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VATICAN COUNCIL II'S STATEMENT ON THE JEWS: FIVE YEARS LATER

A Survey of Progress and Problems in Implementing
the Conciliar Declaration in Europe, Israel,
Latin America, the United States and Canada

Compiled by the Foreign Affairs and Interreligious Affairs Departments of
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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PREFACE

CATHOLIC-JEWISH RELATIONS, 1970

October 28, 1970, marked the fifth anniversary of the adoption by Vatican Council II of the Conciliar Statement on the Jews, Nostra Aetate. Passed by an overwhelming vote of the Council Fathers and promulgated by Pope Paul VI, this statement is now part of the official magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church for its six hundred million communicants throughout the world.

Five years have passed since the adoption of the Declaration. What have been its effects? What has been accomplished, and what remains to be done?

The challenge confronting the architects of a new Catholic-Jewish understanding was a massive one, requiring in effect the creation of an entire new Christian culture regarding Jews, Judaism and Israel. Prior to Vatican Council II, the Catholic culture -- whose basic themes were established by the Church Fathers in the first four centuries, and supported or extended by subsequent Church legislation -- either ignored Judaism as a living religion, or deprecated it as a foil to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity. Despite the appearance of occasional conciliatory and affirmative views within the Church, normative Christian tradition most frequently held Jews corporately responsible for the death and crucifixion of Jesus, and tended to interpret Jewish suffering and persecution as proof that God had rejected the Jews for their refusal to accept Jesus as Messiah.

Vatican Council II began the process of reversing these attitudes. Not only did the Church officially repudiate anti-Semitism, but it also rejected the deicide charge, an accusation that was the basis of, or the rationalization for, persecution of Jews for centuries, even though it was never explicitly part of Church dogma. Moreover, the Declaration opened the way for the rediscovery by Catholics of the living reality of Judaism as a permanent source of truth and value to Jews, and of integral value to Christianity and Christians. Understandably, the effects of the Conciliar Statement have varied from nation to nation, indeed from community to community. The American Jewish Committee, which has been engaged in the systematic advancement of understanding and solidarity between religious, racial,

and ethnic groups through its programs in various parts of the world, has undertaken this survey in order to provide some basic data for evaluating the present state of Catholic-Jewish relations during the past five years in Western Europe, Israel, Latin America, Canada and the United States.

This preliminary study is also intended to provide a basis for identifying unresolved issues and unmet needs in Catholic-Jewish relations which constitute, at least in part, the "unfinished agenda" for the 1970s.

This five year review is a cooperative study carried out by the Foreign Affairs and Interreligious Affairs Departments of the American Jewish Committee. The reports on European developments were provided by Zachariah Shuster, director of the American Jewish Committee European office in Paris; the Israel report is based on material compiled by Dr. Bernard Resnikoff, director of AJC's Israel office in Jerusalem; Mexico and Central America reports were compiled by Sergio Nudelstejer, director of AJC's office in Mexico City; South America data were provided by Jacob Kovadloff, AJC director in Buenos Aires; by Rabbi Leon Klenicki; and by Dr. Alfred Hirschberg, AJC director in Sao Paulo, Brazil; and the United States data is based on a summary prepared by this writer. Mrs. Judith Banki, assistant director of AJC's Interreligious Affairs Department in New York City, is the author and editor of the complete survey.

Special appreciation is due to the Order of the Sisters of Zion who provided substantial factual information for the European segment of the survey, and who constitute one of the major intellectual and spiritual resources devoted to translating the Vatican Council's Statement on the Jews into a living reality in many parts of the world.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Interreligious Affairs Director
American Jewish Committee

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A major breakthrough in Catholic-Jewish understanding and in specific programs to implement the Declaration has occurred in the United States, where large and influential Catholic and Jewish communities live side-by-side. A report of the secretariat for Catholic-Jewish relations, presented to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C. on November 17, 1970,¹ notes:

"The promulgation of the Vatican Council statement opened a new era of historic dimensions in the relations of Christians and Jews. The task of implementing its directives was taken up without delay by the U.S. Episcopal Conference with the formation in 1965 of the Sub-commission for Catholic-Jewish affairs, under the chairmanship of Bishop Francis P. Leipzig, as a part of the Bishops' Commission for Ecumenical Affairs. The Sub-commission has since been transformed into the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations with Bishop Francis J. Mugavero as episcopal moderator. Since 1967 the Secretariat has maintained a full-time office at Seton Hall University with Rev. Edward Flannery as Executive Secretary. In 1967, through the Secretariat office, the Conference issued Guidelines for Catholic-Jewish Relations, a detailed directory for assisting the dioceses in furthering Catholic-Jewish understanding and cooperation. These were the first such Guidelines to be issued by an episcopal conference."

The Secretariat has encouraged the establishment in each diocese of an office or some other arrangement to attend to matters of Jewish-Christian understanding and to work in collaboration with the national office. It has provided a variety of materials to assist the dioceses toward this goal, including questionnaires, a newsletter, bibliographies, position papers on Jewish-Christian problems, and model programs dealing with textbook inspection. It has held regular meetings with major Jewish organizations, rabbinical and communal, to explore mutual problems and attitudes and to encourage joint projects.

The report indicates that about thirty-five dioceses have some official arrangement to deal with Catholic-Jewish relations, and a few more have a more informal and unorganized way of dealing with them. Particularly active have been the dioceses of Brooklyn, Albany, Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Rockville Centre, Philadelphia, Detroit and Galveston-Houston. Of special note has been the joint publication by the dioceses of Brooklyn, New York, and Rockville Centre of extensive guidelines, which have attracted attention in Europe as well as in America. Noting that, "an estrangement of nearly two millennia

duration could hardly be fully remedied in four or five years," the report points to some remaining problems.

"1) Anti-Semitism, though low toned and unconscious in most cases is, studies show, still widespread, so that constant effort must be made to detect and unmask its many disguises.

"2) Basic to the defeat of antipathy toward Jews is the renewal of our theology regarding the place of Judaism in the divine plan. The II Vatican Council statement has illumined the way with its rejection of the deicidal tradition and its positive assertion of the special bond between the Church and the Synagogue. As yet, however, Catholic scholars have not sufficiently pursued these directions of research, despite the fact that much of the old anti-Judaism often affects our sermons, catechisms, and writings.

