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Papal commemoration of the Holocaust. 1994.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

TO DO MISC.

1. WRITE JOHN XXIII STORY

"I AM JOSEPH YOUR BROTHER"
(on 25th anniversary 1962-1986(?)

- A. GATHER ALL PAPERS + PHOTOS
(look in Ketonch scrapbooks
and wire baskets)
(look in file cabinets - all)

- B. PUBLISH - where? - MOMENT
COMMENTARY - NEW REPUBLIC -

- C. GIVE to N.Y. TIMES

- D. ADVANCE COPY and NOTICE TO
INVOLVED PARTIES + INTERESTED
ORGANIZATIONS:

THRUST:
POSITIVE
GIVE CREDIT
EXPRESS FAITH
THAT PROCESS
WILL CONTINUE
VS. ANTI-SEMITISM
REFER TO POPE
TODAY - VISIT TO ^{ROME} SYN.
CHURCH WILL UNDERSTAND
ISRAEL AND
+ HOLOCAUST ALSO

- 1.) Mel Swig (Ben initiated with ^{me})
- 2.) Bud Meyerhoff (Joe - ditto)
- 3.) Zellerbach (who?) - then Ambassador in Rome
- 4.) Cardinal O'Connor - fr Spellman
- 5.) a Monsignor Marcinus (Chicago)
- 6.) Committee ADL USA
Congress Inter-religious SCA ?

A Vatican Stake In Talks With Jews

By ARI L. GOLDMAN

POPE JOHN PAUL II interrupted his vacation last week to meet with nine leaders of world Jewry at his summer residence outside Rome. It was crucial, the Catholics and Jews at the meeting agreed, to resolve recent tensions between the two faiths before the Pope arrives this week for a 10-day visit to the United States.

But why was it so crucial? There are 53 million Roman Catholics in the United States and only 5 million Jews. There are large Catholic constituencies — feminists and gay rights activists, to name just two — who are angry with the Pope and would like to have his ear. These groups were not granted an audience. Why the Jews?

The answer has to do with the complex and often tortured history of Catholic-Jewish relations. But perhaps more important, it has to do with a troubling issue in Christian theology: What is the role of Jews and Judaism 1,900 years after the coming of the Christian messiah? And how should Christians regard a people who rejected God's true son?

Those questions continue to occupy Protestant as well as Catholic scholars. Last spring, the conventions of both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Church of Christ adopted positions recognizing the validity of Judaism and the continuing covenant between God and the Jewish people.

For centuries, the question was too difficult for Christians to confront. There were crusades, inquisitions, pogroms, ghettos and massacres. Both faiths benefited from a cross-fertilization in philosophy, music and art. In addition, Jews flourished under some benevolent popes and Christian rulers. Yet the "teaching of contempt for the Jews" — a term

Since that time, there has been a slow rapprochement between the two faiths. A dialogue on the highest levels began 25 years ago with a meeting between Pope Paul VI and the great Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel. Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs at the American Jewish Committee, is fond of saying that more progress has been made in the last 25 years of Catholic-Jewish relations than in the preceding 1,900.

While understanding has grown in recent years, some Jews feel that Pope John Paul II has been sending mixed messages. On the one hand, the Pope made an unprecedented visit to a synagogue in 1986, embracing Jews as "our elder brothers." In the same spirit, the Pope has begun using the word Shoah, the Hebrew word for Holocaust, in speeches and letters, giving credence to the Jewish claim that the Holocaust was a uniquely Jewish tragedy.

But many Jews have watched with distress what they have regarded as the Pope's attempts to universalize the Holocaust. They have objected to the Pope's beatification in May of a Jewish convert to Catholicism, Edith Stein, and, most strenuously, to his reception of President Kurt Waldheim of Austria, who during World War II belonged to a German army unit that has been implicated in the deportation of Jews to death camps.

In June, on the eve of the Waldheim visit, numerous Jewish organizations said that if the Pope received the former Nazi officer then they could not in good conscience participate in a largely ceremonial exchange between the Pope and 200 Jewish leaders scheduled in Miami this Friday. The gathering could take place, the Jewish leaders warned, only if they first had a meeting with Pope John Paul. A meeting was hastily arranged at Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer residence, and an agenda drawn up.

Many of the unresolved issues in Catholic-Jewish dialogue seemed to take on new importance. The Jewish leaders wanted to know: Did the Vatican do enough to save Jews from extermination during the Holocaust? Why has the Holy See refused to extend full diplomatic recognition to Israel? And finally, the most vexing question, why did the Pope receive Mr. Waldheim without addressing his past?

The nine Jewish leaders said they came away from the meeting with the Pope and his advisers with few satisfactory answers. They saw hope, however, in the willingness of the Vatican to continue the dialogue and in a promise that the Pope would soon issue a statement on the Holocaust. One participant, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee, concluded: "Waldheim was a crisis that became an opportunity."

More Ideas & Trends Page 16

coined by the French Jewish historian Jules Isaac — permeated Europe like a medieval plague well into the 20th century.

Christian theologians are now joining Jewish scholars who maintain that the Church's teaching created an environment in which Hitler could rise to power and call for extermination of all Jews.

The Church's repudiation of its earlier views came almost two decades after the Holocaust, at the Second Vatican Council of the early 1960's. It was at the Council, in an extraordinary document called *Nostra Aetate* (In Our Time), that the Catholic Church rejected the charge of deicide — the notion that the Jews killed Christ — and firmly condemned anti-Semitism.

THE WEXNER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Herbert A. Friedman
President

Leslie H. Wexner
Chairman of the Board

September 8, 1987

Mr. Ari L. Goldman
New York Times
229 West 43 Street
New York, N. Y. 10036

Dear Mr. Goldman:

I have always enjoyed your reporting, which shows much expertise in the subjects on which you write.

For that reason, I thought you might be interested in a letter I wrote recently to the Times, which was not printed, probably because of its length.

That letter offers a slight emendation to one sentence in your excellent article entitled "A Vatican Stake in Talks with Jews", published 9/6/87. You said: "A dialogue on the highest levels began 25 years ago with a meeting between Pope Paul VI and the great Jewish theologian Abraham J. Heschel."

Actually, the dialogue began two years earlier between a prior Pope, John XXIII, and myself, during the course of which he spoke the famous phrase, "I am Joseph your brother" and intimated his intentions of convening a second Vatican Council to consider the fundamental questions of Catholic-Jewish relations, especially deicide.

