, French-speaking countries (Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Canada), and Spanish—showed that teachings of contempt were widespread throughout the religious culture. Summarizing these findings, Claire Huchet-Bishop, a Catholic scholar, wrote in *How Catholics Look at Jews* that many young Catholics in these countries still were being instructed in the 1960's, 20 years after the Nazi Holocaust, the following teachings:

• The Jews are collectively responsible for the Crucifixion and they are a "deicide people."

• The Diaspora is the Jews' punishment for the Crucifixion and for their cry, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

• Jesus predicted the punishment of his people; the Jews were and remained cursed by him and by God; Jerusalem, as a city, is particularly guilty.

• The Jewish people as a whole rejected , Jesus during his lifetime because of their materialism.

• The Jewish people have put themselves beyond salvation and are consigned to eternal damnation.

The Jewish people have been unfaithful to their mission and are guilty of apostasy.
Judaism was once a true religion, but then became ossified and ceased to exist with the coming of Jesus.

• The Jews are no longer the Chosen People, but have been superseded as such by the Christians.

Bishop noted that charges against the Jewish people were accompanied by a rhetoric of invective—"verbal violence"—which attributed the most vicious motives to them.

In citing these themes of negative theology toward the Jews, it is not my intention to obsess about the past, nor to seek to evoke guilt. Rather, my purpose is to underscore that the radical improvement in Catholic-Jewish relations, theologically and morally significant in itself, also may be a model of how it is possible to transform a culture that once demonized and thereby dehumanized a people into a whole new culture of rehumanization. It also has something to teach us about the importance of overcoming verbal violence and toxic language which destroy human dignity and family solidarity, and replace those invectives with healing language of respect and mutual affirmation. That lesson applies equally to Jews as well as Christians, and, I believe, to all groups who are afflicted by such dehumanizing tendencies.

In the U.S., Eugene Fisher, executive secretary of the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, published a study of post-Vatican Council II Catholic textbooks covering 16 major religion series used in the grade and high school levels. In Faith Without Prejudice, he found great improvements in the treatment of many of the past troublesome themes. For example, he found clear references to the Jewishness of Jesus, which mostly had been avoided in the past, and the notion of Jewish suffering as an expression of Divine retribution completely eliminated from the textbooks. References to the Holocaust were handled with great sensitivity, though those to violence against Jews during the Crusades and the Inquisition and to the modern state of Israel he found to be still inadequate.

In the growing atmosphere of confidence and trust, the Jewish community has conducted its own self-studies of its textbooks in terms of what Jewish schools teach about Christians and Christianity. The studies found that, while Judaism has been influenced in its development by interaction with Christianity more than generally is acknowledged (Maimonides and St. Thomas Aguinas, etc.), it does not define itself in contrast or comparison with Christianity. The Jewish-Christian encounter, as described in Jewish highschool textbooks, is social and historical, not doctrinal or theological. On the one hand, this avoids the problem of polemical approaches to Christianity; on the other, recounting the episodes of persecution, expulsion, and massacres which Jews suffered at the hands of Christians for centuries, and which are among the realities of Jewish history, tends to leave a negative image, not so much of Christian faith, but of the Church as temporal power. In fairness, it must be said that this negative image is offset somehow by attention paid to righteous Christians who shielded and protected Jews across the years, and to the high value assigned in Jewish textbooks to religious and cultural pluralism and human kinship.

Still, many Jews—like many Catholics —are not aware of the momentous changes in Catholic thinking about Jews and Judaism that have issued from the highest levels of the Church since Vatican Council II. As part of the future agenda, Jewish students, as well as others in the general Jewish population, need to be informed of these developments both in formal education and through mass communications.

An unfinished agenda

Education. While remarkable progress has been made since Vatican Council II, there is still much to be done to change habits of thinking. The self-definition-bydenigration model has not yet been replaced fully on the pedagogical level. Current scholarship which sets the conflict events described in the New Testament—particu-

 $[1] \rightarrow 1$

·公赦。·法赦是公司法司

larly the Passion narratives and the portrayal of the Pharisees—into historical perspective should be reflected in textbooks, teacher's manuals, teacher training, and seminary education and by homilists and clergy to a much greater extent than at present. In Jewish education, particularly the seminaries, there is need to overcome the little knowledge about Christian beliefs and the history of present communities, as well as a longer view of the development of Christian thought and history.

