2001

Christians and Jews Learning Together and Remembering the Past to Shape the Future

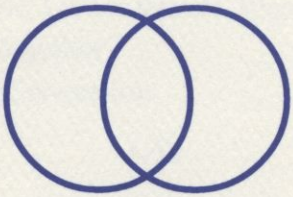
The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies

תשובה

Institute Papers

Christians and Jews Learning Together
and
Remembering the Past to Shape the Future

The Reverend Remi Hoeckman, O.P.



The Third
Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher
Memorial Lectures

The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
South Orange, New Jersey 07079

This series of papers is titled *Teshuvah*, "turning." As "turning to God," *teshuvah* is the biblical and rabbinical term for repentance. Here it bespeaks the re-vision, the re-orientation to which the Second Vatican Council, in its Declaration on the Jews (October 28, 1965), summons Christian thought and action

Table of Contents

Foreword

The Reverend Remi Hoeckman, O.P., S.T.D., secretary of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, offered the third Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher Memorial Lecture on October 29, 1995. Recently, on the occasion of a visit to New Jersey in order to receive an honorary degree from Ramapo College, he gave his second lecture at Seton Hall University on April 2, 2000. The two essays, which complement each other, are presented in print so that a wide readership may have access to these reflections on the work of the Holy See in dialogue with Jewish and Christian thinkers on several continents.

Father Hoeckman wrote his doctoral dissertation on ecumenism and founded the Department of Ecumenical Studies at the University of St. Thomas (the "Angelicum") in Rome, where he was a professor for many years. As an officer for the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education, he made a presentation to the meeting of the International Jewish-Catholic Liaison Committee in Baltimore in May 1992. In January 1993, he took up his present position in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, whose president is Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy.

Seton Hall University has been honored and privileged to host Cardinal Cassidy on several occasions over the last decade. Members of the Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies have fond memories as well of the visits of two of Father Hoeckman's predecessors, Reverend Cornelis Rijk and Monsignor (now Cardinal) Jorge Mejia.

Even before the last session of the Second Vatican Council, which promulgated the Declaration of the Church's Relations with Non-Christian Religions on October 28, 1965 (*Nostra Aetate*, whose major paragraphs discuss the Church's bond with the Jewish People), a group of interested bishops and theologians, undoubtedly including Augustin Cardinal Bea, president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, asked the Sisters of Sion to create a documentation center in Rome so that the work of Catholic education and efforts toward understanding and amity between Catholics and Jews might be recorded and coordinated throughout the world. With houses and study centers in 15 countries, they were a natural choice for this extremely important endeavor. Their work is best known through the review *SIDIC* (Service International du Documentation Judéo-Chrétien), published three times a year in French and English versions.

Soon after, on October 1, 1966, Father Rijk, a professor of Sacred Scripture at the Warmond Seminary in Holland, became the first officer for Catholic-Jewish Relations in the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.[1] Father Hoeckman has taken up this important work at a time when the Church can build upon the remarkable initiatives in Catholic-Jewish relations taken by Pope John Paul II and other leaders in the Church. May his contributions as representative of the Holy Father and Cardinal Cassidy bear fruit for the decades to come!

1 On these early years, see C.A. Rijk, "The Vatican Office for Catholic-Jewish Relations," *SIDIC* (special issue on Cardinal Bea, 1969) p. 11-14; Jorge Mejia, "Catholic-Jewish Relations- Laying the Foundations," *SIDIC* XIII (#1- 1980 the issue in memory of Father Rijik who died on August 29, 1979) p. 7. For an extensive study of Cardinal Bea's work, see John M. Oesterreicher, *The New Encounter between Christians and Jews* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1986) p. 27-99.

The Third Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher Memorial Lecture

CHRISTIANS AND JEWS LEARNING TOGETHER

Reverend Remi Hoeckman, O.P.
Secretary of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews

I. "We are all the children of Vatican II"

These are the words of a Jew. Together with a growing number of other Jews and Christians, Rabbi James Rudin knows that "Vatican II fundamentally changed the way Catholics and Jews view one another."[1] What they may not know is that this change had been prepared for quite a long time by the vision, the commitment and the tireless work of people like Father John Oesterreicher who, together with Catholic and Jewish friends, put his life on the line for the reconciliation of Catholics and Jews, and fought in the frontlines of the efforts which at last led to the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*, the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on the Church's Relationship with Non-Christian Religions.