I think the progress made during the past 26 years, during which the Church has reversed many attitudes toward the Jews, is remarkable; and I foresee ultimate solutions in the two crucial areas of assuming some responsibility for creating an atmosphere which made the Holocaust possible, and of recognizing the existence of the State of Israel.

Sincerely,

Herbert A. Friedman

HAF/jf

551 Madison Avenue / New York, New York 10022 / 212-355-6115
41 South High Street, Suite 3710 / Columbus, Ohio 43215 / 614-464-2772

THE WEXNER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Herbert A. Friedman
President

Leslie H. Wexner
Chairman of the Board

September 2, 1987

Mr. Robert Barzilay
Editor, Letters to the Editor
The New York Times
229 West 43 Street
New York, N. Y. 10036

To the Editor:

The recent meeting in Rome between Jewish leaders and Pope John Paul, on the eve of his departure for the United States, recalls an episode that occurred almost 27 years ago between an earlier delegation of Jewish leaders and another great Pope, John XXIII.

On October 17, 1960, the first delegation of American Jews ever to be received by any Pope met in the Vatican. There an extraordinary event took place, when the Pope rose and verbally embraced his visitors with the electrifying statement, "I am Joseph, your brother."

I was then executive vice-president of the national United Jewish Appeal, leading a delegation of 130 men and women on their way to Israel. We stopped in Rome to meet with the Pope and give voice to our gratitude for a far-reaching

act of humanity he had performed in 1942. He was then Papal Nuncio in Turkey, and had intervened with the Nazi authorities to permit the sailing through the Dardanelles of two vessels carrying 700 Jewish orphan children to Palestine. He literally saved their lives. We wanted to thank him.

The audience was arranged by Benjamin Swig of San Francisco through two good friends, Cardinal Spellman of New York and the American Ambassador in Rome, James Zellerbach, also of San Francisco.

Once the audience was agreed to in principle, the technical details and arrangements took months to settle. There was a certain stiffness in the air. I had suggested that we employ the classical languages: I would address the Holy Father in Hebrew and he would respond in Latin. Some Vatican officials hesitated, fearing that use of the Hebrew language in this setting might imply recognition of the State of Israel. Thus, their decision was that we would speak in our vernaculars, English and Italian.

The texts flowed back and forth across the ocean for approval on both sides. We prepared a hand-written parchment scroll, similar to the ancient Torah, encased in olive wood from Jerusalem, on which was inscribed our profound gratitude for Pope John's courage and humanitarianism.

On the morning of the audience, everything went smoothly, exactly according to the script. Photographs were taken and the audience was over. Suddenly and spontaneously, as the delegation was preparing to leave, John rose from his throne, lifted his hand in a friendly gesture and started to speak extemporaneously. According to the doctrine of Papal infallibility, every word of the Pope is sacred. Here he was speaking without a text, and the editor of the Osservatore Romano, standing nearby, began to write furiously. All the officials looked anxious, for they had no idea what was coming.

The essence of the Pope's very personal short speech was this: he had been thinking of something intimate and meaningful to say to us, in addition to the generalizations of his prepared remarks. He thought of his personal name, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli. Giuseppe is translated into English as Joseph. This led him to the thought of the biblical Joseph sitting as vice-premier on the throne of Egypt dealing out food to all the petitioners from the neighboring drought-stricken countries, including Canaan.

As Joseph's 11 brothers -- the very ones who had earlier sold him into slavery and thought he was long dead -- entered the hall, the Bible tells us he recognized them at once, although they did not recognize him. After a certain point, he decided to reveal himself to them,

stretched forth his hand, and said, to their amazement, "I am Joseph your brother." So it was that John XXIII identified himself to us.

In a flash, we understood that the Pope was saying to this Jewish delegation that he and they were brothers. Except for a very few in the innermost circle, no one knew that he was already thinking of convening the Vatican II Council, which would ultimately deal with the most delicate questions, including the charge against the Jews of deicide. This friendly, jovial, almost simple man was offering his hand in brotherhood and friendship, revealing his inner feeling about Jews. The air was charged with excitement. It was an incredible moment.

In the 27 years since then, Catholics and Jews have crossed centuries of misunderstanding, misconceptions, and ill will. Although there is still much ground to cover, the air is filled with hope for further and continuing progress so that one by one the issues which have separated the two faiths will be replaced by ties that bind.

At this moment it is fitting to recall and pay tribute to the memory of Pope John XXIII, who started the march down the path of reconciliation.



Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

President

Wexner Heritage Foundation

**Concert in Commemoration of the Shoah,
the Jewish Holocaust**

in the presence of His Holiness Pope John Paul II



Aula Paolo VI in Vaticano

Acknowledgements

The organisers of this initiative express their profound gratitude

to His Holiness Pope John Paul II

for the support that He has wished to give for this Concert to be held to-day in commemoration of the Holocaust and for His presence.

They would like also to thank most cordially the following distinguished persons, who by their active support have made it possible for this historic event to take place.

His Eminence Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy

President, Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews

His Eminence Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger

Archbishop of Paris

His Excellency Monsignor Dino Monduzzi

Prefect of the Pontifical Household

His Excellency Monsignor John Foley

President, Pontifical Council for Social Communications

His Excellency Monsignor William H. Keeler

Archbishop of Baltimore

Monsignor Thomas Hartman

Diocese of Rockville Center, New York

Monsignor Pablo Collino

Director of the Cappella Giulia Choir of the Vatican Basilica

Rabbi A. James Rudin

National Director Interreligious Affairs,
«American Jewish Committee»

Rabbi Haskel Besser

Rabbi Ronald B. Sobel

Temple Emmanu-el, New York City

Ambassador Raymond Flynn

Tilles Center for the Performing Arts

Long Island University, C.W. Post Campus

Mr. Roger Tilles, vice-chairman

Mr. Elliott Sroka, Executive Director

Mr. Robert Franz, Vatican Concert Tour Manager

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Mr. Michael Bronson

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M. Theo Klein

Professor Lewis Lockwood

Mr. Alexander Prisant

Mr. James G. Robinson

Professor Stephan J. Schiffman

Sir Sigmund Sternberg

Mr. Peter Thall

Maestro Gilbert Levine

The staff of **The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

IMG Artists -- Ms. Edna Landau and Ms. Linda Marder

Benefactors

The organisers owe a particular word of thanks to the following distinguished persons who have offered practical support for the necessary arrangements in connection with the Concert:

Mr. Jack P. and Mrs. Joanna Sara EISNER

His Excellency Monsignor **William H. KEELER**
Archbishop of Baltimore
President, National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the USA

Mr. James G. ROBINSON
Morgan Creek Productions

Rabbi Alexander SCHINDLER
President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