Communications. There should be a concern that commitment to improved Jewish-Christian relations is progressing primarily among the "ecumenical generals," leaving a substantial gap with the vast number of "infantry troops." A thoughtful, creative, and systematic use of modern means of public education through mass communications would help close this gap and give depth to Jewish-Christian solidarity.

Joint witness, social justice, and human rights. The epidemic of dehumanization in large parts of the world is, I believe, one of the most profound challenges facing Christians and Jews. Fanaticism, resort to verbal and physical violence, torture, terrorism, and violations of human rights and freedomof conscience are daily assaults on the dignity of human life created in the Divine image. Close collaboration of Christians and Jews who share a common vision of biblical humanism could become a critical mass in stemming the forces of dehumanization and in upholding the preciousness of every life in God's human family. There are models and structures in both the Christian and Jewish communities for advancing this fundamental objective of redemption. It requires moral will, commitment, and courageous leadership.

World refugees and hunger. At a time when nations and peoples squander billions on arms races and weapons of death and destruction, it is scandalous that such modest resources are available to help relieve the staggering hunger, starvation, poverty, and diseases in so many parts of the developing world. Wherever and whenever Christians and Jews join hands together and mobilize their common will and material resources, they make a crucial difference in relieving vast suffering and saving human lives.

Pluralism. If, after two millenia of estrangement and hostility, Christians and Jews can create a genuine culture of mutual esteem and reciprocal caring, the Christian-Jewish dialogue well could become a sign and an inspiration of hope to other religions, races, and ethnic groups to turn away from contempt to realizing authentic human fraternity. This pluralistic model of the Jewish-Christian symbiosis may be the most important service that we have to offer to our troubled world.

SECRETARIAT FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS

Vatican City - Tel. 698.4386/698.3071

PROT. N. J 45 /89/C

Vatican City, Feb. 6, 1989

Rabbi Marc H. TANENBAUM IJCIC American Jewish Commitee

165 East 56 Street

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022, USA

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum,

Thank you for having notified me of your decision of January 5, 1989; to retire from the IJCIC Chairmanship. I understand you will continue your activity in the interreligious field in a more -quiet but no less efficacious form, through publications and study, in the same spirit of commitment and dialogue.

Please accept the expression of my deep gratitude and appreciation for the positive contribution you have made to the betterment of Christian-Jewish relations during so many years.

sentiments of With esteem and cordial wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours

Johannes Cardinal Willebrands

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY COMMENTARY (400 words)

POPE JOHN PAUL II APPEALS TO ISRAEL TO HELP SAVE LEBANON

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

The recent appeal by Pope John Paul II to the Israeli government to help prevent "the destruction with which Lebanon is being threatened" is a dramatic sign of the desperation that the Vatican feels over the plight of that decimated country, once the center of the Arab Christian presence in the Middle East.

It is also a statement of the actual, de facto ongoing relationship between the Holy See and the sovereign State of Israel.

I am still convinced -- and this papal act underscores it -- that once peace is established among Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians, full diplomatic relations will follow among the Vatican, Israel and Jordan.

Cardinal John O'Connor's recent visit to Lebanon, following full consultation with the pope and the Vatican, unfortunately became caught up in controversy as a result of an apparent contradiction in two primary objectives in Vatican foreign policy.

Since the days of Pope Leo I (440-461 C.E.), the Vatican has had a primary obligation to defend the interests of the Church and the security of Christians in the world.

During the Middle Ages, the Vatican inherited the mantle of the Roman Empire and became a major instrument of arbitration between nations. Arbitration necessitated a posture of impartiality, if not neutrality.

But Maronite Catholics in Lebanon and many Christians of conscience -- particularly in the Western world -- have been deeply upset that Lebanese Christians have been abandoned by the Western and Christian world to mayhem and massacre by Syria and extremist Moslems.

