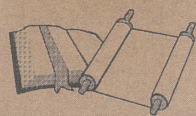


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CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN-JEWISH LEARNING



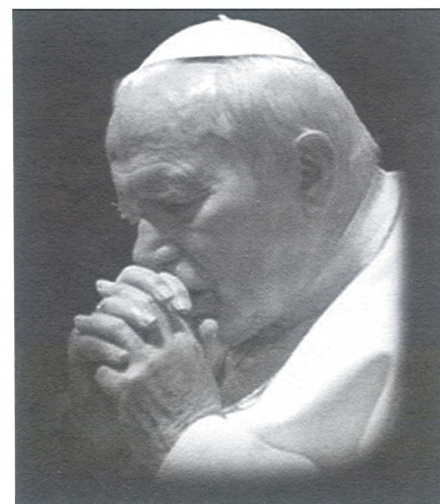
AT BOSTON COLLEGE

This Annual Report is dedicated to Pope John Paul II, the definer of a new relationship between Christians and Jews.

Pope John Paul II: A Memory and a Tribute

In 1965, as one of the youngest bishops at the Second Vatican Council, Archbishop Karol Woytila of Krakow urged the approval of the pioneering declaration *Nostra Aetate*. Thirteen years later, on October 22, 1978, he was crowned Pope John Paul II. His pontificate, one of the longest in history, was marked by an energetic commitment to justice, peace, and the preservation of all life.

One of the hallmarks of his papacy was his steadfast commitment to advancing reconciliation and understanding between Catholics and Jews. His interactions with the Jewish people showed that this effort "was not an academic exercise for him, [but that] he understood Jews not with his head only, but with his heart" (A. James Rudin). His papal actions and pronouncements were the results of a lifelong personal commitment to the people with whom he had lived as a child and gone to school, and whose voices he had heard crying out in Poland during the Shoah.



Continued on page 10

Center Observes 40th Anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*

October 28, 2005 marks forty years since the promulgation by the Second Vatican Council of its groundbreaking "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church's to Non-Christian Religions," known by its first Latin words as *Nostra Aetate* ("In our time"). The declaration made possible a new relationship between Catholics and Jews and launched processes of dialogue and collaborative research that gave rise to academic endeavors such as the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College. Details of the Center's planned observances in both the fall and spring semesters can be found on pp. 8-9.

The convener of the Council, Pope John XXIII, had instructed that a draft be prepared on the relations between the Church and the people of Israel. However, there was opposition to the statement from both inside and outside the Council. Despite these hurdles, on Oct. 28, 1965 the declaration was officially approved after an overwhelmingly favorable vote of 2221 bishops for and 88 against. For the first time in its almost 2000-year history, a formal council of the Catholic Church had issued an authoritative declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations. Such an act cannot be reversed, especially given the major developments that have occurred in the past four decades of implementing the conciliar declaration.

Continued on page 4

Center Publishes New Electronic Journal for the Council of Centers in Jewish-Christian Relations

The Center for Christian-Jewish Learning, in cooperation with the Boston College Libraries, is partnering with the Council of Centers in Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR) to publish the new, open-access electronic journal entitled *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*. The journal is the only electronic academic journal specifically dedicated to the field of Christian-Jewish relations and publishes peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scholarship on the history, theology, and contemporary realities of Jewish-Christian relations as well as reviews of new materials in the field. It also provides a vehicle for exchange of information, cooperation, and mutual enrichment in the field of Christian-Jewish studies and relations. The Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations is an association of centers and institutes devoted to enhancing mutual understanding between Jews and Christians. Most of these centers or institutes are located in the United States, but there are also affiliate members from other countries. Representatives from major Christian and Jewish agencies and religious bodies in the United States are also members.

Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations is co-edited by Philip Cunningham, the Executive Director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College and Edward Kessler, the Executive Director of the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom, one of the foremost academic institutes in the field in Europe. The managing editor is Audrey Doetzel, NDS of Boston College and the reviews editors are Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling of Cambridge University and David Sandmel of Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The editorial board of the journal, assisted by an extensive roster of peer reviewers, includes the directors of leading institutions in Christian-Jewish relations in the United States, Europe, and Israel.

Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations is published on a continuous basis in annual volumes. The first articles and reviews are slated for publication at the end of October 2005 to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council declaration *Nostra Aetate*. There is no subscription fee. Readers may register to receive e-mailed notification of newly published materials.

Visit the journal's website at: bc.edu/scjr.

Center Welcomes New Staff Member

In April 2005 the Center welcomed Dr. Audrey Doetzel, NDS to its staff as Assistant Director for Programs. She serves as a professional resource to Christian and Jewish groups in programming specifically related to Christian-Jewish, Holocaust education, and liturgical studies, and is the Center's networking/contact person in collaborative ventures. She is Managing Editor of *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, (see above) and manages Center administrative functions. She continues, as well, the research and writing she began while a Visiting Researcher at the Center since January 2004.



Center staff shares a new insight into a text from Jeremiah

A Sister of Our Lady of Sion, Dr. Doetzel holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto. A veteran of many years of experience in Christian-Jewish dialogue, she serves on the Advisory Committee on Catholic-Jewish Relations for the U.S. Bishops' Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and on the Board of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education at Seton Hill University. She has also been editor of *The SIDIC Review*, The Service International de Documentation Judeo-Chretienne.

Interreligious Learning: Courses at Boston College 2005 - 2006

Christ and the Jewish People (*Philip A. Cunningham, Spring 2005*) In the wake of the groundbreaking conciliar declaration *Nostra Aetate*, the Catholic Church now authoritatively teaches that the Jewish people remain in an eternal covenant with God. This course explores the unfolding implications of this recognition for the Christian conviction that Jesus Christ is universally significant for human salvation by considering relevant New Testament texts, the development of the church's Christological tradition, the rise and demise of supersessionism, and various approaches being proposed today.

From Diatribe to Dialogue: Studies in the Jewish-Christian Encounter (*Paul R. Kolbet and Ruth Langer, Spring 2005*) Christians and Jews, living together, have never ignored one another. Only in our times have these encounters begun to include positive affirmations of the other. To provide the student with a background for the contemporary situation, this course explores various theological facets of this encounter, from the diatribes of earliest Christianity through the medieval disputations, concluding with the contemporary dialogue. Readings are drawn from Jewish and Christian primary sources in translation.