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INGRESSO ALL'AULA PAOLO VI
DA PIAZZA SAN PIETRO
ARCO DELLE CAMPANE

L'INGRESSO SARÀ DATO
DALLE ORE 16 ALLE ORE 17.30

ABITO SCURO
(ECCLESIASTICI: ABITO PIANO)



Giovedì 7 aprile 1994

*alle ore 18 nell'Aula Paolo VI
AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES
alla presenza di Sua Santità*

Giovanni Paolo II

*avrà luogo un concerto
per commemorare la «Shoah»,
l'Olocausto degli Ebrei*

Vaticano, 1° aprile 1994

Programma

MAX BRUCH

« Kol Nidrei »
per violoncello e orchestra
Opera 47 (1881)

Violoncellista: Lynn Harrell

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Sinfonia n. 9 in Do minore
opera 125
Terzo movimento:
adagio molto e cantabile

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Salmo 92
per solo coro

Cantore: baritono Howard Nevison

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Sinfonia n. 3 « Kaddish »
(1961-1963)
brano

Narratore: Richard Dreyfuss

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Chichester Psalms (1965)

Secondo movimento:

Salmo 23 (tutto)

Salmo 2 (versetti 1-4)

Andante con moto, ma tranquillo

Solista: Gregory Daniel Rodriguez

Terzo movimento:

Salmo 131 (tutto)

Salmo 133 (versetto 1)

Sostenuto molto, lento possibile

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

DIRETTORE

GILBERT LEVINE

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES



CORO « CAPPELLA GIULIA »
DELLA BASILICA DI SAN PIETRO IN VATICANO

CORO DELL'ACCADEMIA FILARMONICA ROMANA

MAESTRO DEI CORI

PABLO COLINO

The Wexner Heritage Foundation

551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022
212 355 6115
Fax 212 751 3739

Huntington Center Suite 3710
41 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614 464 2772

4 April 1994

Edward Cardinal Cassidy
Facsimile #011-39-6-698-853-65

Your Excellency:

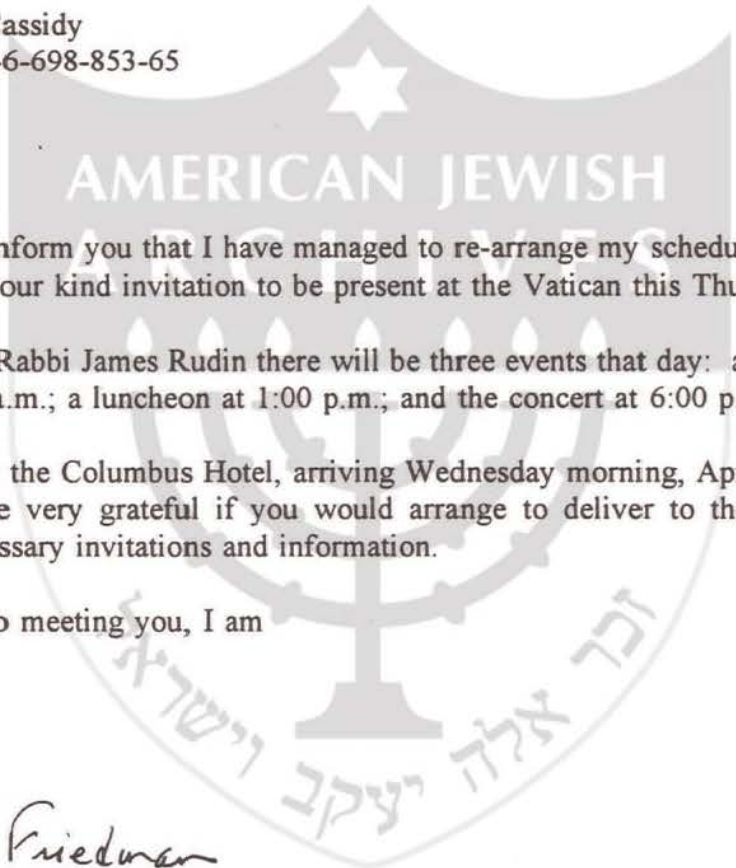
I am delighted to inform you that I have managed to re-arrange my schedule and will therefore be able to accept your kind invitation to be present at the Vatican this Thursday, April 7th.

I understand from Rabbi James Rudin there will be three events that day: an audience with His Holiness at 11:00 a.m.; a luncheon at 1:00 p.m.; and the concert at 6:00 p.m.

I will be staying at the Columbus Hotel, arriving Wednesday morning, April 6, on TWA flight 840, and would be very grateful if you would arrange to deliver to the hotel an envelope containing all necessary invitations and information.

Looking forward to meeting you, I am

Most sincerely,



Herbert A. Friedman

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue 9th Floor
New York, NY 10022 U.S.A.

551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022
212 355 6115
Fax 212 751 3739

Huntington Center Suite 3710
41 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614 464 2772

31 March 1994

Edward Cardinal Cassidy
Facsimile: 011-39-6-698-853-65

Your Excellency:

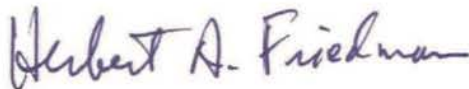
May I express my gratitude for your kind invitation to myself and my wife to attend the extraordinary concert on April 7 in commemoration of the Shoah. I have attempted to re-arrange my schedule on short notice but have not succeeded. I am terribly disappointed, especially since I have been honored to be in the presence of every pope since Pius XII in 1946.

May I extend to you, concerning whom my friend Rabbi James Rudin speaks so highly, sincere congratulations on having organized such a dignified program, replete with leading personalities, beautiful music and an inspirational tone. The respect which your commission is according the victims of that evil madness will be appreciated by all men of good will.

Lastly, His Holiness Pope John Paul II displays deep sympathy, wisdom and statesmanship by attending the concert in person. Once again he shows the human aspect of his personality and is to be warmly applauded.

With heartfelt thanks and genuine regrets, I am

Most sincerely,



Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022 U.S.A.

COMMISSION
FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS
Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

15th March, 1994

On the evening of Thursday, April 7 next, at 18.00, a Concert will be held in the **Aula Paolo VI** in the Vatican to commemorate the Shoah. His Holiness Pope John Paul II will be present.

The Shoah is a terrible abyss which has thrown a black light on the frightening depth of human evil. Music, of all the arts, has the capacity to enter directly into the soul, to clarify the inner reaches of the spirit. It is hoped that the music especially chosen for this Papal Concert will bring all who hear it together in remembrance of those horrendous events which must never be forgotten so that they never be repeated.