Father John Oesterreicher and his friends had the courage to publish in 1934, in Austria, the periodical *Die Erfüllung*. What an initiative that was! It was launched in a period which the foreword of the first issue rightly described as "confused and dismal times," with the aim "to lay low the walls which people have erected between one another through ignorance and dissension, through error and sin."[2] And the writer (according to informed sources John Oesterreicher himself) spelled out: "Our journal takes its starting point from the Jewish question. It sees therein not a question of the time, but a question of eternity; a question on which minds are divided. It desires to serve an encounter of Jews with the Spirit of Jesus Christ and an encounter of Christians with the mission of Israel."[3]

Obviously the perspective was not merely going to be a historical one, for "to a great extent [the journal] will also examine contemporary Judaism as modern spiritual life", wrote the editor. Yet this was not going to be a mere academic exercise either, because, the author insists, "the Jewish thought and activity of our time regards *people* above all [4]."

That this venture ("such a periodical in such a time as ours is a hazardous venture") could not be an academic exercise became very clear a few months later, when the so-called "Nuremberg laws" were promulgated by the Nazis. At that time John Oesterreicher wrote in *Die Erfüllung*:

> We have refrained from expressing a reaction to the exclusion of German Jewry from the economic and social life of Germany. This, however, is no longer possible; we can no longer look on the anti-Jewish measures as if they were not our concern. Now it is our duty to take a public stand. All of the measures which placed the existence of German Jewry within German society in grave perils had been passed over in silence. But here is a decree which shatters any political framework, which no longer attacks only the external positions but strikes at German Jewry in the depth of its being, desiring to annihilate it in its inner existence. This decree threatens not only the Jews but the West, not only the West but humanity as such. This law concerns each and every individual and no one can shirk the responsibility of taking a stand.[5]

Oesterreicher certainly did take a stand, and by doing so he took a very courageous step, which turned out to be a step towards *Nostra Aetate* (n.4), promulgated 30 years later by the Second Vatican Council.

Although later on John Oesterreicher admitted that in those early days quite a few of his approaches were like the halting steps of one learning to walk, like the gropings of a beginner,[6] we can only be sad that too few, far too few, had at that time the vision and the courage to step along with him. Yet it is because of the courage, and indeed of the faith of people like him, that 30 years later Vatican II could open a totally new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations,[7] and indeed in Christian-Jewish relations in general, and that a Rabbi was able to affirm "we are all the children of Vatican II."

Chapter 4 of *Nostra Aetate* to which John Oesterreicher himself directly contributed, was and remains the centerpiece on which the Catholic Church's teaching with regard to Jews and Judaism is basically built, although this teaching has been and needs to be further developed.[8] Of course Jews and Christians read this chapter of the Council's document, and indeed every document and situation, past and present, which concerns them both, from different perspectives, and I am thinking here of Jews and Christians in the Land as well as elsewhere. The perceptions differ considerably according to the different expectations, which in their turn are shaped by different experiences. Perhaps Jews and

Christians have not yet read this chapter, as well as subsequent Church documents concerning their relationship, and history as such, sufficiently *together*, in order to begin to understand a bit more of each other's experiences, perceptions and expectations, so that the way they view one another, and the way they could view themselves through the eyes of one another, may start to change, truthfully and profoundly, without fear of "losing something to the other side." Unfortunately, it is a fact that many Jews and Christians still feel that way today. But then, what are 30 or 50 rather positive years within a span of two millennia where antagonism has prevailed most of the time? Old forms do die hard. Yet the new chapter in our relations which Vatican II has opened could be to the greater benefit of both sides, indeed of all sides.