Liturgy, Seasons, Festivals: Jewish and Christian (*Bruce Morrill and Ruth Langer, Fall 2005*) The Jewish and Christian liturgical years dance around each other, interpreting the seasons and their biblical celebrations in ways that are both overlapping and appositional. Beginning with the common Sabbath and Paschal seasons, this course compares Jewish and Christian understandings and celebrations of the liturgical calendar. In the course of this comparison, we explore the development of the celebrations, the ways that they form and inform their practitioners. Because Christianity grew out of Judaism and because Jews and Christians have lived in each others' presence, we also explore how this interaction itself shaped these liturgies.

The New Testament in Its Jewish Context (*Philip A. Cunningham, Fall 2005*) Most of the New Testament books were composed when the Church was a Jewish eschatological movement, grappling with its relationship to other Jewish groups, with its understanding of the authority of the Torah, and with the conditions to admit Gentiles into its ranks. This course examines the consequences of these dynamics for the New Testament itself and for subsequent and contemporary Christian-Jewish relations.

Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Bible (*Philip A. Cunningham and Ruth Langer, Spring 2006*) Although Jews and Christians share many of the same scriptural texts (the Christian "Old Testament," the Jewish *Tanakh*), they often understand them differently. This course explores the ways that Jews and Christians have interpreted key texts, separately and together, over two millennia of learning from and disputing with each other. Students themselves engage in interreligious learning while learning about ancient Israel's scriptures and studying methods of biblical interpretation from late antiquity to today.

Passover in Midrash and Talmud (*Ruth Langer, Spring 2006*) Fundamental to any understanding of Judaism is an ability to enter into its formative literature, Midrash and Talmud, the primary texts of Jewish learning. Focusing on texts (in translation) relevant to the celebration of Passover, this course introduces students to the rabbinic approaches to Scripture and their means of making it relevant in their (and our) world. This understanding is heightened by comparisons to early Christian discourse on the same themes.

Center's Website Has Major Upgrade

Regular visitors to the Center's website will have noticed a new and more accessible presentation of its materials. Since its inception five years ago, the website has grown by leaps and bounds. As the number of files on the website soared into the thousands, it became clear, especially to the director of Boston College's Office of Marketing and Communications, Ben Birnbaum, that a better arrangement structure was required. With the assistance of expert consultants and the hard work of the OMC staff, especially Benjamin Jones, the website has been completely reorganized and updated, becoming in the words of one recent writer, "the most useful collection of information and resources on Jewish-Christian relations in the world." The homepage now offers direct links to current international and Center news, together with current and archived articles, documents, streaming videos, and educational resources. Visitors can register to receive e-mail notification of new postings. Take some time and surf through its many features at bc.edu/cjlearning.

Why this debate? After World War II, it was clear that persistent Christian teaching against Jews had helped make the *Shoah* possible. As recently as 1938, a draft document commissioned by Pope Pius XI to condemn Nazi racism argued that because “the Jews” were cursed by God for crucifying Jesus and because the Church had to guard against the dangers posed to Christian souls by the Jews, there existed an “authentic basis of the social separation for the Jews from the rest of humanity.” Thus, when 25 years later the Second Vatican Council considered the subject, there was a 1500-year anti-Jewish theological understanding that exerted great influence.

The following points sketch the revolutionary chapter 4 of *Nostra Aetate*. In the subsequent forty years each has been further developed in official Catholic documents:

1. *Nostra Aetate* stressed the religious bond and spiritual legacy shared by Jews and the Church.

This has become axiomatic in later Catholic writings.

The shared religious bond and spiritual legacy stressed by Nostra Aetate has become axiomatic in Catholic ecclesiastical and theological writings.

2. *Nostra Aetate* strongly implied that **God and Jews abide in covenant**: “to them belong [note the present tense] the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.” This point was repeatedly asserted by John Paul II, as when he referred to Jews as “the people of God of the Old Covenant, never revoked by God.” The full, theological ramifications of this recognition are still being explored.

3. *Nostra Aetate* deplored “all hatreds, persecutions, displays of antisemitism directed against the Jews at any time or from any source.” While *Nostra Aetate* did not mention Christian antisemitism, later documents acknowledged Christian wrongdoing and labeled antisemitism as a sin against God and humanity. Christian penitence was perhaps expressed most iconically in Pope John Paul II’s prayer at the Western Wall on March 26, 2000. Still, many Christians remain unaware of the history of Christian oppression of Jews and more education about this is needed.

4. *Nostra Aetate* rejected the “deicide” charge by saying that “Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or accursed as if this followed from holy scripture.”

5. *Nostra Aetate* stressed the need for accurate biblical interpretation and education: “all must take care, lest ... they teach anything which is not in accord with the truth of the Gospel message or the spirit of Christ.” This directive was intensified in later documents. However, as the controversy over the 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ* demonstrates, much work remains to be done in promoting Catholic principles of biblical interpretation.

6. *Nostra Aetate* called for Catholics and Jews to collaborate in “biblical and theological enquiry and ... friendly discussions.” Directly contradicting the prior discouraging of Catholics’ conversation with Jews, this summons has contributed to a great number of dialogues and the establishment in the USA alone of two dozen academic centers to promote Christian-Jewish studies.

7. *Nostra Aetate* expressed no interest in trying to baptize

Jews, relegating resolution of Christian/Jewish disagreements about Christ until the final dawning of God’s

kingdom: “[T]he church awaits the day, known to God alone, when all peoples will call on God with one voice and serve him shoulder to shoulder.” This phrase was closely considered during the Council’s deliberations and was meant to convey, in the words of Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro that “only an eschatological turn of events will bring [Jews and Christians] to the common messianic meal of the eternal Pasch.” Today, unlike some other Christian communities, the Catholic Church allocates no resources for the conversion of Jews. However, the theological reasons for this abandonment of previous and persistent Christian efforts have not yet achieved a definitive articulation in Catholic teaching.