I see Cardinal O'Connor's visit as a quiet, legitimate effort to signal Maronite Catholics that the Vatican and the Catholic world indeed care about their survival.

The pope's appeal to Israeli President Chaim Herzog, while couched in the language of impartiality, is a plea to help save the Christian remnant in Lebanon from total genocide.

Herzog's response was sensitive and caring. He expressed Israel's horror over the current wave of Syrian bombardment of the Lebanese Christian population, and Israel's interest in helping establish "the stability, unity and independence of Lebanon."

If this diplomatic pattern continues, Israel may yet help the Vatican save what is left of the Christian community in Lebanon.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, international consultant for the American Jewish Committee, is former chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.

FOR RELEASE JUNE 16, 1989



Dear Jack,

Besides all that I have written about Una, I should add that she has read all of Andrew Greeley's novels (has had some correspondence with him) and bakes terrific Irish Soda bread. I hope that it will be possible for her to study with you. In fact, I would LOVE to do it myself, but I must run the graduate program here.

First, let me thank you for the xeroxed stuff you most recently sent. I shall be able to read most of it next weekend. You amaze me with your productivity and your wisdom.

I have enclosed three little pieces from my Doctrine for Life column, the two on sex having been already published and the one on the Jews not yet; they go out to about 50,000 religion teachers throughout the country.

I finished a piece on Academic Freedom and the Catholic University that will be published after I get the final revisions done. The paper I read at the Holy Cross conference is going to be published in an edited volume by Paulist Press; Bernard Cooke of Holy Cross will be editing it. I've got two pieces coming out in the new volume of the <u>New Catholic</u> <u>Encyclopedia</u>, and have a few other things cooking too.

1

It would do my soul great good to spend some time with you before too long. I shall work something out one of these days. In the meantime, all God's blessings on you and your loved ones. Sincerely,

> DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES 300 College Park Dayton, Ohio 45469-0001

WHAT CATECHISTS SHOULD TEACH ABOUT THE JEWS

I grew up in a Slovenian neighborhood on the East side of Cleveland. The only Jews I knew as a boy were Mr. Friedman, for whom my father worked, and Mr. Figowitz, who sold burlap to my father. Mr. Friedman owned the Cook Coffee Company and my father was the manager of its major warehouse and roasting plant; Mr. Figowitz called regularly on my father, who was one of his major customers. About both Mr. Friedman and Mr. Figowitz I have only positive memories, because my father liked and respected his employer for his fairness and generosity, and because our family received gifts, usually baskets of fruit, at Thanksgiving and Christmas from both Mr. Friedman and Mr. Figowitz. I don't recall my parents ever speaking of "kikes" or of "jewing someone down," but I do remember wondering in grade school why the Jews killed Jesus.

My years in college coincided with the years that the Second Vatican Council met. At the end of the Council, on the 28th of October in 1965, the Council passed its Declaration on the Jews, <u>Nostra Aetate</u>. This document represented a profound shift of attitude in the Catholic Church, and called for wide-reaching reevaluations of Christian teachings about the Jews. In college, I began to study the Catholic Church's actions towards the Jews from the beginning of Christianity and in the process uncovered a very sad history indeed.

There is not space in this short article to chronicle even a small portion of the crimes Christians have, over the centuries, committed against Jews. Suffice it to refer the reader to Fr. Edward H. Flannery's extensive and reliable study, <u>The Anguish of</u> <u>the Jews</u> (Paulist, rev. 1985). The size of the step taken by Vatican II can be gauged by considering what was said about the Jews at the Council of Basle, the last Church Council to take up the question until Vatican II. As Fr Flannery has explained:

The Council of Basle decreed in 1434 that Jews were to have no concourse with Christians; they were to be excluded from public office; they would be forced to wear a distinctive garb; they would henceforth live in a special quarter; they would not be allowed to pursue university degrees, and they would be made to listen to Christian sermons--by force if necessary.