It is expected that a number of holocaust survivors will attend, together with the Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff of Rome, members of the College of Cardinals and of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, and various world dignitaries.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (London) and the **Cappella Giulia** Choir of St. Peter's Basilica will be conducted by Maestro Gilbert Levine.

On behalf of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, I wish to assure you that should you wish to be present at this very special event, you would be most welcome indeed.

I would ask you, however, to let me know if you intend to be at the Concert, so that a formal invitation may be ready for you on your arrival in Rome. It will of course be necessary in this connection for us to know where you may be contacted while here in Rome (Fax: (06) 698.853.65).

Yours sincerely,



Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy
President

Rabbi & Mrs. **Herbert FRIEDMAN**
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue, 9th Floor
NEW YORK, NY 10022 USA

San Pietro



AIR MAIL

ROMA
San Pietro
(Veduta aerea)

April 6, 1994

Dear Fran, David and Charles -
Tomorrow April 7, on the eve of
Yom Hashoah in Israel, the
Pope, for the first time in 50 years,
has committed the Roman Catholic
church to observe the Holocaust,
with prayer, song and appropriate
solemnity.

This event, coupled with the
recent diplomatic recognition of Israel
by the Vatican, should mark the
beginning of a new relationship.
The next 100 years will
tell.
Much love to you all.
Pop.

Arti Grafiche Barlocci - Settimo M. - PRINTED INITIALLY



HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN
500 E. 77 St. - Apt. 2519

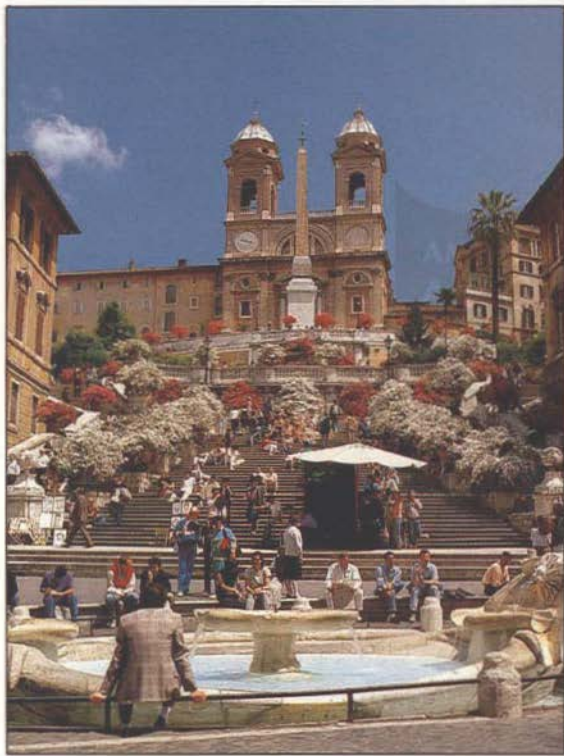
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PIAZZA DI SPAGNA



IL FASCINO DI ROMA

ROMA
Piazza di Spagna
Madonna dell' Immacolata Concezione

AIR MAIL

April 6, 1994

Dear Frankie-

Sitting here, in the Vatican
post office, with scores of others,
all busy writing cards, and
chattering away in a multitude of
tongues, one gets a sense of
the world-wide reach of this
Church. It is quite fantastic.

I picked The Hassler Hotel
on the Spanish steps as a symbolic
promise to take you there. It is now
the #1 in town, with the Excelsior
having slipped in reputation.

Much love, H.



FRANCINE FRIEDMAN

500 E. 77 St. - Apt. 2579

New York, N.Y. 10162

U.S.A.

EDI.CART. s.r.l. - Roma - Tel. 06/5566779

Notes From Vatican Trip
April 1994

John XXII - 1960

Son io Giuseppi il fratello nostra

It is I, Joseph your brother

John Paul II - 1994

"our elder brothers"

10:30 -

Orientation meeting
Roger Tilles
Mordecai Waxman
Ronald Sobel
Fayge Zimmerman
Willy Lowenberg
Clive Marks, London
Bob Keeler
(*Newsday* reporter)

11:00 -

Audience in Vatican

1. Cardinal Cassigy
2. James Rudin
3. Jack Eisner - rep. of survivors
Pope from Poland paid respect to Holocaust and recognized Israel
4. Roger Tilles (benefactor)
5. Pope - thanked Gilbert Levine
Recalled visits to Auschwitz & Dachau in '79
"This people" is from Abraham
Quoted himself
Said same thing in '86 when visiting Rome synagogue
At this evening concert in '94, the candles will remind us of the Shoah

Pope had negative pressure from Curio. Pope wanted to respect Shoah and recognize Israel in his lifetime. Today's anti-semitism is unspeakable. We confirm our resolve to cement good relations between our two communities. We must work harder to encourage bond between Jews and Christians.

As we listen to the music together we think of Psalm "How good and beautiful it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

After audience, Pope

- 1) greeted each guest individually, while picture was taken
- 2) took group picture

Lunch

Bishop Pierre de Frey, Asst. to Cassidy
Tuvia Zevi - Pres., Italian Jewish Community
Cardinal Edward Cassidy - energy, intelligence, warmth
English (Irish ?) accent - later learned he is Australian

"We are trying to heal a wound which history has handed down to us."

Tilles gave Cassidy a beautiful shofar.

Minyan after lunch - Kaddish

Nathan Shapell's son - 9 years ago

Waxman

Event was really historic
Each step in process of theological development will go further

Essence of the significance:

150 survivors from 12 countries

They made it.

Pope felt it.

I had conversation with Rudin re implementation, down to inserting a sentence in the actual catechism which every Catholic kid learns by heart - "Hatred of Jews is a sin. Jews are our elder brothers."

Concert

7-8,000 seats - weekly Wednesday audience for public
Special section for invited guests.
Cross removed
Six-candle menorah installed

Bruch - Kol Nidre - dull, no vibrato, violincello too high, should be cello - deeper - also it was directed too slow.