The fortieth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* is an occasion for Catholics to become better acquainted with its crucial historical significance in regard to Jews. It also challenges Jews, who have never faced the situation of having to react to unprecedented affirmative Christian statements about the Jewish religious heritage.



“From Diatribe To Dialogue”



BC Students Explore the Jewish Christian Encounter

From Diatribe to Dialogue - Studies in the Jewish Christian Encounter (TH485) is one of the most difficult courses we teach. Only a single session at the end of the course addresses the post-Holocaust rapprochement between Jews and Christians. Even so, we spend 1/15th of the course on 1/40th of its chronological scope. The rest is an emotionally difficult journey through theological mudslinging, prejudice and all-too-frequent violence as Jews and Christians have denigrated and demonized each other through the ages. Two of the students in the course, Rachel Nelson, a Catholic Ph.D. candidate in the History of Christian Life, and Daniel Schockett, a Jewish undergraduate, reflect on the course and its contribution to their education.



Rachel Nelson:

As a student of early church history, focusing on liturgical development in the first three centuries following Jesus' birth, I have always had an interest in the relationship between Judaism

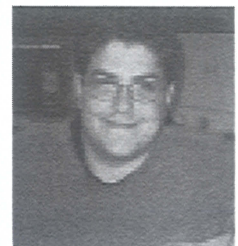
and Christianity. I was aware of the anti-Jewish rhetoric that runs through many of the Christian writings of this period. However, I also understood that much of this rhetoric was either written by a community that still identified itself as Jewish or by a beleaguered minority attempting to develop its own self-identity. Christians wrote a vast amount of anti-Roman literature for the same purpose. I would never have dreamed of interpreting the statements literally or seeing them as valid theological statements about how Christianity relates to Judaism in the present.

Yet, I also knew that many of the writings that I so blithely muted with my historical apologetics had not typically been read with attention to their historical context. Instead, centuries of Church Fathers had interpreted these texts literally, with truly horrific results. However, I tended to attribute these sins to the twisted attitudes of individuals or the ignorant prejudices of particular

Daniel Schockett:

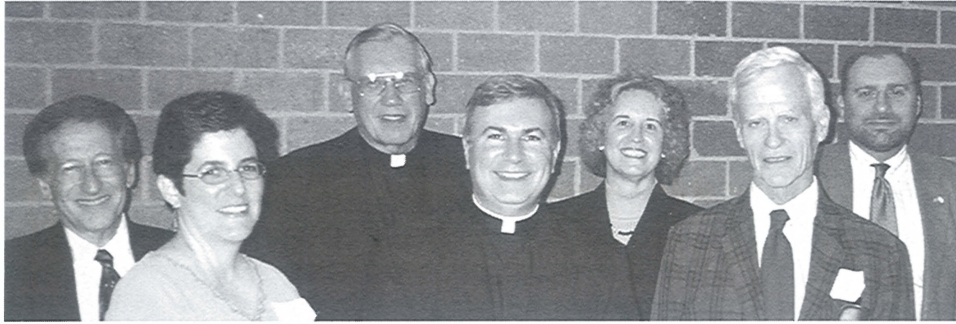
I have always found it strange that Jews and Christians are referred to as 'People of the Book.' As a relatively educated Jew, I know that we Jews are people of thousands of books, not just one. Similarly, as a relatively educated American, I know that Christians have a similar canon, spanning just as long a history and just as many pages. So they, too, should be called 'People of the Many Books.' However, there is a problem that every Jew or Christian must face: since only a fraction of the complete canon can ever be studied by one layperson, certain texts must be ignored in order to focus on those which are more important.

Unfortunately, since the texts in this course are, at best, politically incorrect and, at worst, deeply hateful, they are often the first to be discarded by Christians or Jews who are interested in their own religion. It is even more unfortunate that they are often the first texts to be picked up by Christians or Jews who are interested in the others' religion. What drew me to take this course and what makes this course so essential to interreligious dialogue is that it takes polemics which would be hard to study in a purely Jewish or Christian context and



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September 8, 2004 - Center Hosts Dialogue among Local Interreligious Leaders



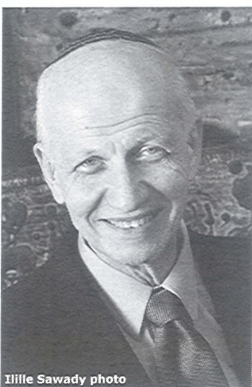
M. Cook, R. Langer, J. Pawlikowski, D. Michael, D. Kessler, F. Sherman and A. Ronkin (pictured above) were among fifty-some area interreligious leaders at a day-long consultation hosted by the Center. The event was co-sponsored by the Center and the American Jewish Committee, Boston Chapter; the Anti-Defamation League, New England Region; the Office for Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs of the Boston Archdiocese; the Consulate General of Israel to New England; the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston; and the Massachusetts Council of Churches. Invited guests Michael Cook, Hebrew Union College, John Pawlikowski, President of the International Council of Christians and Jews, and Franklin Sherman, member of the Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations, sparked a valuable wide-ranging conversation, including the impact of *The Passion of the Christ*, the Israel-Palestinian conflict and the question of divestment, Roman Catholic theological debates, and the impact of these factors on local interfaith relations. Plans for future similar consultations are underway.



John Michalczyk

Sept 28, 2004 – Of Stars and Shamrocks: Boston's Jews and Irish

The Center co-sponsored a screening of Professor John Michalczyk's informative documentary about this aspect of Boston history. The showing was followed by a reception with Klezmer and Irish music. Other sponsors were: The American Jewish Committee, The Consulate of Ireland, Boston College Fine Arts/Film Studies, The Center for Irish Programs, BC Hillel, The Irish Chamber of Commerce USA, The Irish Cultural Center of New England, and the Irish Networking Society.