"3) The State of Israel has become a serious stumbling block in Jewish-Christian relations. Jews have in the vast majority identified with that State whether as a refuge from anti-Semitism, a new source of Jewish identity and survival, or as a Messianic fulfillment. They see Zionism as central to Judaism itself and essential not only to Israeli but also Jewish survival, and therefore as an ecumenical and a religious consideration which should be included in the dialogue. They have judged Christian coolness or silence with respect to Israel's peril, especially during the Six Day War, as indifference toward what they considered the possibility of another genocide, and have expressed their disappointment. The charge of silence has been taken into the dialogue with good results. Among other things, Christian dialogists have learned more of the intense bond uniting Jews to Israel, and Jews have learned some of the questions Christians have had on its subject.

"To summarize, Catholic-Jewish understanding has advanced tremendously within the last five years, but is still faced with several serious problems. Some suspicion of Christian motives and sincerity in dialogue still lurks on the Jewish side, and a widespread indifference to the dialogue persists on the Christian side. There is nonetheless reason to hope that as our dioceses move on further to implement the II Vatican Council statement on the Jews, the next five years will witness another flowering equal to the first."

Several other areas of progress in the United States, not specified in the report of the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, deserve mention. One is the significant effort to improve Catholic teaching about Jews and Judaism, reflected both in textbook materials and in classroom teaching on every level.

In the late 50's and early 60's, the American Jewish Committee helped initiate and sponsor a series of self-studies of Catholic textbooks then most widely used throughout the United States.² Carried out at St. Louis University, the studies pointed to serious inadequacies and prejudiced treatment of Jews and Judaism in the materials. The findings, circulated to major publishers of Catholic textbooks, stimulated a process of self-correction and revision which undoubtedly received a great impetus from the passage of the conciliar statement and the subsequent guidelines of the American bishops. Today, almost every publisher of Catholic textbooks has either produced new materials or revised older series in the light of the findings of the St. Louis studies and the recommendations of the bishops' guidelines.

In similar vein, a survey covering various aspects of teachings about Jews and Judaism in Catholic seminaries, colleges and universities, and high schools appears to indicate a serious effort to treat Judaism more fully and fairly in the school curricula. Undertaken jointly by the Institute of Judeo-Christian Studies at Seton-Hall University, and the AJC, the survey³ indicates that 40% of the seminaries and the colleges provide courses in Jewish studies; 41.3% of the seminaries and 75% of the colleges treat Judaism in courses in comparative religion; and 82.7% of the seminaries and 68.9% of the colleges offer Scripture courses which specifically treat the relationship of Christianity to Judaism.

While smaller percentages of these institutions deal with the theology of the Nazi holocaust or the history or theological significance of the State of Israel, these subjects appear to have a fuller treatment in Catholic high schools. Almost 70% of the high schools responding to the questionnaire reported that they invite local rabbis into the classrooms when Judaism is being discussed. While comparative statistics are not available for pre-Vatican II Catholic education, the findings undoubtedly reveal significant progress, according to Sister Rose Albert Thering, O.P., who coordinated the study.

No report on Christian-Jewish relations on the American scene can be complete without some mention of the enormous range of program activities between the two communities. It is impossible to catalogue the conferences, institutes, lectures, scholarly exchanges and fraternal dialogues which have taken place in recent years.⁴ It is possible, however, to provide an outline of the categories into which these activities fall, with a few illustrative examples:

1. Scholarly exchanges between theologians and academicians on historical, theological and biblical studies. Examples: a convocation "Toward a Theology of Israel," co-sponsored by the Institute of Judeo-Christian Studies and the American Jewish Committee in observance of the Fifth anniversary of the conciliar statement, which brought together leading Catholic, Protestant and Jewish scholars in an intensive evaluation of recent accomplishments and unmet needs; an international colloquium at Harvard Divinity School in 1966.⁵
2. Training institutes for Catholic teachers to advance understanding of Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations. Examples: Institutes on Jewish-Catholic relations for religion teachers of the Archdiocese of Chicago; Institutes of Jewish studies for Catholic teachers in colleges and universities, generally held during the summer months at Catholic colleges in various parts of the U.S. with both Catholic and Jewish faculty members. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has prepared a series of films on "The Image of the Jews" which is being widely used.
3. Conferences of religious educators to evaluate and improve the ways in which each faith teaches about other faiths. These have been held in Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Los Angeles, to name a few,⁶ frequently under the sponsorship of the Religious Education Association.
4. Lecture series by Jewish and Catholic scholars in universities and seminaries. Examples: A lecture series by eminent Jewish scholars at Pius XII Religious Education Center in Detroit; at St. John's University, Long Island, New York; St. Meinrad's in Indiana; at St. Louis University Divinity school. The Jewish Chatauqua Society has been active in this field.
5. Fraternal dialogues including laymen. Innumerable "living room dialogues" in which groups of laymen, frequently married couples, meet on a regular basis in one another's homes have been carried on in major cities throughout the country. The purpose of these dialogues is to help Jews and Catholics know and understand one another as human beings, and to overcome stereotypes or mythologies that each group holds of the other. The National Council of Catholic Men and National Council of Catholic Women have helped to promote such dialogues by preparing special materials for them, including a brochure on "Jewish-Christian Dialogues."⁷
6. In addition to the specifically interreligious programs, we can note the intensification of Catholic-Jewish cooperation in the fields of welfare, relief and social action. This cooperation covers both

international concerns (such as joint Catholic, Protestant and Jewish efforts to provide food, clothing, and medicine during the Nigerian-Biafran conflict) and American domestic priorities such as anti-poverty programming, race relations, white ethnic concerns, urban renewal, and other forms of social action.

In similar vein, there has been increasing cooperation on a working level between Catholic and Jewish professionals involved in mass media, such as television, journalism, etc. Increasingly, religious periodicals publish articles, letters and viewpoints of spokesmen of other faiths; radio and television programs sponsored by religious groups invite guests of other faiths to participate in the programs.

It should be noted that the kinds of activities described but not exhausted in the above outline, have been initiated in a variety of ways: at the instigation of individual Catholic or Jewish religious and communal leaders, with the encouragement and support of national bodies, or by local groups or educational institutions. Much of this activity has been initiated by Jewish communal organizations such as the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Both of these groups have supported and participated in a variety of projects and produced, in cooperation with Catholic scholars and educators, a variety of publications.⁸ The Jewish Chatauqua Society, an agency of Reform Judaism in the United States, has also provided rabbis as lecturers and resource experts at Christian schools and at conferences and institutes. The Institute of Religious and Social Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America has provided a regular forum for Jewish-Christian communication. The general secretaries of the three umbrella groups - the National Council of Churches, the Synagogue Council of America, and the U.S. Catholic Conference - meet frequently to exchange information and viewpoints.