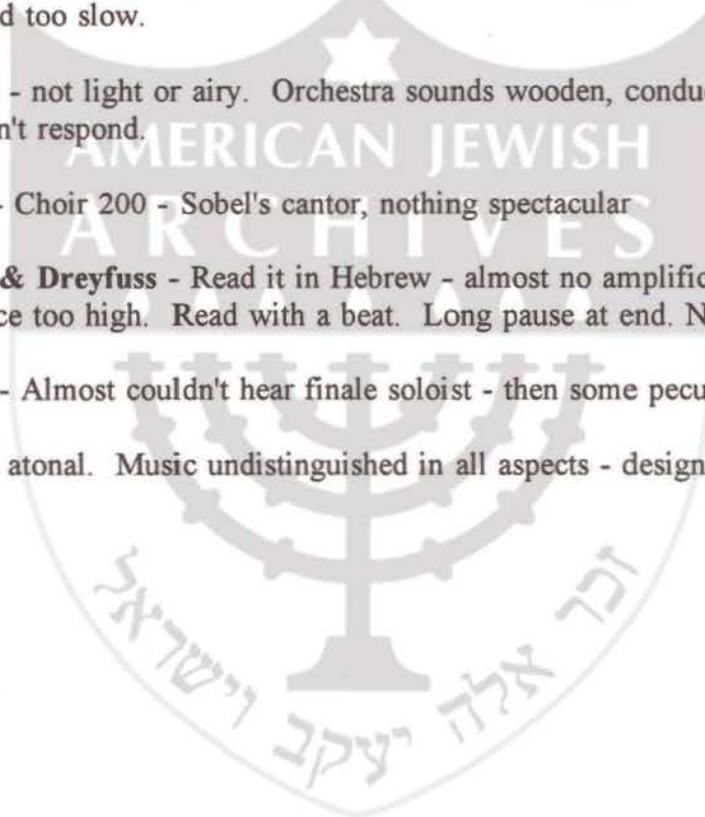
Beethoven - not light or airy. Orchestra sounds wooden, conductor makes extravagant gestures - they don't respond.

Schubert - Choir 200 - Sobel's cantor, nothing spectacular

Bernstein & Dreyfuss - Read it in Hebrew - almost no amplification in huge hall. Lost impact. Voice too high. Read with a beat. Long pause at end. Nothing.

Bernstein - Almost couldn't hear finale soloist - then some peculiar clashing.

Second set atonal. Music undistinguished in all aspects - designed to put you to sleep.



NATHAN SHAPELL

April 20, 1994

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

Thank you for sending me the picture from the Vatican. I do appreciate your picking this up for me.

It was a pleasure seeing you in Rome and sharing in this historical event. I hope that if you are in Los Angeles you will call me and I will certainly do the same when I am in New York.

Warmest regards,

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
The Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

44a New Cavendish Street

London, W1M 7LG

Telephone: 071 486 4663

20. IV. 94

Dear Rabbi Friedman.

What a kind thought.
I couldn't attend the luncheon when the
'photos were given out, so I very nearly
missed, what the Americans would call, "the
results of the photo opportunity". Adrienne is
thrilled, and also sends her thanks.

I have spoken of our meeting
to Felix Posner + Michael Sinclair (the chairman of the
Chief Rabbi's 'Committee'). Michael is in Israel at present
and I think when we are both in N.Y. we
should contact the Weisner Heritage Foundation from
whom we have a lot to learn. Your work is
well known here, as I'm sure you are aware.

I too look forward to future contact.

With very best wishes, & grateful thanks

Believe me,



*Congregation Emanu-El
of the City of New York
Fifth Avenue at 65th Street
New York, N.Y. 10021*

Study of the Senior Rabbi

DR. RONALD B. SOBEL

April 19, 1994

Dear Herb:

You are extraordinarily kind and I am grateful for your thoughtfulness. Thank you for picking up the photograph and forwarding it to me.

It was a remarkable occasion, filled with significance and meaning. I am glad we were able to share it together.

With friendship and great admiration, I am

As ever,



Lowenberg Corporation

44 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, California 94104
Telephone (415) 392-4500
FAX (415) 392-4508

April 18, 1994

Mr. Herbert A. Friedman
The Waxner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Herb,

How nice of you to think of me and send the picture of me with the Pope.

It was indeed again a great pleasure to see you as always. Aside from keeping our community together, the great pleasure I derive out of all of this is knowing people like you.

I treasure our continued friendship, and I send you my very good wishes and many thanks for thinking of me.

Sincerely yours,

William J. Lowenberg

WJL:ch

Islanders bring historic Vatican concert to life

Holocaust survivors, Pope John Paul II to attend

By WINSTON PICKETT

First there was a Polish Cardinal from Krakow who became Pope.

Then there was a Jewish conductor from Cedarhurst, who became director of the Krakow Philharmonic.

Now there is a Yom HaShoah concert directed by a Long Island arts center, funded in part by the Catholic Church and a group of American Jews that includes a Great Neck businessman, and brought together with the aid of Holocaust survivors from 11 countries.

More unlikely still is the concert program, which includes such works as Bloch's "Kol Nidre" and Leonard Bernstein's "Kaddish," and will be held in the Vatican and broadcast live to millions of Catholics around the world.

On Thursday, April 7, on the eve of Yom HaShoah, Maestro Gilbert Levine will conduct the London Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Vatican Choir of St. Peter's Basilica in a musical commemoration of the Holocaust. Even without the backdrop of last December's historic agreement that established diplomatic ties between Israel and the Vatican, the event has all the makings of a watershed in Jewish-Catholic relations.

Consider the program.

Six Jewish survivors from Hitler's death camps will open the commemoration by lighting six candles representing the six million Jews murdered during World War II.

Cellist Lynn Harrell will open with Max Bruch's "Kol Nidre," and Levine will conduct the Royal Philharmonic and the Vatican's Capella Giulia Choir in works that include the "Funeral March" of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Cantor Howard Nevison of New York Temple Emanu-El singing Schubert's Psalm 92 in Hebrew, actor Richard Dreyfuss reciting the prayer for the dead in Bernstein's "Kaddish Symphony," and two of the late composer's "Chichester Psalms," also in Hebrew.

In attendance will be Pope John Paul II, Rome's Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff, more than 50 Holocaust survivors, members of the College of Cardinals, and hundreds of Jewish and Christian dignitaries.

Later the pope will meet privately with a group of the event's organizers, Holocaust survivors and other Jewish and Catholic officials. There will also be a private tour of the Vatican's Judaica collection.

"This isn't just a musical memorial in a concert hall," said Rabbi



Roger Tilles



Jack Eisner

James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee. "This is the Vatican. By it the pope wants to acknowledge that the Shoah was a universally horrible event that he himself partly lived through. It is an important commitment to advance Catholic-Jewish relations on a major scale."

Perhaps more important is the medium itself.

"The world doesn't need another monument, conference or memorial," said Rudin. "Only music has

the ability to transcend religious boundaries and linguistic barriers."