Rabbi I. Greenberg

October 19, 2004 – For the Sake of Heaven and Earth: The New Encounter between Judaism and Christianity

Rabbi Irving Greenberg, the president of the Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation, presented a summary of his recent book on a positive Jewish theology of Christianity – the culmination of his years of grappling with the horrors of the Holocaust, participating in the Jewish-Christian dialogue since the 1960's, and challenging Christians to overcome the legacy of contempt. His collection of essays calls for Christians and Jews to come together in their continuously evolving partnership with God, and to respect the distinctiveness of the ongoing validity of each other. Respondents to Rabbi Greenberg were Philip A. Cunningham, BC, Steven T. Katz, BU, and Francis X. Clooney, BC. The event may be viewed online (see "Streaming Videos" in the lower right corner of the Center's homepage).

February 9, 2005 – Should Catholics Seek to Convert Jews (If Jews are in True Covenant with God)?

On Ash Wednesday, 2005, a panel of BC theologians – Michael Himes, Fred Lawrence and Philip A. Cunningham – revisited the issues raised by the 2002 dialogue document *Reflections on Covenant and Mission* by the US Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the National Council of Synagogues. In this event, co-sponsored by the Theology Department, the three theologians discussed their own approaches to the relevant issues of dialogue, evangelization and conversion.



Michael Himes

March 1, 2005 - Faith, Scripture and the Death Penalty: A Jewish and Christian Dialogue

Ruth Langer, associate director of the Center and BC associate professor of Jewish Studies, and Stephen J. Pope, BC associate professor of ethics, discussed Jewish and Christian perspectives on capital punishment. The panel explored both pro- and anti-death penalty positions in order to better understand the contemporary debate, focusing on scriptural interpretations and the development of moral teachings concerning this issue.

March 15, 2005 – Early Modern Jewish Controversies: Spinoza, Modena, and Isaac of Troki

Daniel J. Lasker, professor of medieval Jewish philosophy in the Goldstein-Goren Department of Jewish Thought at Ben-Gurion University in the Negev, discussed the nature of Jewish and Christian polemics during the Enlightenment. Widely published, Professor Lasker's seminal works include studies of medieval Jewish-Christian debate and polemics. The event may be viewed on line.

March 22, 2005 - Christ's Passion: What's at Stake for Christians and Jews?



L. Roy, P. Cunningham, R. Helmick, J. Michalczyk

Boston College panelists Philip A. Cunningham, Raymond Helmick, John Michalczyk, and Louis Roy, offered personal reflections on the meaning of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus for Christians as the season of Lent drew to its culmination during Holy Week. The event also marked the recent publication of a collection of essays entitled, *Pondering the Passion: What's at Stake for Christians and Jews?* The event may be viewed on line.

April 21, 2005 – Healing the Holy Land: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Resources for Peace Making

Professor Yehezkel Landau discussed the need for a just solution to the conflict in Israel and Palestine which draws upon the spiritual resources of the three Abrahamic families in the Holy Land. Professor Landau is co-founder of *The Open House Project* in Ramle, Israel, a unique experiment in building communities of conversation and cooperation among Israeli Arabs, both Christians and Muslims, and Israeli Jews. The evening included a film on the work of *Open House*.



Yehezkel Landau

September 25-28, 2005

Nostra Aetate Today**Reflections 40 Years after Its Call for a New Era of Interreligious Relationships**

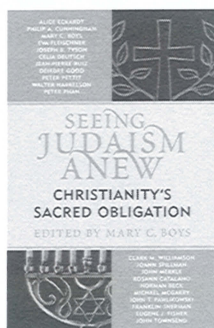
Walter Cardinal Kasper

The Boston College Center for Christian-Jewish Learning – along with the Cardinal Bernardin Center at CTU, Georgetown University, and the Center of Christian-Jewish Understanding of Sacred Heart University – is a collaborator with the Institute for the Study of Religions and Cultures and the Cardinal Bea Center for Judaic Studies in sponsoring this international conference to take place at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Plenary sessions will focus on the way in which people of various faiths have come to a new understanding of their own tradition through engagement with another tradition. Successive days will concentrate on Jewish-Christian relations, on Christian relations with the religious traditions of Asia, and on Muslim-Christian relations. The opening keynote address will be by Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald,

President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and Walter Cardinal Kasper, President of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews will address the closing dinner session.

The Center organized seminar panels on: The Implications of *Nostra Aetate* for Christology and Soteriology; The Implications of *Nostra Aetate* for Liturgy and Education; and The Historical and Dialogical Significance of *Nostra Aetate*. The three Center staff members will be seminar presiders and will present papers at various plenary and seminar sessions.

October 9, 2006, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. - Corcoran Commons, Heights Room

Seeing Judaism Anew**Christian Scholars Group on Christian Jewish Relations**

The Center will host an event in observance of the publication of *Seeing Judaism Anew: Christianity's Sacred Obligation* - a collection of essays which offers a conceptual framework by which Christians can rethink their understanding of the church's relationship to Judaism and show how essential it is that Christians represent Judaism accurately, not only as a matter of justice for the Jewish people, but also for the integrity of the Christian faith. The essays expand the ten themes which the members of the Christian Scholars Group on Christian-Jewish Relations developed in the September 2002 document *A Sacred Obligation*, which focused around a guiding claim: "Revising Christian teaching about Judaism and the Jewish people is a central and indispensable obligation of theology in our time."

Members of the Christian Scholars Group will mark the publication of this book with a program and a reception introduced by the editor of the book and the new chair of the Christian Scholars Group, Dr. Mary C. Boys. In a session *Looking Backward - Looking Forward*, three Christian veterans of the dialogue, Alice Eckardt, Eva Fleischner and Walter Harrelson will be interviewed by Michael Paulson, Religion Reporter for *The Boston Globe*. In a second session three Christians and three Jews will offer brief reflections on: *What Difference Does the Effort to See Judaism Anew Make?* Both sessions will include audience participation.

November 16, 2005 - Gasson Hall, Room 305

Estranged Brothers: Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity

The theme of Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity will be addressed by Adiel Schremer, associate professor of Jewish History at Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel. His new book, nearing completion, on Jewish-Christian relations in Late Antiquity will be the subject of his presentation.

November 18, 2005 - Clergy Luncheon Evangelizing in a Religiously Plural Society



This event for clergy and church leaders featuring Fr. Tom Ryan, CSP, will discuss how Christian evangelization can occur in the context of simple presence and witness, work for justice and peace, the Church's liturgy and prayer, as well as in the more traditional context of proclamation and catechesis.