WESTERN EUROPE

A survey undertaken by the Sisters of Zion regarding the implementation of the Conciliar statement in Europe, reveals significant areas of progress, as well as remaining problems. In the eleven (11) countries surveyed, some efforts have been made to familiarize priests, seminarians and laymen with basic concepts of Judaism. There has been more progress in some areas than in others, much depending upon the initiative and determination of individual Catholic leaders.

GERMANY

There is no episcopal committee on Christian-Jewish relations, but Cardinal Jaeger, Bishop of Paderborn, has been authorized to deal with the subject.

The Oberammergau Passion Play,⁹ long a source of concern for Jews, remained a potent issue in 1970. While a number of Catholic clergymen made known their disapproval of the text, and Cardinal Doepfner, the Archbishop of Munich, expressed the wish that the play be modified, the 1970 performances of the play were carried out in the old style with minor changes. (Jews, who view the play as incorporating medieval anti-Jewish prejudices, indicated they will continue to press for changes.)

In Munich, a Catholic-Judaic institute organized periodic meetings of working groups on Christian-Jewish relations. This institute contains a library and dissemination center for students and research workers.

The Catholic Academy of Bavaria has frequently organized seminars and public discussions on the subject of the Conciliar declaration.

The 81st and 83rd national Catholic rallies, held in Bamberg in 1966 and Trier in 1970, devoted special sessions to the subject of Christian-Jewish relations. The latter was followed by an ecumenical ceremony at which the Bishop of Trier participated, and after which many faithful went to the synagogue on the Sabbath.

Catholics take part in the activities of the Coordinating Council of the 45 Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, which number 6 to 7 thousand members. The council has published two volumes: Anti-Semitism in the New Testament, 1967; and Jewish People--The Promised Land, 1970.

German theologians met at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, at a session attended by 9 Catholics, 9 Protestants and 10 Jews.

The Coordinating Council prepared a list of chairs and courses available in German universities and academies which are devoted to the subject of Judaism, Jewish history and anti-Semitism.

There was Catholic participation at educators' meetings, near Hanover, to examine school manuals. Cooperation with the Council of Europe on this question is foreseen.

At the initiative of the German episcopate, a study was prepared a few years ago on religious teaching with regard to Jews. There is, however, no information as to the implementation of this study. A Catholic educator, Dr. Charlotte Klein, (Sister Louis Gabriel) of Frankfurt University, has claimed that the basic materials used for theological training in German universities continue to reflect the entrenched anti-Jewish prejudices of earlier decades, and require radical revision.

An important periodical on Christian-Jewish relations, the Freiburger Rundbrief edited by Dr. G. Luckner, provides a helpful collection of documents and statements on Christian-Jewish relations.

AUSTRIA

There is no episcopal committee on Christian-Jewish relations but Cardinal Koenig, Archbishop of Vienna, has expressed personal interest in the subject, and presided at the opening of a symposium at the University of Vienna on the subject, "Hatred of Jews -- Fault of Christians?" in 1965. On October 23, 1970, the Vienna Synod published a declaration which has not yet been circulated.

A working group called Christians and Jews was founded in the 50's, within the Pax Christi movement, later replaced by the coordinating committee for Christian-Jewish cooperation. With the purpose of helping implement the conciliar declaration, the association has promoted mutual knowledge among Christians and Jews. In December of every year, it convenes a conference of theologians and exegetes whose deliberations are later published. Three volumes have appeared, edited by Father Clemens Thoma. The association also directed a memorandum to Cardinal Koenig in 1967 concerning Catholic teaching with regard to Judaism, which has resulted in certain corrections in the textbooks. The Sisters of Zion have established a Jewish-Christian information center in Vienna. Catholics participate with other Christians in the activities of the group; Aktion Gegenden Anti-Semitismus. The University of Vienna has a Judaism institute headed by Professor Kurt Schubert.

At the request of religious authorities, objects displayed in the Judenstern Church recalling a legendary martyr of "ritual murder," were removed. There is still a question of removing an offensive fresco on the ceiling of this church and of curtailing a celebration in honor of the centenary of this legendary martyr, Andre de Rinn.

BELGIUM

A subcommission for relations between Christians and Jews, attached to the national commission on ecumenism, was established in December 1967. The subcommission of twelve members met for the first time in 1968, with the goal of implementing and developing the conciliar declaration. It hopes to "combat all forms of religious anti-Semitism, whether in teaching, preaching, the press, radio and TV," and to promote relations between Christians and Jews through increased knowledge of Judaism in Christian circles. The subcommission declared that it will abstain from proselytizing.

A documentation service, run by the Sisters of Our Lady of Zion, will organize the information now at the disposal of the Centre des Hautes Etudes Juives at the Free University of Brussels, the Louvain Center for Studies of Vatican II, and the Center of Socio-Religious research.

On the diocesan level, at Malines-Brussels, an ecumenical commission of 18 members was elected in February 1970 for a period of three years, one member being charged with responsibility for Christian-Jewish relations. Cardinal Suenens and the episcopate have concerned themselves with vestiges of medieval traditions. In December 1968, the Diocesan Commission of Malines published a release on the stained glass, tapestries and paintings in St. Michael's Cathedral which portray alleged profanation by Jews of the eucharist in Brussels in 1370. An explanation in five languages is put at the doors of the Cathedral. The episcopate has requested the circulation of the statement clarifying all allusions to the pretended miracle.

The Maredsous Sessions - A group of 12 to 15 European theologians (from France, Belgium, Holland and Italy) has been meeting for some years in the Maredsous Abbey, near Namur, for 2-1/2 days of work and exchange of views. The subjects of these colloquia are based on a biblical theme, discussed according to the Jewish and Christian tradition, in order to arrive at the similarities, the continuity and the differences of the two traditions.

In June 1966, a session on general Christian-Jewish relations took place in the Benedictine monastery of Ermeton. Chief Rabbi Bulz, of Luxembourg, participated in this session.

In January, Father Cornelius Rijk of Rome gave lectures in Antwerp and Brussels.

Courses on Judaism are given at the theological faculty of the Catholic University of Louvain by Dom M. Bogaert, o.s.b.