The decisions of this Council merely codified, except for the decree concerning university degrees, what had been done off and on for some centuries. Many of these practices continued until the last century. To quote Flannery again: "Compulsory sermons were finally terminated by Pius IX in 1848; the last ghetto in Europe to disappear was Rome's in 1870; distinctive Jewish garb, in the form of a badge, found a secular revival in the Nazi empire; and the prohibition of university degrees survived as 'quotas' in universities and colleges in the twentieth century (Face to Face,

Fall 1985, p. 44).

Unquestionably whet the consciences of Christians were horrified when the death camps of World War II revealed for all to see the enormity of the evil to which anti-Semitism had led. The Church realized that it had to look at its own teachings and expunge from them whatever might contribute to a misunderstanding of the Jews and their place in history.

Twenty years of soul-searching culminated in Vatican II's decree on the Jews, Nostra Aetate, which corrected what had been a common and erroneous teaching that Jews bore responsibility for the death of Jesus. The Council explained that even though some of the Jewish leaders pressed for the death of Jesus, "what happened in His passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, nor upon the Jews of today." Intimately linked to the false assumption that the Jews collectively were responsible for the death of Jesus was the "teaching of contempt"; that is, the teaching that Jews and Judaism were rejected by God and condemned to wander about in the world, persecuted and without a homeland. This "teaching of contempt" has supported throughout the centuries deep-seated and sometimes violent expression of anti-Semitism. Against such erroneous thinking the Council stated that "the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures." Again, the Council declared that "now as before, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues -- such is the witness of the

Apostle" (cf. Rom. 11: 28-29). In other words, as the Vatican's 1974 <u>Guidelines on Religious Relations with the Jews</u> explained, "the history of Judaism did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather went on to develop a religious tradition." That same conciliar decree took up important practical concerns as well, and stated that "all should take pains, then, lest in catechetical instruction and in the preaching of God's word they teach anything out of harmony with the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ."

I wish now to turn to a few of those practical catechetical concerns and then to advert to some of the continuing difficulties in the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Catholic religion teachers have been greatly helped by the continuing efforts of scholars and church leaders to develop guidelines for catechetical instruction. Besides the 1974 Vatican Guidelines referred to above, there appeared in June of 1985, to mark the 20th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, another Vatican document, "Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church." This document has been followed, in this country, by the publication in June of 1987 of a booklet entitled Within Context. It is the product of a working group of twelve Catholic educators, New Testament scholars, and publishers who, in dialogue with Jewish scholars, drew out the catechetical implications for Catholic education in the United States. The booklet also contains a bibliography of resources for teachers.

These documents have obvious practical value for the cate-

chist in addressing questions such as, what ought to be said about the Jewishness of Jesus? It has been only in this century, mainly since the Holocaust, that Christians have begun to realize the importance of understanding Jesus' own Jewishness. The authors of <u>Within Context</u> summarize nicely a great deal of recent scholarship when they write:

Jesus was born, lived and died a Jew of his times. He, his family and all his original disciples followed the laws, traditions and customs of his people. The key concepts of Jesus' teaching, therefore, cannot be understood apart from the Jewish heritage. Even after the Resurrection, Jesus' followers understood and articulated the Christ Event through essentially Jewish categories drawn from Jewish tradition and liturgical practice. An appreciation of Judaism in Second Temple times is essential for an adequate understanding of Jesus' mission and teaching, and therefore that of the Church itself.

In essence, this means that it is impossible to understand the person and teachings of Jesus without an informed grasp of the customs and teachings of the Jewish people who were Jesus' contemporaries. Understanding the Jewishness of Jesus will not only shed great light on the origins of Christianity, but will also dramatically reduce anti-Semitism. As the noted Lutheran historian of Christian doctrine, Jaraslov Pelikan, recently wrote: "Would there have been so many pogroms, would there have been an Auschwitz, if every Christian church and every Christian

home had focused its devotion...on icons of Christ not only as Pantocrator but as <u>Rabbi Jeshua bar-Joseph</u>, Rabbi Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of David, in the context of the history of a suffering Israel and a suffering humanity?" (<u>Jesus Through the</u> <u>Centuries</u>, p. 20).