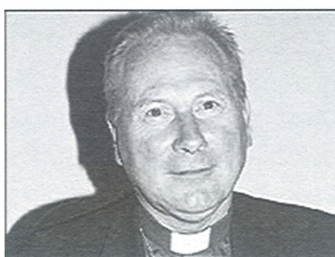
November 21, 2005 - Higgins 300 Catholics and Jews: The Unfinished Agenda



This program will feature a screening of the film *I am Joseph Your Brother*, which charts developments in Catholic-Jewish Relations since the issuance of *Nostra Aetate* in 1965. One of the film's creators, Rabbi Ron Kronish, will offer thoughts on the 'unfinished agenda' in Catholic-Jewish relations.

March 16-17, 2006 In Our Time: Interreligious Relations in a Divided World

Boston College and Brandeis University will co-sponsor a conference to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council Declaration *Nostra Aetate*. Special guest and keynote speaker will be Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.



Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald

His keynote address at Brandeis University the morning of Mar. 16 will be *What Interreligious Dialogue Has Taught Us*. Several panels will follow the keynote address. The day will conclude at Boston College with a public lecture by Archbishop Fitzgerald on the theme *The Promise of Interreligious Dialogue for a World in Conflict*.

The March 17th program, hosted at Boston College, will feature a morning fishbowl session on *Questions Interreligious Dialogue Poses for Catholic Theology* in which panelists will reflect with the Archbishop on current pressing questions. Theology faculty members

and doctoral students will join the conversation, with audience questions following. An afternoon session on *Pastoral Implications of Interreligious Dialogue for Parish Life* will focus on parish and diocesan interreligious activities, liturgy, preaching, and current world events. The session will include local Jewish and Muslim speakers.

April 24, 2006: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Fuller Meanings: Christian and Jewish Readings of the Bible

An Exploration of the Pontifical Biblical Commission's '*The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*'

Co-sponsored by the BC Theology Department, the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning, and the Weston Jesuit School of Theology, this symposium will explore how Jews and Christians interpret the Bible – where they differ and where they agree – and will suggest how local congregations can make the

Bible a richer resource for study and education. The speakers will be: J. Levenson, Harvard Divinity School; G. A. Anderson, U of Notre Dame; P.A. Cunningham, Boston College; D. J. Harrington, SJ, Weston School of Theology; R. Langer, Boston College.



Levenson



Anderson



Cunningham



Harrington



Langer

His pontificate took huge strides in defining the new relationship between Catholics and Jews envisioned by *Nostra Aetate*. His legacy has encouraged the establishment of academic centers such as BC's Center for Christian-Jewish Learning, as the Center website's slideshow of his relevant quotations conveys.



Center Director, Philip Cunningham and his wife Julia Walsh meet Pope John Paul II in 1998.

While at the time of his death many lauded the unprecedented advances in Catholic-Jewish rapprochement during his papacy, they were also aware that this growth in reconciliation and understanding had not been without tension and at times had been honed in the fires of controversy. Actions such as his meetings with Yasser Arafat and Kurt Waldheim, his defence of Pope Pius XII, slow access to Vatican archival materials, the canonization of Edith Stein were all controversial.

However, they realized, too, that here was a man who had an intimate knowledge of the great civilization of Eastern European Jewry, who understood the Jewish psychological pain and historic mistrust of the Catholic Church, and who had an intuitive awareness that the approach to reconciliation and understanding could not be sporadic or one-dimensional.

Little wonder that among the Jewish farewells to a beloved and trusted friend was a *Dayenu* litany prepared by Beth Israel Beth Aaron Congregation, Montreal. Modeled on the Passover Seder ritual prayer - "It would have been enough for us" - the prayer summarized some of his most important legacies from the Jewish perspective:

- His 1979 visit to Auschwitz and his prayer by the Jewish memorial there;
- His 1986 visit to Rome's great synagogue to pray with the city's Jewish community;
- His condemnation of anti-Semitism and his call for Christian repentance;
- His 1994 Vatican-hosted concert commemorating the Shoah;
- His 1994 establishment of full diplomatic relations between Israel and the Holy See;

- His Year 2000 visit to the State of Israel, kissing its soil, visiting Yad VaShem, visiting the Western Wall and placing into its crevices a Christian prayer for forgiveness.

His travels to 129 countries during his papacy were rarely without meetings with local Jewish communities. In addition to personal contacts and dramatic symbolic

gestures – which have become indelibly imprinted on the pages of recent Christian-Jewish history – his intense theological reflection has greatly advanced the reforms begun by *Nostra Aetate*. His emerging theology of the Catholic-Jewish relationship may be summarized in ten points:

- Jews live in covenant with God.
- Anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism are sins.
- Christian teaching, including misuse of New Testament texts, has promoted antipathy and violence toward Jews. Interpretations promoting negative attitudes toward Jews are in error.
- There exists a divinely-willed ongoing bond between Judaism and Christianity.
- The path for Christians to follow with Jews is dialogue and collaboration.
- Judaism has its own distinctive vocation in the divine plan.
- Jesus was and always remained a Jew. His humanity cannot be understood apart from this.
- Christians must affirm Jews' self-understanding of their own religious experience. Christians deepen their own faith when they learn from the living faith of contemporary Jews.
- The Scriptures of ancient Israel have revelatory value as inspired texts apart from the Church's christological reading of them.
- Jews and Christians both have the covenantal responsibility to prepare for the Age to Come.

As he rests in peace, may John Paul II's vision continue to *disturb* us, with his 1993 reminder to Christians and Jews, that "following the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing to the world. This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to first be a blessing to each other."

Pope Benedict XVI Reaffirms the Vision of *Nostra Aetate*

On April 19, 2005, the College of Cardinals elected Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger as the next Bishop of Rome and Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Assuming the name Benedict XVI, the new pope has, in his initial months in office, shown every sign that he will continue the concern for and personal involvement in the progress of Catholic-Jewish relations shown by his predecessor. He has reached out to and met with leaders of the Roman and worldwide Jewish communities, and put on hold the beatification process of a late 19th-early 20th century French priest pending an investigation of his allegedly antisemitic writings, and he has voiced interest in arranging a personal visit to Israel.