There is a project for a Judaic Institute under the patronage of a mixed commission, at which Msgr. Descamps is delegated by the bishops as representative of the Catholic University. Its aim: to work with the Compendium Rerum Judaicarum in Holland; promote the study of Judaism; and gather documentation on existing Judaica in Belgium.

An important step toward the implementation of the conciliar declaration was a three-year study completed in 1969, of French language Catholic textbooks widely used in religious teachings in France, Belgium, Canada and Switzerland. The study, covering a depth analysis of 79 volumes published between 1945 and 1966, was undertaken at Louvain University by Canon Francois Houtart of the Center of Social Religious Research and Canon Jean Giblest of the Center of Catechetical Research and was co-sponsored by the American Jewish Committee. While the study found relatively few accusations of deicide, it revealed that Jews are depicted as "type portrayals" of "non-believers of bad faith, as examples not to follow..." The Judaism of Jesus' time is viewed as materialist and legalistic, and accounts of the passion in many of the lessons collectively implicate all Jews of Jesus' time in his condemnation and death.

A second Louvain University study on Catholic attitudes to Jews is currently under way. It seeks to discover the relative influence of religion as a possible source of anti-Jewish prejudice and stereotypes when examined together with other, non-religious sources of anti-Jewish prejudice.

While no systematic implementation of the findings of the Louvain textbook study has yet been undertaken, there are suggested plans to contact publishers and authors of the textbooks investigated.

ITALY

There is no episcopal commission on Christian-Jewish relations. Father Cornelius Rijk, head of the Vatican office for Catholic-Jewish relations, has established a documentation center where conferences and exhibitions have taken place. SIDIC, a bulletin of international documentation and essays on Christian-Jewish relations, which is edited by Father Rijk, has made a notable contribution to the dialogue in many parts of the world.

Impetus for the elimination of anti-Jewish references in textbooks has come from a study carried out at the Leonard M. Sperry Center for Intergroup Cooperation of the Pro Deo University. Entitled Religion and Prejudice, "a content analysis of Catholic religious textbooks in Italy and Spain," the study was authored by Professors Otto Klineberg and Tullio Tentori, co-directors of the Sperry Center; Professor Franco Crespi, Director of the Institute of Sociology of Pro Deo University; and Professor Vincenzo Filippone of the Center staff. The study covered 142 religious manuals published in Italy between 1950 and 1964, and 115 volumes of Spanish language texts. While noting the need for further research, the authors concluded, "We must confess to a feeling of dismay at the amount of hostility we have uncovered. To the extent that this hostility has been unintentional, we may have reason to hope that an awareness of its nature and its frequency may have a salutary effect."

Some modifications in religious textbooks have already been made as a result of this study. A variety of events have taken place in Catholic institutions in Italy related to Jewish-Christian concerns, for example, a seminar on "Israel and the Mystery of Salvation" at the Catholic University of Milan. In Florence, there is a group called Amicizia, which publishes a monthly bulletin and organizes conferences on Judaism. The Sisters of Zion organized a course on Judaism under the title, "Dialogue." Also of note is the appointment of an American rabbi, David Neiman, as visiting professor in theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He will teach a course in Jewish literature and the New Testament.

SPAIN

There is no episcopal committee, nor was an official declaration made. But there is encouragement from the archbishops of Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Seville to promote Christian-Jewish relations. In Madrid, the archbishop approved the establishment of a study center for Judaism, and appointed Don Vincenta Serrano as the person responsible for Judeo-Christian activities.

Amistad, the Christian-Jewish Society created in 1961, can be considered as the Catholic body for dialogue with Jews. The Secretariat is located at the headquarters of our Lady of Zion. Amistad's program for teachers' training this year is: "The teaching of esteem, a task in the world today."

Amistad organizes public lectures and colloquia in colleges, seminaries, universities and theology faculties. These are private meetings.

There is interest in the formation of a center for Judaic studies for Christians. A group meets every 15 days to study together a theme and prepare documentation to satisfy the numerous requests for information on Jewish subjects.

There are courses on Judaism in the theological faculty of Vittoria, San Sebastian and Seville, at which the participation of the Madrid rabbi is frequently requested. There are courses in modern Hebrew by audio-visual methods.

As a result of the findings of the Pro Deo study of Spanish language textbooks, cited above, efforts were made in 1967 and 1968 to deal with some of the objectionable passages in catechetic materials of primary and secondary levels. Apparently, editors have accepted modifications of some of the objectionable materials.

FRANCE

An episcopal commission on Christian-Jewish relations was founded in 1969. In addition, the Church has undertaken several official actions of primary concern to Jews. The archbishopry of Paris refused its imprimatur to a book, Judaism and Christianity, which it recognized as being contrary to the spirit of the Vatican declaration. In April, 1969, the episcopal commission issued several statements on the situation in the Middle East, in order to counteract activities of some Catholic groups hostile to Israel.

An information bureau attached to the publication Encounter Today which has been operating since 1960 at the headquarters of the Sisters of Zion, in 1968 became a branch of the International Information Service established in Rome by Father Rijk.

There have been various Jewish-Christian symposia held throughout the country. Significant examples are: A meeting of European and American theologians on the subject of messianism, in Strasbourg, which included Msgr. Ramsellar of Holland and Msgr. Elchinger, Bishop of Strasbourg, who suggested that petitions be sent to the Vatican asking for guidelines in implementation of the conciliar declaration. Other symposia include one held in Paris in June, 1970 on "Judaism and Ecumenism" and one on "the Mystery of Israel." In addition, the Sisters of Zion have organized courses on Biblical Hebrew in Paris, Lyons, Strasbourg and other cities.

Among periodicals dealing with Jewish-Christian rapprochement, Encounter Today, which is published in Paris in English, has already been mentioned. There is also a series of pamphlets called

Verité, aimed at teachers, which provides material regarding religious teachings on Jews and Judaism, a review called Rencontre Chrétiens-Juifs, and occasional bulletins of the Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne, an organization to improve Christian-Jewish relations in France which has been active for many years. The major French language Jewish publication, l'Arche, deals regularly with matters of Jewish-Christian concern.

In August 1969, Msgr. Riobé made a public declaration with regard to the rumors of Orleans, an incident which involved the accusation of some Jews there of carrying on white slave traffic.