As the past chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), Rudin was instrumental in clearing the way for Jewish endorsement of the event. IJCIC, which is made up of the AJCommittee, the American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the Synagogue Council of America and the Israel Interfaith Council, officially represents the world Jewish community for relations and dialogue with the Vatican.

Then there are the players, as well as the circuitous—and frequently fortuitous—events that brought them together.

Levine—who grew up in a Conservative household in Cedarhurst, graduated from Lawrence High School, attended Juilliard School of Music and earned degrees from Harvard and Yale Universities—became conductor of the Krakow Symphony Orchestra in 1987 and has since assumed a role as one of Pope John Paul II's musical advisors.

It was as the director of the pope's "hometown symphony"—the first time that the post has been held by a non-Pole and a Jew—that Levine first established a relation with the pontiff. A year after taking up the baton, Levine met with the pope in his private library for an interview, during which, Levine said, the Church leader's "interest and concern for Jewish issues was made clear." Later that year, in 1988, Levine directed the Krakow Philharmonic in a commemoration of the pope's first 10 years. Last year he traveled with the pope to Denver, where he conducted a concert mark-

ing the pontiff's visit to America.

When more than two years ago Levine suggested the idea of a concert commemorating the Holocaust, he was fairly certain the response would be positive.

Despite several recent well-publicized disruptions in Jewish-Vatican relations—among them the pope's official welcome to Kurt Waldheim shortly after the former Austrian president's Nazi past was disclosed, and a lengthy controversy over a convent at Auschwitz—Levine knew that as a matter of policy, and from his personal conversations with the pontiff, that Pope John Paul II had helped alter the Catholic Church's anti-Jewish teachings. "I believe he wants the relations between Catholics and Jews codified in the Catholic Church and to become a legacy of his papacy," said Levine.

What Levine didn't know, however, is that his idea for a concert would take more than two years to come to fruition. Originally scheduled for a year ago, the concert had been intended as a prelude to normalized relations between Israel and the Vatican. At that time, said Levine, the RAI Symphony, the state orchestra of Italy's national television station, had offered to sponsor the event.

But when a scheduling conflict forced the RAI Symphony out of the picture, Levine turned to Great Neck businessman and philanthropist Roger Tilles for help. Tilles had previously volunteered his services when Levine had asked him to raise money to pay for a choir and other features of the musical program he envisioned.

Tilles came to the task well-connected. As founder and president of the Tilles Performing Arts Center at the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University, the Great Neck businessman put the center's executive director, Elliott Sroka, in charge of finding a new orchestra. When the right fit was made with the London Royal Philharmonic, which had performed at the Tilles Center several times, a new hurdle appeared: paying the fare for 92 musicians to fly round-trip from London to Rome.

On the technical level, Levine knew the Tilles Center was well equipped. "It is one of the finest organizers of concerts in the United States," said Levine.

For Tilles, the matter was more basic.

"When Gil originally called me, we thought the extra expense would be around \$35,000. When the full burden of the concert became mine, that became \$160,000," said Tilles. After the Tilles Performing Arts Center took over as producer of the concert, Tilles reached into his own pocket before tapping local contributors, and then convinced the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, of which he is a board

member, to donate \$10,000. In time, Tilles raised approximately one third of the cost.

Another third came from an unexpected source: Holocaust survivors.

One of the first telephone calls Levine made after the RAI dropped out was to Jack Eisner. A survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto, Maidanek, Buchenwald and Polish forests in which he hid as a guerrilla partisan, Eisner was well-connected with the survivor community. Earlier, the wealthy retired businessman, who splits his time between Israel, New York and Poland, had written a Holocaust memoir, *The Survivor*, helped finance the renovation of the third largest synagogue in Warsaw, and founded the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization.

"I was the first to organize large-scale public commemorations of the Holocaust," said Eisner, now 67. Familiar with Levine since the conductor began directing the Krakow Philharmonic—at one point Levine had asked him to serve as narrator for a production of Schoenberg's "Survivor from Warsaw"—Eisner went to work with his contact list.

"I undertook to assemble 100 leading survivors from around the world," said Eisner from his New York apartment. More than half came through.

The results startled veteran fundraiser Tilles. "Suddenly we started getting checks from South Africa, France, the United States—11 countries, and more than \$50,000 in all," said Tilles.

Other funding sources and contacts seemed to fall into place. One was the RAI, which offered to broadcast the concert live to millions throughout Europe and the world. Another was Sir Sigmund Sternberg, head of the European Council of Christians and Jews, who had helped secure the Royal Philharmonic.

Other important interfaith links were forged with Baltimore motion picture executive James Robinson of Morgan Creek Productions, and Baltimore's Archbishop William Keeler, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"It really was Roger Tilles, Jack Eisner and the Robinson-Keeler pair that made this concert happen financially," said Levine.

Something else was at work, too. Call it collective will, moral balance, or historic opportunity, each of the major players in this week's concert had a personal reason for forging ahead without even so much as a sideways glance.

For Tilles, there is a kind of personal and professional symmetry that comes with what he calls growing up Jewishly "isolated and insulated" in Great Neck, discovering

and befriending Catholic Long Islanders through a close friendship with Msgr. Tom Hartman, and working for a decade to bring the two groups together.

One fruit of that labor has been Project Understanding, founded by Tilles and Hartman, which sends six Catholic and six Jewish high

'The world doesn't need another monument, conference or memorial. Only music has the ability to transcend religious boundaries and linguistic barriers.'

school students, accompanied by a priest and a rabbi, to Israel during Passover and Easter every year. This year's trip returns April 4.

"It was obvious that Roger was the perfect person to turn to," said Levine. "He is a rare mixture of musical aficionado, fundraiser, and

someone who is deeply committed to Catholic-Jewish dialogue."

Said Tilles: "It is personally gratifying to pull so many pieces of my life together." For Levine, the concert represents a synthesis of his life as a musician and a Jew. "If my art and my music can serve the purpose of bringing people together and honor the memory of the six million at the same time, then it will have been a success. The fact is, this is an incredible gesture by the Vatican, to commemorate the most horrendous series of events in human history."

Survivor Eisner goes further: In his estimate, the concert is nothing less than a vehicle of redemption from what he calls the "anti-Jewishness of the Church" and the "diabolization of the Jews for 1,000 years."

With this commemoration the Vatican is reflecting on a tragic part of its history, recognizing the ugliness that has been done for a

millennium and saying it wants to do better, continued Eisner. "When they stretch out their hand we have to accept it and try to appeal to the *menschlichkeit* of their Christianity."