A second area of considerable catechectical importance is the way in which the passion of Jesus is taught. It is sobering to recall that many of the pogroms were carried on during Holy Week. We should recall that the catechism of the Council of Trent taught that Christian sinners are more to blame for the death of Christ than those few Jews who brought it about--they indeed "knew not what they did" (cf. Luke 23-34), but we know it only too well. In 1975 Archbishop Peter Gerety of Newark New Jersey released an important pastoral letter on Catholic-Jewish Relations, in which he wrote:

In the pulpit and classroom, we must guard against cliches and generalizations that would pit "the Jews" or "the Pharisees" against Jesus or the infant Church. The Jewish people of the Second Temple period harbored many spiritual, intellectual and political movements. Although Jesus did not belong to any of these groups, He stood closest to the Pharisees, and this is precisely the reason for the intense debates with some of them. In the majority of passages of the Fourth Gospel, using the phrase "the Jews" St. John designates the Jewish authorities, especially in the context of the Passion and Resurrection narratives. The congregation

should be made aware of this fact in the Good Friday liturgy and on other occasions when this Gospel is read. I urge our

priests to make this clear to our people. Similar observations could be made about the Synoptic Gospels as well.

Finally, a word about the Pharisees. Recent research, the results of which still lack complete agreement, shows that there are many commonalities between the thinking of Jesus and that of the Pharisees. The 1985 Vatican document lists the following: "The resurrection of the body; forms of piety, like almsgiving, prayer, fasting and the liturgical practice of addressing God as father; the priority of the commandment to love God and our neighbor" (no. 17). In fact, some Pharisees warned Jesus of the risks he was running (Luke 13:31); some were praised by Jesus (Mark 12:34); and some Jesus ate with (Luke 7:36, 14:1). That some Pharisees were hypocrites whom Jesus confronted is not to be doubted. At the same time, there are hypocrites in every religion, including Christianity, where Jesus continues to confront them. Would it not be best simply to stop using altogether the word "pharisee" as a synonymn for "hypocrite"?

Scholars involved in the Jewish-Christian dialogue substantially agree now on the denial of collective Jewish responsibility for the death of Jesus, the Jewishness of Jesus, and the similarities between Jesus and the Pharisees. Catechists should make sure that their students learn about these insights. There remain, however, a number of points on which substantial differences may

be found. Even more fundamental than the matter of teachings, there is the difference that exists in the ways in which Catholics and Jews experience God spiritually. As one author recently put it:

The centrality of Jesus in the mystery of the triune God is as much outside the Jewish expeifence as the relationship of covenant to land, and of the Jews to Israel, is outside the Christian experience. The Catholic consciousness in faith of the church as a new covenant that transcends every ethnic designation is far removed from the Jewish experience of themselves as a religious people. And the Catholic experience of the Eucharist is not identical with the Jewish one of the Seder. Nor should it be. In fact, the most difficult hurdle in true dialogue is to grasp the other's pieties. Although these spiritual differences are, in view of the my personal experience in the Jewish-Christian dialogue, somewhat overdrawn, they are, nonetheless, there. There remains, however, an even greater difficulty for the dialogue, and that is the lack of agreement on just what the point of dialogue should be.

Fundamentalist Christians are clear about why they wish to support the State of Israel: the State of Israel is, in their reading of Scripture, an indispensable step in the process that will culminate in the conversion of all Jews to Jesus as Lord. For the liberal Protestant, all religions are of equal value, and there is, therefore, no need to emphasize missionary outreach to anyone who belongs to another religion. Just where Catholics are

going to stand on this issue has not been finally worked out. Sometimes, the Church seems to say that Judaism has an irrevocable calling to be and remain Jews, witnessing to the world by their belief in the one God. At other times, the Church seems to say that the divine mission of the Church offers an all-embracing means of salvation in which alone the fullness of God's self-revelation, Jesus the Christ, can be encountered.