THE NETHERLANDS

The episcopate in Holland has established a subcommission on the church and Israel, headed by Msgr. Ramsellar, which prepared a report on relations between Jews and Christians which was presented to the Pastoral Council of the Catholic Church in April 1970. This exemplary document recalls the contribution of the Jews to the history of Dutch civilization, and the destruction of most of the Jewish communities in the Netherlands during the years of the Nazi occupation. It vigorously condemns anti-Semitism; rejects proselytism "as contrary to human dignity and Christian conviction;" emphasizes the liturgical bond between Jewish and Christian worship; and suggests improvements in catechetical teaching regarding Jews and Judaism. A series of pastoral recommendations deriving from the report were adopted by the Pastoral Council. The Council has also prepared recommendations on changes in religious textbooks.

Catholics participate in the study of Judaism at the Institute Het Leerhuis, in which Protestants, Catholics and Jews study Bible and Talmud together.

LUXEMBOURG

Msgr. Elcheroth is charged by the episcopate to deal with Christian-Jewish relations, and Catholics are represented in the Interfaith Committee of Luxembourg, which recently became affiliated with the ICC in London.

Msgr. Igino Cardinale, Apostolic Nuncio for the Benelux countries, took part in the meeting of the International Consultative Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations held in Luxembourg last year.

SWITZERLAND

While there is no episcopal commission, Catholics participate actively in the Christian-Jewish Working Group.

Students of Catholic schools for adults often visit synagogues.

GREAT BRITAIN

The Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Heenan, has appointed a commission of 8 members to deal with Christian-Jewish relations, chaired by Mr. Christopher Hollis. The seat of the Secretariat is at the Study Center of Bible and Judaism of the Sisters of Our Lady of Zion.

This commission published in 1970, a pamphlet of guidelines which also contains a resume of its activities.

The Study Center has held two sessions on biblical Hebrew and one session on Jewish sources of Christian liturgy.

In October 1966, an international consultation on Jewish-Christian relations was held at Cambridge University. One of the early post Vatican Council meetings on this subject, it gave impetus to implementation of the conciliar statement, with particular emphasis on the need to revise religious teaching regarding Jews and Judaism.

Recently, the Corpus Christi College for Catechetics, which is located in the college of the Sisters of Our Lady of Zion, arranged a conference on Judaism for its students. The study of Judaism is incorporated in the courses on comparative religion in the upper classes of secondary schools.

Among the publications of the Sisters of Zion are the bulletin of the center, which treats a special subject in each issue, as for instance, the Pharisees; Jews in the Gospel of St. John; the Synagogue; the Historicity of the New Testament; Passover and the Last Supper; Human responsibility in the Death of Christ; the Sabbath; Religious Significance of Jerusalem; etc.

The Center of Biblical and Jewish Studies has completed a survey of religious textbooks during the last thirty years. This survey will be followed by a review of the presentation of Jews in teaching at schools; and both studies will be published in one volume.

IRELAND

The establishment of an episcopal sub-commission for Christian-Jewish relations is planned for the coming year.

Various meetings have taken place on elements of Judaism and racial problems, with the participation of Jews. The Sisters of Our Lady of Zion have organized conferences and seminars, both for laymen and religious students.

Since 1965, annual lectures were given for students on the general subject of Christian-Jewish relations, and this year the theme discussed was the declaration Nostra Aetate-Five Years Later, which was dealt with by two speakers, a Catholic and a Jew, to an audience of about 200 persons.

The Sisters of Our Lady of Zion have organized a ceremonial Seder for seminarists, with the participation of groups of priests and students.

LATIN AMERICA

The population of the Latin American continent, where some 220,000,000 people now live in the 20 major countries, is one of the fastest growing in the world. It is also the most heavily Catholic area in the world today.

There are approximately 772,000 Jews in Latin America, making it the fifth largest Jewish community in the world (after the U.S., U.S.S.R., Israel and France.) Argentina's 500,000 account for about 2 per cent of that country's population. In South America as a whole, the ratio is below 0.5% in Mexico and Central America the proportion is about 0.05%. Brazil's Jewish community is second in size to Argentina, with about 150,000, followed by Uruguay with approximately 54,000 and Mexico with approximately 36,000.

While there have been some indications of progress in Catholic-Jewish relations in some countries, the pace of interreligious understanding has been very slow. The situation in Latin America is also complicated by the lack of democratic regimes in some countries, and by some internal Catholic dissension, with small groups of militant priests and nuns on one hand, and a pre-conciliar hierarchy on the other. Understandably, where the government is repressive or the church torn by ideological dispute, Catholic-Jewish relations assumes low priority.

ARGENTINA

With the largest Jewish population of any South American country, Argentina represents something of a paradox in Catholic-Jewish relations. On the one hand, the foremost anti-Semitic agitator and disseminator of hate material is a Roman Catholic priest, Father Julio Meinville, who has been associated with the right-wing anti-Semitic group, Tacuara. An increasing amount of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist literature has been openly sold in bookstores and newsstands. On the other hand, some important progress has been made in specific areas in Jewish-Christian relations. Anti-Semitic attitudes and statements on the part of Catholic teachers and professors have decreased, and there have been some fundamental changes in textbooks and catechisms. Lay-clerical groups have held conferences to discuss anti-Semitism and related subjects and to plan action--which may or may not be carried out. Publications have been printed and distributed. Lectures have been delivered in universities, synagogues and even hotels. "Ecumenical actions" have occurred from time to time with clerical participation.

Some ecumenical encounters worthy of mention are:

A meeting at the Catholic Seminary at Buenos Aires on the subject, "Possibilities of the Dialogue," which included representatives of the main Jewish organizations and rabbis representing Orthodox, Conservative and reform viewpoints.

An encounter organized with the Benedictine Sisters on the subject "How Do We See Our Neighbors," which included 10 Jewish and Catholic couples in a discussion of how Catholics and Jews view one another.

A meeting on "The Land of Israel and the State of Israel: Their Meaning for Judaism and Christianity."

A panel to discuss the article "The Myth of the Jewish Christian Tradition" which was translated into Spanish.

These and several other meetings were initiated by Rabbi Leon Klenicki, Director of the Latin American office of World Union for Progressive Judaism, and consultant to the American Jewish Committee.

