

CD-1092 Transcription

Discusses Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger with reference to  
Jewish-Christian relations. undated.

Marc Tanenbaum:

-- Ratzinger by Marc Tanenbaum. (clears throat)

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, president of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is a world-class theologian. He is also regarded as a major theological influence on Pope John Paul II. Cardinal Ratzinger's traditionalist pronouncements on women, progressive Catholic theologians, seminary education, have created dramatic public controversy. And so it is with his pronouncements on Judaism and the Jewish people. Last October an interview published in an Italian right-wing publication, *Il Sabato*, Cardinal Ratzinger declared that the purpose of the dialogue between Catholics and Jews is to lead Jews to their fulfillment in Christianity. He held up as his model of Catholic-Jewish dialogue Sister Edith Stein, the Jewish woman who abandoned her Judaism to become a Catholic nun.

Her interview was regarded as deeply offensive by [01:00] by most believing Jews who resent the ancient notion that Judaism is spiritually exhausted and is displaced by Christianity. There

was a sympathetic response in the Vatican by Cardinal Willebrands among others, who hold a much more positive appreciation over the ongoing validity of Judaism. The Dutch Cardinal and Jewish leaders agreed months ago to hold a meeting with Cardinal Ratzinger in Rome later this year. When a reception with Cardinal Ratzinger was hastily arranged in New York City last week, several Jewish leaders decided not to attend. It was not a boycott. They simply felt that an improvised social reception with casual theological banter was not the way to deal with such basic issues. The real dialogue with Cardinal Ratzinger and with competent Jewish scholars is still to be held in Rome. This is Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee for ECU Media News.

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