This very ambiguity was behind the flap caused by a recent statement attributed to Cardinal Ratzinger, who, in pointing out that the Pope had offered in dialogue with the Jews not only respect but a theological direction, was supposed to have added: "This always implies our union with the faith of Abraham, but also the reality of Jesus Christ, in which the faith of Abraham finds its fulfillment." The cardinal immediately published a clarification which read: "This theological direction implies our union with the faith of Abraham, but also the reality of Jesus Christ in whom, for us, the faith of Abraham finds its fulfillment." The first statement implies that the faith of the Jew finds fulfillment only by believing in Jesus Christ; the second statement explains that for Christians, and not for Jews, fulfillment is achieved through belief in Jesus Christ. Both sorts of statements appear in the 1985 Vatican document. The precise goals of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Jews therefore remains, among Catholics, a point of difference, not yet sufficiently clarified by our official statements.

It may help to recall, at this point, that one of the

essential parts of true inter-faith dialogue is to come to an understanding of the faith the others as they define themselves and in the light of their own religious experience, which, in the case of the Jews, is an experience based on a covenant that the Catholic Church has solemnly declared has never been revoked. For centuries, long and painful centuries for the Jews, Christians have not only failed to make that effort to understand, but have forced their faith upon the Jews. Is it too much to ask now that we Catholics, after centuries of abusing and misunderstanding the Jews that culminated in the nightmare of the Holocaust, after underscoring for the first time at Vatican II both the continuing validity of the Jewish religion and the right of every person to religious liberty--is it too much to ask Catholics never again to proselytize Jews? However it is that we are eventually to understand Jesus' affirmation that there will be one shepherd and one flock (John 10:16), and however much my recommendation may look as though there are now two parallel ways of salvation, surely now, more than ever, we should realize that healing and forgiveness based on deep mutual respect should occupy first place on the agenda of the dialogue. This much is surely necessary, even if the precise goals of inter-faith dialogue between Christians and Jews remains, among Catholics, a point of difference, not yet sufficiently clarified by our official statements.

Despite such delicate points of disagreement, there have been many gains since Vatican II. In this country especially, the Jewish-Christian dialogue has already borne abundant fruit. We

have come to see that, indeed, knowledge of only one religion is knowledge of no religion at all. Whatever our personal experiences with Jews have been, be they as positive as those of my youth with Mr. Friedman and Mr. Figowitz, or otherwise, there is no excuse now for catechists to omit from their teaching solidly grounded insights into the deep spiritual links between the Church and the Jewish people and faith, insights that can only enrich and deepen Christian education and lead to a true appreciation of God's chosen people. Where we have reached substantial agreement, let us faithfully present it; where differences remain, let us respectfully await the clarification of the Spirit.

J. Heft, sm 1/8/88

FAX COVER SHEET

MARC H. TANENBAUM International Consultant American Jewish Committee

> 45 East 89th Street New York, NY 10128

212-831-2952 FAX: 212-876-8351

DATE: -T0: nune FAX #:-0 TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET - 3 MESSAGE AREA Heartiest Mazal los on your achievenent. The Glemptorie enormored good P cchange . cere Encloses is copy of my letter to Card U.S. Willebranks, other either will follow, Be IF THIS BOX IS CHECKED, PLEASE FAX BACK TO CONFIRM RECEIPT VOF THIS FAX. **RESPONSE AREA**

THE ABOVE FAX WAS RECEIVED GARBLED. PLEASE RESEND FAX.

۰.,

[start]

AMERICAN JEWISH Original documents faded and/or illegible

St. 20, 2057

Sir Sigmund Sternberg O.St.J. KCSG JP

02/10 '89 12:53

Star House Grafton Road London NW5 4BD Telephone 01-485 2538 Facsimile 01-485 4512

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum Director International Relations American Jewish Committee

2 October 1989 Date sss\md Our ref

Your rel

FAX: 3 pages including this

Dear Marc

I hope you had a good Rosh Hashanah and your sermon went well.