Most activity in this field was carried out by the Confraternidad Judeo-Cristiana, a brotherhood organization of Christians and Jews,

which has existed in Argentina since 1957. This group has struggled against the indifference, if not the outright hostility, of the conservative hierarchy, as well as the suspicions and doubts of some Argentine Jews, especially the Orthodox. (Apparently, a visit to Argentina by Father Cornelius Rijk in 1970, and his meetings with the Jewish community there, did much to dissipate this suspicion.) In the past two years, a few Argentine Catholic officials, primarily those assigned to the department of ecumenism of the Latin American Bishops' Conference (CELAM) have moved toward cooperation. Fathers Jorge Mejía and Luis Rivas, charged with responsibility for Catholic-Jewish relations, maintain a good liaison with the Jewish community. Nevertheless, the evaluation by the AJC office in Buenos Aires of the situation in Argentina will probably serve to describe the situation in most Latin American countries: that the most active role in the promotion of Jewish-Christian relations and in activities connected with implementation of the Conciliar Declaration has been fundamentally played by Jews.

BRAZIL

The tense religious and political situation does not favor official interreligious dialogue. There is no Jewish-Christian brotherhood organization in Rio de Janeiro; there are, however, some study groups in which a local rabbi and Sister Paula Teresa of the Order of Zion are active. The Sister has translated several studies of Jewish-Christian interest into Portuguese. In general, however, the Brazilian bishops are indifferent to the dialogue, due mainly to their lack of knowledge of Judaism. Even where some interest has been expressed, there seems little desire for concrete programming. There is a Chair of Hebrew Studies at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

In Sao Paulo, there is an active Jewish-Christian Brotherhood Council which publishes a bulletin (Encontro) and participates in a Chair of Jewish Studies at the University of Sao Paulo. The Council has held interfaith Passover-Easter services. As the first in a series of pamphlets, the Council, together with the National Office of Ecumenism, published a translation of "Human Responsibility and the Death of Christ," a publication of the Center for Biblical and Jewish Studies in London. Rabbi Fritz Pinkuss represented the Jewish community at a memorial meeting for the late Cardinal Bea in March.

COLOMBIA

On August 20 and 21, 1968, a significant Jewish-Christian meeting was held in Bogota, co-sponsored by the department of ecumenism of the Latin American bishops and B'nai B'rith (Caribbean). The meeting took place during the visit to that country of Pope Paul VI.

A number of resolutions were suggested, such as the revision of textbooks and catechisms, as well as dictionaries and encyclopedias to eliminate prejudice. Nevertheless, there is no evidence of these suggestions being implemented in a systematic way. Apparently, the principles of the conciliar statement have not been applied, because of the lack of normative rules or guidelines to carry them out.

CHILE AND URUGUAY

On September 16, 1967, the pastoral synod of the Catholic church of the province of Santiago, approved a statement on Jewish-Catholic relations. The statement asserted the need for dialogue on a theological religious level, and the necessity of forming a commission to work in collaboration with the Jewish community to revise catechetical texts in the spirit of the conciliar statement. According to reports, this excellent text has never been systematically implemented, although there is a small group at the Catholic University of Valparaiso concerned with these matters. Apparently, the work of the brotherhoods in Chile and Uruguay has been relatively stagnant.

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

In Mexico, there have been a few expressions of Catholic-Jewish rapprochement, largely on a ceremonial level. For example, on the first anniversary of the promulgation of the conciliar declaration, the President of the Mexican Theological Society lectured before a large audience. There have been several other lectures by Catholic authorities, including one by Archbishop Darío Miranda at Congregation Bet El in Mexico.

There is, however, no single structural organization to coordinate activities in this field, and no indication that the conciliar statement is being implemented on a mass level. The pre-formed, stereotyped concepts of the Jews as Christ killers and a condemned people still abound. In an investigation made in a poor neighborhood of Mexico City, of 16 persons interviewed, not only did none of them know anything about the conciliar declaration on the Jews; they did not even know of the existence of Vatican Council II.

In Central America, with the exception of Costa Rica, there has been no decisive or fundamental change in the area of Jewish-Christian relations. The small country of Costa Rica has had a Jewish-Christian brotherhood organization for 15 years which has sponsored many conferences and published a series of booklets. There is also the "Centro Elias," a center for biblical information and Jewish-Christian relations which has played an important role and published some materials on Christian teaching and anti-Semitism.

In Mexico and Central America, there is still a high degree of anti-Semitism, some of it from Catholic sources. The works of Father Meinville are widely circulated, as well as books of other anti-Semitic authors, such as Father Dr. Joaquin Seenz de Arriaga, and Salvador Borrego. Apparently some of these books are used as textbooks in some Catholic schools.

ARAB ANTI-SEMITISM

No survey of Jewish-Catholic relations in Latin America can be complete without some mention of the impact of an aggressive and heavily financed Arab Propaganda campaign. This campaign has not been restricted to anti-Israel propaganda, but has manipulated some of the classical themes of traditional anti-Semitism. The infamous forgery Protocols of the Elders of Zion has been published and distributed in Latin America by Arab sources. After the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, a series of advertisements appeared in principal newspapers, accusing Jews of double loyalty and warning of their potentially harmful position. These announcements were paid for by Catholic students organizations.

In addition, Arab sources have promoted atrocity stories relating to Israeli treatment of Christians and Christian holy places. For example, a book, The Tragedy of Christianity in Israel, published by the office of the Arab League in Buenos Aires, with a foreword by Msgr. Hakim, which scandalously misrepresents the facts, has received wide circulation on the continent. An appeal by the Bishop of Lebanon for Christians to "condemn the atrocities committed by the Jews against Palestinians and the holy places," was widely diffused in Mexico. Several Catholic publications have consistently followed the Arab line.

The Arabs play both sides of the divisions which exist in the Latin American Catholic community. They appeal to the third-world orientation of leftist youth by depicting Israel as an extension of Yankee imperialism. They appeal to the traditionally conservative Catholic element by raking over classical anti-Semitic themes and charging atrocities against Christians in Israel. The impact of these campaigns cannot be discounted as a source of continued anti-Jewish feeling in Latin America.

CANADA

Organized interfaith activity in Canada was initiated by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, founded more than twenty years ago. In the early 1950's the first Amitié-Judéo-Chrétienne was formed in Quebec, having as a specific aim the exchange of ideas on a religious level. More recently, there was organized in Montreal Le Cercle Roi David, an interfaith group in which laymen have taken an active role.

After Vatican Council II, the Canadian Catholic Conference formed a Commission on Ecumenism. This has both a French Secretariat, headed by Father Stephane Valiquette, S.J., and an English Secretariat, headed by Father John Keating, C.S.P. While there is no specific Canada-wide commission on Catholic-Jewish relations, the most important center for such activity in French-speaking Canada is the Mi-Ca-El Center in Montreal, headed by Sister Marie Noelle, N.D.S. In June, 1967, the Mi-Ca-El Center was attached to the Montreal Diocesan Ecumenical Commission.