These gestures and statements are consistent with his more behind-the-scenes work as President of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, where his role in the preparation of various documents important to the progress of recent decades was far from insignificant. His most public involvements in these documents were

his work relating to the composition of *Dominus Iesus* (2000), which, while failing to mention Judaism specifically, addresses Catholic theologies of religious pluralism, and his personal preface to the Pontifical Biblical Commission's *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* (2001). In the latter he emphasizes the necessity of reevaluating the Christian traditions of interpretation of the Old Testament as well as the anti-Jewish statements of the New Testament.

Both of these tasks are central to the ongoing task of revisioning Christian teachings about Jews and Judaism.

The most significant event for Christian-Jewish relations early in Pope Benedict's papacy was his visit to a Cologne synagogue destroyed by the Nazis. Here he declared, "I wish to reaffirm that I intend to continue on the path towards improved relations and friendship with the Jewish People

[However,] our gaze should not only be directed to the past, but should also look forward to the tasks that await us today and tomorrow."



Pope Benedict XVI is greeted by Rabbi Netanel Teitelbaum at the Roonstrasse Synagogue of Cologne, Germany, Aug. 18, 2005

The Catholic Church and the Jewish People from Vatican II to Today

The Center for Christian-Jewish Learning has been fortunate to benefit from an October 2004 – January 2005 lecture course taught at the Pontifical Gregorian University and organized by the Cardinal Bea Centre for Judaic Studies. With the collaboration of the Cardinal Bea Centre and the capable Italian-to-English translation services of Thomas Cattoi, a teaching fellow in the Theology Department, the Center has been able to publish this series of lectures in English electronically. This English series can be found on the Center website: www.bc.edu/cjlearning - under Current Topics. The series includes the following themes and lecturers:

- "Steps Taken and Questions Remaining in Jewish-Christian Relations Today: Thirty Years of the Pontifical Commission for the Religious Relations with the Jews" – Cardinal Walter Kasper, President, Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews
- "Steps Taken and Questions Remaining in Jewish-Christian Relations Today" – Rabbi Riccardo Di Segni, Chief Rabbi of Rome
- "Approaches to a Christian Theology of Judaism" – Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, Archbishop of Milan emeritus
- "Israel and the Church: The Two Explorers of the Promised Land" – Most Rev. Bruno Forte, Archbishop of Chieti-Vasto
- "Jewish Perspectives on Christianity" – Rabbi Prof. Giuseppe Laras, Chief Rabbi of Milan
- "The Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee" – Msgr. Pier Francesco Fumagalli
- "The Creation of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and its Work" – Cardinal Jorge Mejia
- "The Vatican and Israel" – Cardinal Achille Silvestrini

The full collected texts of the course of lectures will be published by: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Piazza della Pilotta 35, 00187 Roma (editricepugpib-info@biblico.it) .

NELSON cont. from pg. 5:

social groups, oversimplifying the situation by believing that those Christian generations were merely misinterpreting Christian teaching.

Taking this course has radically shifted the way I think about these questions and also the way I read early Christian texts. I am far more aware of the dangers of any group seeking to define its identity through the vilification of the other. Such tendencies breed suspicion and misunderstanding, despite the fact that their intent may be the safeguarding of a minority group. I am more aware of the need to confront the horrors perpetrated by my spiritual ancestors, learning to own them, learn from them, and face the full reality of their sinfulness, without being trapped in endless guilt.

I am immensely grateful for the new sensitivities that I have gained. This is true not only in my academic life, but also in my own personal religious practice. I hear sermons differently, noticing the ways in which we continue to perpetrate anti-Jewish rhetoric despite the directives of *Nostra Aetate*. Perhaps most importantly, I pray differently, with a new awareness of how I am defining my own Christian identity and its relationship to Judaism.

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SCHOCKETT cont. from pg. 5

brings them out into the open.

Prof. Ruth Langer began the course by describing many of these texts as 'Locker Room Conversations,' in that they are meant to be read only by people who share the religion of the author, just as conversations in a locker room are meant to be heard only by people who share the gender of the speaker. While I gave this metaphor relatively little heed at the time, when we began to study Jewish sources, I felt distinctly like I had just told an off-color joke in mixed company. Throughout much of the course, I studied aspects of my own religious tradition that would have been glossed over in a purely Jewish setting. But, in a room with four Christians, those sources came into glaring contrast with the rest of Judaism.

By the end, I had to confront the reality of my own tradition – that it contains a long thread of xenophobia interwoven with ones of kindness and acceptance. Similarly, the inherently anti-semitic Christianity that I had thought existed dissolved into a more complex creature, whose attitudes toward outsiders are as diverse and complex as Judaism's are. Though I have gained an inestimable familiarity with the most influential Christian texts on Judaism, my most important acquisition from last semester was the knowledge that there really are good Christians out there who are willing to enter into a Jewish-Christian dialogue about some of the most emotionally difficult texts in our canons. Most comforting was that the most recently written texts most encouraged a constructive discussion among the members of both religions. Professor Paul Kolbet concluded it best as the last class ended, saying to the students, "Now, it's your job." This course has reoriented me and given me another job that I am eager to undertake.

Annotated Internet Sourcebook Progress

Last year's report described the annotated internet sourcebook on "Jewish Understandings of the Other" that was still in its planning stages. This year the initial pages, presenting a selection of historic Jewish texts about non-Jews, are available on the Center's website (bc.edu/jsourcebook). Designed to encourage Jewish participants in dialogue to delve deeper into their own theologies of the religious other and to contribute to constructive theological work on this topic, it also serves as a resource for anyone seeking to understand Judaism better. The editors, Ruth Langer, Eugene Korn and Shira Lander have now invited an initial group of academicians to contribute pages to this open-ended project. Their immediate enthusiastic response indicates that these texts and their annotations will provide a rich and valuable resource. Be in touch with Ruth Langer for further information.