Professor Moses Schenfeld telephoned me requesting details relating to the Auschwitz Convent issue. He broadcasts and writes regularly and would like to use this material. I told him that we have been working together and, to save time, I would be grateful if you could forward the relevant information to him. Incidentally, he is a first cousin of mine. His address is: 1175 Greacen Point Road, Mamoroneck, New York, NY 10543.

I received a friendly telex from Cardinal Glemp in which he states he is very interested in the Sternberg Centre and he writes that he appreciates my openness to solve difficult problems and understanding of others.

The purpose of the Dinner on Thursday 5th October at the Royal Society of Medicine is to draw up the agenda for the symposium to clear up misunderstandings between Jews and Poles. I would appreciate receiving your thoughts on how you see the way forward which I could put forward at the dinner. I would like to draw your attention to last Friday's Herald Tribune which refers to a Munich Daily "Suddeutsche Zeitung".

I have heard that it is not we who solved the problem but it was solved by other methods. This lie will have to be countered. As you have written to President Bush, might I suggest you write informing him of what is happening.

-2-

Would it be possible for you to set out how you would like to see a reorganised ICJLC function. If so, could this be done in collaboration with Henry Siegman and Jim Rudin?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely AMERICAN JEWISH

RCH

SIR SIGMUND STERNBE

2 01 485 4512

STERNBERG

CATHOLIC HERALD, Friday, 29th September 1989

Lessons from Auschwitz row

SO Cardinal Josef Gleiap has finally given in and agreed to the Auschwitz carmel being moved. His decision, late in the day as it is, is of course to be welcomed. Had he stuck by the letter of the agreement signed by three cardinals and Jewish leaders in 1987 in Geneva the unpleasantness of the past months could have been avoided, but that subject has been treated in an earlier leader.

What needs to be asked now is what long-term damage has the Auschwitz debacle caused to Catholic-Jewish relationships. Leaders of the Jewish community in this country — most noticeably the ever sigorous Sir Sigmund Sternberg — have been keen to full a positive gloss on the change of heart by Cardinal Glemp.

But it would be foolish to pretend that the row over the Anschwitz carmel has not put in jeopardy the progress made to closer Catholic Jewish understanding. If only for the reason that for a long time the Polish Catholic authorities seemed to belittle the very acute pain that many Jews of moderate mind and moderate opinion worldwide felt about the presence of a group of nuns on ground they considered scared, the dispute has shown that much has yet to be achieved in mutual understanding of traditions, and of the residue of the past.

However, the very resilience of the links forged since the second Vatican Council and before between Catholics and Jews has also been demonstrated in the past months.

[end]

Original documents faded and/or illegible



JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY COMMENTARY (250 words)

FOR RELEASE OCTOBER 20, 1989

SIMCHAT TORAH SYMBOLIZES JEWISH CONTINUITY IN JOY By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum (Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

Simchat Torah, the Festival for Rejoicing with the Torah, is a remarkable balance wheel in the mental health of the Jewish people.

Preceded by the observance of Yom Kippur, with its fasting and repentance, one could conclude superficially that Judaism is a somber, self-denying faith that requires ascetic retreat from the world.

Sukkot, which begins Oct. 19, climaxed by Shemini Atzeret, Oct. 21, and Simchat Torah, Oct. 22, are festivals radiant with joy and celebration centered on recommitment to the Torah.

On the eve of Simchat Torah, gaiety fills the synagogue as the Torah scrolls are taken out of the ark. Each scroll is carried around the bimah, or pulpit, at least seven times, and each adult carries one around once.

The seven circuits, the rabbis observe, suggest that just as Joshua encircled the walls of Jericho seven times and they collapsed, so the walls of hatred and misunderstanding should collapse.

The hakofot, the circling procession, on Shemini Atzeret, the eighth evening, prepares for the next day of Simchat Torah, when the last verses and then the opening verses of the Chumash, the Five Books of Moses, are read, thus beginning the yearly cycle of the Torah reading.

All over the world on these festive days, with the same prayers and the same intonations, Jews rejoice over the Torah and renew their loyalty to the Covenant as the core of their Jewish existence.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant to the American Jewish Committee and is immediate past president of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.