For the AJCommittee's Rabbi Rudin, the concert, while extremely significant, is part of a continuum of "more positive Catholic-Jewish encounters since 1965 [and the promulgation of the landmark encyclical *Nostra Aetate* by Pope John XXIII] than in the first 1,900 years of the Church."

It is a path, moreover, that Rudin believes owes more to Pope John Paul II than any other pontiff in the history of the Church. "We have to remember that this was the first pope to speak [in 1986] in a synagogue—as the premiere Catholic teacher to Catholics—and declare that the covenant of the Jewish people is irrevocable."

Other benchmarks abound. In 1987, under the shadow of the Waldheim affair, John Paul II told a Miami gathering of IJCIC representatives that there were "no theological obstacles to full diplomatic relations with Israel."

Said Rabbi Mordecai Waxman of Temple Israel of Great Neck, who was president of IJCIC at the time, "This was the necessary underpinning, ideologically and psychologically, for the recognition of Israel."

And, said Rudin, an equally far-reaching development may yet emerge from a 1992 meeting between IJCIC and Chicago Diocese Archbishop Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, at which the suggestion was made to open the Vatican's WW II archives to non-Church scholars.

For the present, however, both its organizers and other interested observers think the pope's decision to host a Yom HaShoah concert will have an untold ripple effect.

"The fact that the pope chose to sponsor this shows a real desire to make a statement about the significance of the Holocaust not only to the Jewish people but to the world at large," said Waxman. UAHC president Rabbi Alexander Schindler agreed, noting that the simultaneous broadcast of the concert throughout Europe via Eurovision and on delayed broadcast over 300 radio stations (including public radio stations in the U.S.) will act as an antidote to "Holocaust deniers, revisionists, and those who minimize the uniqueness of this tragedy."

For Eisner, the concert's papal backing is without parallel. "To me it's more than the recognition of Israel, which was a political act," he said. "This is a *theological* act. This is a huge step that the Church is making to change its course drastically towards Jews. It may finally take another 50 years," however, to finally eradicate anti-Jewish teachings of the Church. In the meantime, said Eisner, the emotional impact for the 200 million Christians around the world watching it cannot be overestimated.

"As a survivor who lived for six years in the camps," he said, "this is a culmination of my dream to prevent what happened to me from happening to my grandchildren."





With a menorah lit in memory of Jews killed in the Holocaust, Pope John Paul II welcomed the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Elio Toaff, to a concert of Jewish

inspiration at the Vatican yesterday. Many wept as the Kaddish was read to Bernstein's music and a New York cantor sang the 92d Psalm to Schubert.

8 April 94 Holocaust Lamentations Echo at Vatican

By JOHN TAGLIABUE
Special to The New York Times

ROME, April 7 — Pope John Paul II welcomed the Chief Rabbi of Rome to the Vatican today as guest of honor at a concert to honor the memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

"Many at that time mourned, and their lament resounds still," the Pope told 5,000 invited guests in the immense audience hall next to St. Peter's Basilica. "We hear them here, too. Their lament did not perish with them, but lifts up strong, struggling, heart-rending, and it says, 'Do not forget us.'"

It was the first time that Pope John Paul, who has sought to heal the strife between Catholics and Jews, has officially honored the memory of the millions of European Jews killed by the Nazis on the day Jews have set aside for this. And it was the first time Rome's Chief Rabbi, Elio Toaff, had been received as the honored guest at a Vatican ceremony.

Just before the London Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and cellist Lynn Harrell began Max Bruch's variations on "Kol Nidre," an 1881 composition for cello and orchestra by the German composer that evokes the prayer spoken on Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, the Pope made his way down the red-carpeted main aisle accompanied by Chief

Rabbi Toaff, and the President of Italy, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.

In a gesture to emphasize the equal dignity of the two faiths, the two men sat on identical gilt and brocade thrones next to President Scalfaro.

Earlier, six survivors of concentration camps, one raising a granddaughter aloft, lit six candles on a large menorah, the ceremonial candelabrum, one representing each of the estimated six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

"The candles lit by some of the survivors," the Pope said, speaking in Italian, and briefly in English, after the music, "seek to demonstrate symbolically that this hall has no narrow limits, but that it contains all the victims: fathers, mothers, sons, brothers, friends."

"In our memory they are all present," he said. "They are with you; they are with us."

The menorah has a peculiar resonance for Rome's ancient Jewish community. The original candelabrum from the Second Temple was brought to Rome by the conquering soldiers of the Flavian emperors after they destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D., and it is depicted on the triumphal arch erected for the Emperor Titus, who also settled thousands of Jewish slaves in his capital.

Rabbi Toaff did not speak at the

concert, but in a statement he said the Pope's effort to commemorate the Holocaust "was much appreciated by the Jews." He said the concert "assumes a significance that goes beyond that of a simple artistic event."

The Pope was most visibly moved, and many in the hall wept openly, as the actor Richard Dreyfuss read Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, to Leonard Bernstein's music.

A high point came as Howard Nevison, the cantor of Temple Emanu-El in New York intoned, in Hebrew, the 92nd Psalm, "O Lord, it is good to give thanks," to a composition written by Schubert in 1826 for the dedication of a synagogue in Vienna.

The Pope's acquiescence in allowing a service of largely Jewish inspiration within the confines of the Vatican was seen by most Jews attending as a measure of his efforts to embrace the world's Jews as the "elder brothers" of Christians.

Concert Follows Recognition

The concert, which was largely organized by Gilbert Levine, an American conductor who is a Jew and a close acquaintance of the Pope, came little over three months after the Pope, buoyed by the progress made in talks between Israel and the Palestinians, finally agreed to formal recognition by the Vatican of Israel.

Some Jews said the Pope had revived the revolution in Catholic-Jewish relations set in motion by Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council, which rejected the long-standing teaching among Catholics that Jews were collectively responsible for Christ's death.

"Vatican and Holocaust, this is not an oxymoron any more," said Mr. Levine, who first met the Pope during his tenure as music director of the Philharmonic Orchestra in Cracow, Poland, where the Pope served as Archbishop.

Indeed, some among the roughly 100 Holocaust survivors, with children and grandchildren in tow, felt they were somehow experiencing the impossible.

Survivors Recall

At an audience earlier in the day, Jack Eisner, a survivor of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising who lives in New York, told the Pope: "My Grandma Hannah had 11 grandchildren. My Grandmother Masha had 20 grandchildren. Only I alone survived."

"As a young boy growing up in prewar Warsaw, I feared crossing the sidewalk next to a church," he said. "Now, some 50 years later, the unthinkable is happening."