Christian Scholars Group

The Christian Scholars Group on Christian-Jewish Relations, an ecumenical gathering of Christian academicians, has been meeting semi-annually for over thirty years to study the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. For several years, its work has been sponsored by the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning. This past year, five new members were welcomed into the CSG: S. Mark Heim, Andover-Newton Theological School, Newton, MA; Bjorn Krondorfer and Katharina von Kellenbach, St. Mary's College of Maryland; Esther Menn, The Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, and Karla Suomala, Luther College, Iowa. The year saw the publication of the new CSG book edited by Mary C. Boys, *Seeing Judaism Anew: Christianity's Sacred Obligation*. At the conclusion of its fall meeting, the CSG will host a special Sunday afternoon event to mark the publication (see p 8).

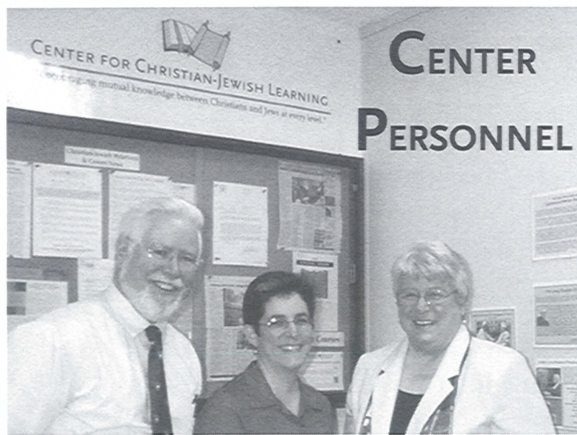
The work of the CSG includes the analysis of research papers presented by members or invited guests. At the past year's fall and spring meetings, the Group discussed papers on a wide range of topics: "The Struggle for Religious Identity: Jewish Children Who Were Hidden by Christians during the Shoah" by Eva Fleischner; "Constructing Memory, Eluding Culpability: The Holocaust and National Socialism in Autobiographical Writings of German Theologians" by Björn Krondorfer; "Christian Anti-Judaism" by guest Walter Lowe; "A Torah-Observant Paul?: What Difference Could it Make for Christian/Jewish Relations Today?" by guest Mark D. Nanos; "Jews and Judaism in Asian Theology" by Peter Phan; "The Tabernacle in the Epistle to the Hebrews" by John T. Townsend. Papers presented by members over the past three decades are being archived online and are gradually being made available to researchers and students on the Center's website. Visit the webpages of the CSG at www.bc.edu/csg.



Council of Centers

At its annual meeting held in Chicago in July, the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR) continued to show signs of growth and development. In addition to launching its electronic journal, *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* (see p. 2), the Council expanded its membership to include institutes in Canada and to admit four new member centers: The Kripke Center for the Study of Religion and Society at Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, the new King's University College Centre for Catholic-Jewish Learning, London, Ont., Canada, The Cardinal Bea Centre for Judaic Studies, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, and The Center for the Study of Christianity at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. This brings the total membership to 27 centers or institutes in the United States and Canada, and five members overseas. The Council also approved a new Board of Directors: re-electing Peter Pettit from Muhlenberg College as Chair, Philip Cunningham of Boston College as Secretary-Treasurer and for the first time Michael Signer of the University of Notre Dame as Vice-Chair and as At-large members: Elena Procaro-Foley from Iona College and Peter Zaas from Siena College. The Council's business affairs are managed by the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College. Visit the Council's webpages at www.ccjr.us.

The Center wishes to thank all who have contributed to its activities in the past year. We are very grateful for your support!



Philip A. Cunningham, Executive Director
Ruth Langer, Associate Director
Audrey Doetzel, Assistant Director for Programs

Philip A. Cunningham, Executive Director

- This past year saw the publication of a new book edited by Dr. Cunningham, *Pondering the Passion: What's at Stake for Christians and Jews?* - a group of essays (many written by colleagues at BC) that examines the origins and influence of the four Gospel passion narratives over the centuries.
- As a member of the Christian Scholars Group, he also contributed "Covenant and Conversion" to their newly published book, *Seeing Judaism Anew: Christianity's Sacred Obligation*.
- The CCAR Journal, *A Reform Jewish Quarterly* published his "Reflections from a Roman Catholic on a Reform Theology of Christianity."
- He was a featured speaker at the Chicago meeting of the International Council of Christians and Jews, including addressing "The Future of Jewish-Christian Relations." At a seminar at the Catholic Biblical Association meeting, he offered "Brief Reflections on the Continuing Need for the Christian Religious Imagination to be Informed by Historical Jesus Research."
- Presentations made this year included several on the fortieth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* delivered at the College of St. Rose, Albany; the Rev. Richard A. Marzheuser Lecture on Jewish-Catholic Relations, the Athenaeum of Ohio; Hartford Seminary; the Greater Manchester (NH) Interfaith Council; St. Joseph College of Maine; and Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston.
- Locally, he explored "The Motif of Synagogue and Church in Christian Art" at the Boston Public Library and "Catholic-Jewish Relations" (with Ruth Langer) at the Gralla Journalism Institute at Brandeis University. He also offered a series on *Walking God's Paths* at Temple Shir Tikva in Wayland. At special Center events at Boston College, he responded to Rabbi Irving Greenberg's presentation of his new book, analyzed the relationship of the 2002 document *Reflections on Covenant and Mission* to Vatican II's *Nostra Aetate*, and discussed how the historical Jesus understood his imminent death.
- In addition, this year Dr. Cunningham was re-elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations and assumed co-editorship of its new electronic journal. He was also a consultant for the London launching of a joint project of the International Council of Christians and Jews and the World Council of Churches and continued service as a member of the Advisory committee on Catholic-Jewish Relations for the U.S. Bishops.