Among English speaking Canadians, Catholic Jewish relations were the special responsibility of Sister Regina, N.D.S. until September 1968. In the same month, Father Edward L. Bader, C.S.P. was appointed by the Canadian Bishops as working consultant for the English secretariat; he has been active in the area of Catholic-Jewish relations. As a first step, he appointed regional representatives: Msgr. Chartrand, Rector of St. Mary's Cathedral, for the Winnipeg area; Professor William Dumphy of St. Michael's College, for the Toronto area; and Father Laurence Frizzell of St. Joseph's Seminary, for the Edmonton, Alberta area.

After consultation with Father Cornelius Rijk, Father Edward Flannery and others, it was decided that special emphasis in English-speaking Canada in 1969 would be on seminary programs similar to Catholic-Jewish institutes which had been held in several colleges in the U.S. An institute was held February 24-27 at St. Joseph's Seminary in Edmonton (Father Frizzell had been previously active in this field: in 1965 and 1966, he invited Rabbi Louis Ginsberg to demonstrate the Passover seder for Catholic students in the Seminary.)

March 24-26, an "Institute on Judaism" was held at St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto. Arranged by Father Bader, the three-day institute included seminars by three rabbis, one Orthodox, one Conservative, and one Reform. The lectures covered halachah, Catholic-Jewish relations, the historical and theological development of Judaism since 1800, and the program concluded with a Passover meal

for 75 Canadians at Holy Blossom Temple.

In Montreal, Quebec, a course on Judaism was begun in 1967 by the Theology Department of Loyola College. Taught by two rabbis, David Hartman and Leonard Poller, both graduates of Catholic universities in the U.S., it was the first such course to be offered for credit by any Catholic College or university in Canada. In addition, both Loyola College in Montreal and Hillel House in Winnipeg have organized study days between Christians and Jews. These programs consisted of conferences, small group discussions and meals in common.

The activities of the Mi-Ca-El Center include an ongoing program to inform Christians about Jews and Judaism, through correspondence, articles, conferences, dialogues and occasional participation in mass media programs. The Center also sponsors lectures and dialogue meetings among lay persons. For instance, a two-week program on a local radio station allowed a large listening audience to phone or write in questions concerning relations today in the province between Christians and Jews, ecumenical work and prejudice in general.

A series of courses on Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations have been given to two groups of student Sisters from different congregations, to two contemplative communities, and others.

A group of young people experienced an initiation to Jewish life through the presentation of a seder and traditional Sabbath which included recitations and singing (in French, English and Hebrew).

The Center has been similarly active in informing Jewish groups about the attitude of the post-conciliar church with regard to ecumenism and Catholic-Jewish relations. For example, Sister Noelle lectured on her recent visit to the Holy Land, to members of the French-speaking Jewish Sephardic community in Montreal and to the Cercle Juif. Lectures have also been held at the Mi-Ca-El Center in both French and English. In January of 1970, the Center hosted a dinner and discussion evening for Father Edward Flannery and Andre Chouraqui, vice-mayor of Jerusalem. In February the Center hosted a group of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish couples discussing different family religious customs and the religious education of children. In April, the Center held a one-week biblical Hebrew session.

Undoubtedly, a substantial effort to implement the conciliar statement of Vatican Council II has been undertaken in both French speaking and English speaking areas of Canada. Individual projects thus far undertaken are highly commendable; undoubtedly they do not yet amount

to a systematic program, and the advances made thus far have penetrated only a small proportion of the population. In acknowledgement of this fact, some caution regarding the Canadian catechism "Come to the Father" (published in both French and English) was expressed by a reviewer in the June 1967 Sidic: "Although biblically oriented, 'Come to the Father' has very little provision in parents' manual, teachers' guide-book or children's text for knowledge of the new insights into the thought and life patterns of our ancestors in the faith. Teaching this series with understanding and competence presupposes a biblical, historical training which most teachers in Canada have not as yet received."

While there is no organized program on a national level, Father Bader and regional representatives have answered requests for assistance and spoken before Jewish students, women's and youth groups. Father Bader lectured on "Jewish Beliefs and Worship" in a pilot adult education program for several Toronto parishes in February, and in London, Ontario in March.

Father Bader has also participated in joint social action projects with Jewish leaders. In addition, two public statements bearing on Catholic-Jewish relations have been made by Roman-Catholic leaders: the first deplored the execution of several Jews in Iraq; the second encouraged immigration into Canada of both Jewish and Arab refugees.

Also worthy of mention is an International Conference of Christians and Jews held at York University in Toronto in September 1968. Largely inspired by an Anglican clergyman, Roland deCorneille, and sponsored jointly by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and the U.S. National Conference of Christians and Jews, it brought together more than 200 participants including delegates from Europe and Israel. The conference theme was "Overcoming the Barriers to Communication." Conference participants made a number of recommendations regarding the revision of textbooks, the encouragement of mutual studies of first and second century history, Talmudic texts and patristic writings, as well as joint research and scholarly collaboration on such areas as Jewish history, the Middle Ages, the Enlightenment, etc.

ISRAEL

Interreligious dialogue and cooperation have advanced in Israel in recent years. While some of the dialogue groups antedate Vatican Council II, there is no doubt that the conciliar statement has significantly improved the general atmosphere within which the dialogue takes place.

There are several Catholic groups which have been established to gain a better understanding of Judaism and to prepare for the dialogue: the Ratisbonne Center in Jerusalem, staffed by the Fathers of Notre Dame de Zion; two study houses of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Zion, one at Ain Kerem, one at the Ecce Homo convent in East Jerusalem, which has sponsored a unique program of ulpanim--intensified language workshops--in Hebrew and Arabic. (Some Sisters of Zion are also affiliated with the Ratisbonne Center.) There is also the Dominican House of St. Isaiah in Jerusalem, which concentrates on studies in post-biblical Judaism.

In addition, there are several groups which have been founded specifically for the purpose of interreligious dialogue, which include, but are not limited to, Catholics.

The Israel Interfaith Committee was founded in 1959 to promote better understanding among religious groups in Israel. The present chairman is Professor Zwi Werblowsky, head of the department of humanities of the Hebrew University. Two achievements of the committee may be noted: a solemn meeting in June 1963 to honor the memory of Pope John XXIII shortly after his death, and the translation into Hebrew and subsequent publication of the encyclical Pacem in Terris.