Erwin Herling, 74, who survived the camps at Auschwitz and Matthausen, added, "When the Pope shook my hand, I had the feeling 2,000 years of Jewish suffering had come to some kind of turning point."

The Pope, he said, demonstrated, "that there is a way to live together in harmony and peace."

Night of Harmony

Vatican Holocaust concert helps heal ancient wounds

By Bob Keeler
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Vatican City — The long, difficult relationship of Catholics and Jews, 2,000 years of frequent dissonance and mutual suspicion, rose in a triumphant crescendo of harmony last night at a history-making concert in the halls of the Vatican.

Gathered at the very heart of Catholicism, Pope John Paul II and the leaders of Italian and world Jewry together observed Yom Ha-Shoah, Holocaust commemoration day, marking the Nazi slaughter of 6 million European Jews. Together they listened to a program that included the Hebrew words of Leonard Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" and his "Kaddish" Symphony, named for the traditional Jewish prayer in memory of the dead.

"To say Kaddish inside the Vatican means for me that Jews no longer have to consider themselves outsiders and that there is a shared spirituality," said actor Richard Dreyfuss, who narrated the symphony.

Along with about 100 others who contributed financially and otherwise to the concert, including Holocaust survivors, Dreyfuss attended a special audience with the Pope earlier in the day.

At that audience the Pope listened thoughtfully to Jewish leaders and survivors, then responded with a ringing condemnation of anti-Semitism. At times some in the audience wept quietly, like Donna Bojarsky of Los Angeles, who cried as she listened to the words of reconciliation and thought of her mother, a Holocaust survivor whose birthday was yesterday. "It was moving," she said.

As a young man, John Paul saw for himself the ferocity of the Nazis, and in recent years he has made pilgrimages to Auschwitz and Dachau.

"I welcome the survivors of the terrible experience of the concentration camps who honor us with their presence," the Pope said. "The concert this evening is a commemoration of those horrifying events. The candles which we burn as we listen to the music will keep before us the long history of anti-Semitism which culminated in the Shoah. . . . Humanity cannot permit all that to happen again."

Yesterday's events capped a series of recent developments that have helped to ease 2,000-year-old frictions and to heal the hurt that Jews felt over what they considered the timid response of Pope Pius XII to the Nazi extermination program at the time of the Holocaust.

Pope John XXIII began changing all that at an emotional appearance in 1960 before Jewish leaders honoring him for his role in saving 1,000 Jewish children in Turkey during World War II.

In 1962, John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council, which set in motion a chain of events that erased from the church's liturgy a Good Friday prayer for the "perfidious Jews" and brought about "Nostra Aetate," a key document making it clear that Catholics should not blame Jews for the death of Jesus.

At the end of last year the Vatican and Israel reached agreement on diplo-



The Pope is flanked at concert by Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, left, and Rome's chief rabbi, Elio Toaff.

'The candles which we burn . . . will keep before us the long history of anti-Semitism which culminated in the Shoah . . . Humanity cannot permit all that to happen again.'

— Pope John Paul II

matic relations. In a recent interview John Paul strongly expressed his support for the right of Jews to their homeland in Israel, called the Jews the "elder brothers" of Catholics and repeated his desire to visit Jerusalem.

"John XXIII started the process; John Paul II is pushing the process further," said Rabbi Herbert Friedman of Manhattan, who attended the meeting with John XXIII in 1960 and the papal audience yesterday.

That audience and last night's concert placed an emotional seal on the progress of the past 30 years.

"This is a unique, an extraordinary moment in the long and complicated history of our two ancient faith communities," said Rabbi A. James Rudin, inter-religious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee. "It is a moment that will not come our way ever again . . . Because words and weeping fail us, as finite human beings who believe in an infinite God, we must turn to the divine gift of music to form a mystical bond of remembrance between heaven and earth, between life and death, between past and future."

Roger Tilles, the Long Island developer who was a prime fund-raiser and organizer of the concert, told the Pope: "Thank you for bringing the power of your commitment to commemorate the Shoah together with the unique power of music."

The day was especially moving for concentration camp survivors such as Jack Eisner of Manhattan, whose own life embodies the epochal changes that the audience and concert signal.

"As a young boy growing up in pre-war Warsaw, I feared crossing the sidewalk next to a church," Eisner told John Paul. "Now, some 50 years later, the unthinkable is happening. The most influential and powerful church in the world and its majestic spiritual leader of a billion souls is extending its hand of

friendship to me, the Jewish boy from the Warsaw ghetto."

The day was filled with warm gestures. The Pope greeted each of the survivors and others at the private audience one by one, then posed for a group photo with them. Later, at a lunch hosted by Tilles, the developer presented a shofar, the horn that Jews use at the Jewish New Year, to Cardinal Edward Cassidy of Australia, president of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

The process that led to the concert began with a suggestion from Gilbert Levine, who conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of London last night. Tilles became involved as a principal fund raiser, and his Tilles Center at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University did much of the musical organizing.

Last night many of the leaders of Italy's 40,000-member Jewish community,

with Jewish and Catholic leaders from around the world, gathered for the concert in the 7,500-seat Pope Paul VI hall, in the shadow of St. Peter's Basilica.

As Eisner and other survivors finished lighting six candles for the 6 million slain Jews, the two honored guests walked in together: the Pope and the chief rabbi of Rome, Elio Toaff. In addition to the Bernstein works, the hauntingly emotional program offered Max Bruch's "Kol Nidre" concerto, the third movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and a Franz Schubert setting of Psalm 92.

What was missing from the program was as telling about the Vatican's attitude as what was in it. For one thing, Tilles said, the Vatican removed for the concert a huge cross that usually hangs in the hall. For another, the Vatican rejected a Gustav Mahler piece, apparently fearing that his presence on the program might offend Jews, since he eventually converted to Catholicism. "Their sensitivity has been amazing," Tilles said.

At the close of the concert, John Paul spoke feelingly about the Holocaust, first in Italian, then in English. "I wish to invite all of you to observe a moment of silence in order to praise the Lord with the words which He will suggest to our hearts," the Pope said, "and to hear once more the plea, 'Do not forget us!'"

The whole day had tremendous significance. "I really think that it's going to be a turning point," said Monsignor Thomas Hartman, who runs Tellicare, the television arm of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rockville Centre. Rudin and Friedman said the church now has to turn to the next item on the Jewish-Catholic agenda: implementation at the grass roots.

To hear excerpts of Max Bruch's setting of the Kol Nidre prayer and of Richard Dreyfuss reciting Kaddish from Leonard Bernstein's Kaddish Symphony, call (718) 896-6969 and enter category 4482.



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