Ruth Langer, Associate Director

Dr. Langer continues her work as a Jewish liturgist and her work in Jewish-Christian relations. These roles merge at times too, in her continued work on a book on history of the *birkat haminim* (the liturgical curse on apostates, heretics, and enemies, often including Christians in pre-modern times), and in her election this year to the largely Christian Academy Committee of the North American Academy of Liturgy. In addition, Dr. Langer serves on the boards of the Jewish Studies Program at Boston College, the Hillel Council of New England, and is a member of the History and Comparative Theology Areas of the graduate faculty of Boston College's Theology Department. Her publications and lectures this year in Jewish-Christian relations include –

Discussions towards a Jewish theology of the religious other:

- "Theologies of Self and Other in Jewish Liturgies," *CCAR Journal: A Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Winter 2005).
- As Scholar in Residence, New England Region of the Central Conference of American Rabbis Annual Retreat.
- "Jewish Liturgical Memory and the Non-Jew: Past Realities and Future Possibilities" at a conference on Towards a *Contemporary Jewish Theology of World Religions*, sponsored by the Elijah Interfaith Institute at the University of Scranton; paper presented again at the World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem.
- A discussion of the topic at the Boston College Theology Department's Comparative Theology Lunch.
- Several pages in the internet sourcebook on *Jewish Understandings of the Other* (p. 13).

Presentations on the *birkat haminim*:

- “The Early History of the *Birkat Haminim*,” at the 2005 annual meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy, *Early History of the Liturgy Seminar*.
- “The Birkat Haminim Without Minim?: The Aftermath of Christian Censorship,” at the World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem.

More general discussions:

- “Faith, Scripture, and the Death Penalty: A Jewish and Christian Dialogue” with Stephen Pope at BC.
- “The Present State of Jewish-Christian Relations” at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology
- “Telling the Catholic Story of Covenant in the Presence of Jews: A Response to Rev. Lawrence Frizzell” at a conference on *Catholic and Jewish Understandings of Covenant*, on the 40th Anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, sponsored by the US Bishops and the American Jewish Congress.
- “Dynamics of Dialogue” with Audrey Doetzel for the Hebrew College-Andover Newton student dialogue group *Journeys on the Hill*.

Other presentations and publications include:

- “Spiritual Resistance and Martyrdom: The Mother and her Seven Sons,” for Congregation Shaarei Tefillah, *Shabbos by Chanukah Light: A Community Celebration through Learning*.
- “Liturgical Flexibility and Halakhah,” an 18 hour “minimester” course at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, New York.
- “The Liturgical Writings of J. Leonard Levy: The Judaism of an American Reform Rabbi,” in *Pursuing Peace Across the Alleghenies: The Rodef Shalom Congregation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1856-2005*, edited by Walter Jacob (Pittsburgh: Rodef Shalom Press, 2005).
- “Prayer and Worship,” in *Modern Judaism: An Oxford Guide*, edited by Nicholas de Lange and Miri Freud-Kandel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- “Worship and Devotional Life: Jewish Worship,” in the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, revised edition.

Audrey Doetzel, NDS, Assistant Director for Programs

Dr. Doetzel began the past academic year as a Visiting Researcher hosted by the Center, and ended the year by becoming a member of the Center staff. Her activities as a professional resource in the Christian and Jewish communities included:

- Planning, facilitating and speaking at a Fordham University In-Service Day for New York High School religion teachers on “Critique and Review of High School Religion Curricula in view of Post-Vatican II Ecumenical and Interfaith Efforts.” She later presented this experience as a Case Study at a Boston College Comparative Theology luncheon seminar.
- Speaking to Hadassah (and invited guests) at Temple Beth Abraham, Nashua, NH on “Developments, Current Challenges and Possibilities in the Jewish-Christian Relationship.”
- Addressing and facilitating a Christian-Jewish Dialogue at Stonehill College on “Covenant and Salvation: Bearing Witness to God’s Saving Ways.”
- Presenting the theme “How Groups Become Marginalized: The Roots of Christian Antisemitism” at a Facing History Institute for Jewish Holocaust educators.
- Speaking, with Dr. Langer, to the Hebrew College-Andover Newton student dialogue group on “Dynamics of Dialogue.”
- Serving on the Boston Archdiocesan *Nostra Aetate* planning committee.

With the recent launching of the e-journal *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* (see p. 2), she has begun her work as Managing Editor of the journal. Her essay “Catholics and Jews: Healing the Wounds” was published in *America*, Vol. 192, No. 11, 2005. At the September *Nostra Aetate* conference in Rome (see p. 8) she will present her paper: “Roots of that Good Olive Tree: 21st Century Liturgical Challenges and Possibilities.” This coming year she will pursue field research and writing on: How Developments in the Christian-Jewish Dialogue are affecting Intra-Christian Ecumenical Understandings and Relationships.

Along with her Center administrative responsibilities – which include: coordinating publicity, networking and collaborative ventures; maintaining Center budgets; website maintenance; and handling conference logistics – she serves on the Advisory Committee on Catholic-Jewish Relations for the U.S. Bishops’ Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and on the Board of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education at Seton Hill University.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Center for Christian-Jewish Learning is devoted to the multifaceted development and implementation of new relationships between Christians and Jews that are based, not merely on toleration, but on full respect and mutual enrichment. This defining purpose flows from the mission of Boston College and responds to the vision expressed in Roman Catholic documents ever since the Second Vatican Council.

The building of new, positive relationships between Jews and Christians requires sustained collaborative theological research. Therefore, under the Center's auspices, Scholars and thinkers representing diverse Jewish and Christian perspectives engage in intense and ongoing study of all aspects of our related yet distinct *traditions* of faith.

Educationally, we are committed to the goal that "Jews and Judaism should not occupy an occasional and marginal place in [Christian religious education]; their presence there

is essential and should be organically integrated" (*Notes*, 2). We are convinced that Jews and Christians enrich and deepen their respective religious identities by joint educational endeavors. The Center is dedicated to conducting educational research and to offering programs, both in the university and the wider community, in which Christians and Jews explore their traditions together.

When the Center team is fully established, the executive director, the Judaica scholar, and professors holding one visiting and two permanent chairs in Christian-Jewish relations will pursue these tasks. In short, the Center applies the scholarly resources of a Catholic university to the task of encouraging mutual knowledge between Christians and Jews at every level (*Notes*, 27).

[Notes = Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Teaching in the Roman Catholic Church, 1985.]



Boston College
Center for Christian-Jewish Learning
Theology Department
21 Campanella Way
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

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