The Rainbow Group in Jerusalem, founded in 1964, is an informal association of Jews and Christians in a dialogue program. The members gather once a month in one or another of their homes. After a short prayer, a paper is read, alternately by a Jew and Christian, and is discussed by the group.

The Students' Ecumenical Discussion Group was founded in 1961 by an Anglican father. It consists of about 30 students, mostly Protestants, but also some Jews and Catholics, who have come from other countries to complete theological studies in Jerusalem. Meetings are held twice a month to discuss different viewpoints on questions concerning Jewish-Christian dialogue.

An interreligious group in Tel Aviv, founded in 1964, brings together about 30 Jews and Catholics in an apartment in Tel Aviv. Biblical, philosophical and theological questions are discussed in Hebrew. A good library is available.

A Dutch-speaking group of about 80 Jews, Protestants and Catholics meets about once a year, each time in a different part of the country to discuss religious topics.

The Ecumenical Theological Fraternity of Jerusalem, consisting of Christians from different churches, meets once a month to discuss some theological aspect of ecumenism having to do with Israel (mystery, divinity, the State...) Sometimes a Jewish scholar is invited to speak. Canon Peter Schneider is the chairman.

The American Jewish Committee office in Israel, directed by Dr. Bernard Resnikoff, has cooperated with Christian and Jewish leadership to promote and facilitate the dialogue. In November of 1970, AJC co-sponsored with the Harry S. Truman Research Institute of the Hebrew University and the Israel Interfaith Committee, an international colloquium on "Religion, Peoplehood, Nationalism and Land," which included key Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish scholars. In association with the Israel Interfaith Committee, AJC has also published a "Planning Guide for the Christian Visitor to Israel," which is geared to Christian study groups visiting Israel and contains a listing of public, non-governmental agencies.

SUMMARY AND AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

Advances in understanding and mutual esteem between Catholics and Jews since the adoption of Nostra Aetate have been considerable. Indeed, viewed from the perspective of two millenia, they have been remarkable. In calling attention to a number of crucial unsolved problems, in Latin America, Western Europe, Israel, Canada, and the United States, we would not wish to minimize the progress made thus far. Hopefully, a presentation of these problems will help establish an agenda for continued Catholic-Jewish cooperation in the years to come.

Despite minor indications of progress in Latin America, the lack of fundamental improvements in Catholic-Jewish relations in Mexico, most of Central America, and much of South America, remains a serious problem. Mexico and Argentina are centers of anti-Semitic propaganda. Obviously, the Church is not responsible for anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish material issuing from Arab sources,¹⁰ but some of it comes from Catholic sources, and not enough has been done to counteract the impact of this propaganda on the Catholic community. The great masses of Catholics have not abandoned their negative attitudes toward Jews. Despite official expressions of good will, the Church has given little institutional support, through hierarchy or local clergy, to implementation of the Vatican declaration.

In Western Europe, some significant advances have been made. Where members of the hierarchy have supported or encouraged it, Christian-Jewish dialogue on the academic and theological levels has progressed. Some changes in catechetical materials regarding Jews and Judaism have been made. Yet serious problems remain. In Germany and Austria, basic source materials for the education of clergy and seminarians remain, for the most part, in the anti-Judaic cast of 19th century German biblical scholarship, with its characteristic view of "dekadente, unsittliche Spaetjudentum." The very term "spaetjudentum" is offensive, and should be eliminated from the theological vocabulary.

On the mass level, it is questionable how deeply the commendable activities thus far undertaken have penetrated the consciousness of the Catholic faithful. The recent rumors of Jewish white-slave trafficking in Orleans, mounting at times to hysteria, indicate how closely beneath the surface resides a stratum of superstition and deeply ingrained prejudice about Jews. The Oberammergau Passion Play, despite minor changes in the last performance, remains an abiding example of folk anti-Semitism, depicting the Jews as col-

lectively villainous and motivated by greed and blind hatred.

In the United States, where significant progress has been noted, there remain obstacles to Catholic-Jewish understanding. While good lines of communication have been developed between representatives or leaders of the Roman Catholic and Jewish communities, the attitudes of large numbers of American Catholics still remain unaffected by the conciliar statement because of lack of implementation. Sometimes, the different positions assumed by Catholics and Jews on matters of public policy inhibits discussion and programming in other areas. Despite a great many advances which have been freely acknowledged, the impression remains that Catholic-Jewish relations do not constitute a major priority for the Church.

On a more intellectual and theological level, there also remain unresolved issues inhibiting rapprochement between Christians and Jews. In particular, there is the need for Catholics to develop an adequate theology of Judaism as a living and permanent faith and tradition, valid in its own terms as a source of truth and value for the Jewish people. A serious effort in this direction is now being made by a few Catholic theologians, but the great weight of Christian tradition still views Judaism as preparatio evangelica.

Jewish religious traditions and celebrations are increasingly venerated in Catholic teaching today, but largely in terms of their value for enriching the Church's heritage and self-understanding, not their religious validity for Jews. The use of the term "the people of God" to describe the Church is a case in point; it represents a return to Jewish categories of thought and reveals the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures in the understanding of a covenanted people, but it also seems to deny -- or at best ignore -- God's enduring covenant with the Jewish people. A parallel effort is needed in the Jewish community in terms of formulating an adequate religious understanding of Christianity and Christians.

An adequate presentation of the Jewish people in Catholic history is another important unresolved problem. "Most Catholics have torn out of their history books the pages that Jews have memorized," Father Flannery wrote in The Anguish of the Jews. It is probably true that each religious group, in recalling its history, emphasizes its own martyrs and ignores the persecutions of others. Corrections are needed on both sides. The "Interreligious" writing of history, using the scholarship and factual histories of both Catholics and Jews - and other religious communities - in collaboration, may well

be a creative solution to the problem of historical amnesia. Catholics and Jews must know more about each other's group history before they can fully understand each other as human communities.

Finally, a deeper understanding of the meaning of Israel to the Jewish people and Judaism is essential if Catholics wish to comprehend the dominant reality that shapes Jewish consciousness today. We do not refer here to theological justification of the present State of Israel, nor to political considerations, but to the significance of the land to Jewish tradition across the centuries and to the complex historical, religious and cultural bonds which link world Jewry to Israel.

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