As Irving Greenberg has put it, "if committed and believing Christians and Jews can discover the image of God in each other, if they can uncover and affirm each one's proper role in the overall divine strategy of redemption, surely the inspiration of this example would bring the kingdom of God that much closer to everyone.[9]" I would add, it would bring all of us that much closer to a better understanding of that reality which John Oesterreicher has described as a "question of eternity."

Both Jews and Christians believe that all men and women are the children of the one Father. This belief is the legacy of a story which "is shared and told, almost as one, by Jews and Christians alike;"[10] a story of divine-human partnership and, on the human part, of God-given capacities "to be used to upgrade the world" and "to increase its capacity to sustain and nurture life at its highest dignity."[11] Yet, the story has gone wrong in becoming history, and history gave birth to different stories altogether, to clashing stories which have led in turn to disastrous consequences. Today, and also because of these consequences, it has become possible and necessary for Jews and Christians to listen to each other's stories, and so to try to meet together again, reconciled but different, around the Eternal Story to which both traditions relate their existence and their vocation in this world.

I think that Pope John Paul II had this in mind when he wrote to the Jews in Poland on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: "As Christians and Jews, following the example of the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing for the world (cf. Gen. 12:2 ff.). This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to be first a blessing to one another."[12] *Nostra Aetate*, itself the result of discovery and rediscovery, of vision and commitment, has made it possible for the supreme Pastor of the Catho-

lic Church to make this statement, and for the Jews to recognize the truth expressed in it. We are all the children of Vatican II indeed, for it is helping us to rediscover universal brotherhood by rediscovering each other.

II. "There is no future without memory"[13]

This year is a year of anniversaries, both of the Second Vatican Council and *Nostra Aetate*. Memory and memories are central to every anniversary, but in the realm of Jewish-Christian relations they are very central and important indeed. They need to be approached with delicacy and sensitivity, and with great care for the truth, the past and present, and the determination to let them play their rightful part in the process of shaping the future. No triumphalism will do, neither a triumphalism of power nor a triumphalism of pain, if we really wish to shape a future together where there is plenty of space, also theological space, for everyone. What is needed in this process is the *new spirit* which Pope John Paul II described in an audience with Jewish leaders on February 15, 1985. He said:

> Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotype, there is now growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is, above all, love between us: that kind of love I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old. *And he added:* Love involves understanding. It also involves frankness and the freedom to disagree in a brotherly way.[14]

The Jewish and Catholic delegates at the 13th meeting of the International Liaison Committee (ILC) between the Catholic Church and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), which took place in 1990 in Prague, took up this point, and they called on their respective constituencies for a deepening of that spirit, "which emphasizes cooperation, mutual understanding and reconciliation; goodwill and common goals to replace the past spirit of suspicion, resentment and distrust."[15] Looking ahead towards the future they affirmed:

> After two millennia of estrangement and hostility, we have a sacred duty as Catholics and Jews to strive to create a genuine culture of mutual esteem and reciprocal caring. [In this way] Catholic-Jewish dialogue can become a sign of hope and inspiration to other religions, races, and ethnic groups to turn away

from contempt, toward realizing authentic human fraternity. The new spirit of friendship and caring for one another may be the most important symbol that we have to offer to our troubled world.

Hence, Eugene Fisher is absolutely right in saying that "we stand in a unique moment of history, reassessing all that has gone before us in a spirit of reconciliation and renewed hope for the future."[16] Much is at stake indeed, for good or ill, in how we today understand and frame Christian-Jewish relations.

At that very meeting in Prague, a city once called "The Jerusalem of Europe," the President of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, singled out some crucial elements in this process of reconciliation and shaping of the future. I quote him rather extensively:

> The Nazi and Communist ideologies have cut deep into the heritage of the peoples of Europe; they have created new forms of idolatry based on the rejection of the universal ethic founded on the Ten Commandments. The human person is no longer considered an "image of the Other," a beloved child of God with God-given human rights.
>
> [...] Recent developments in Europe have offered new possibilities for the creation of a true "civilization of love" based on the values of the Revealed Scriptures. There is a huge vacuum that wants to be filled - but which provides not only possibilities, but also great dangers.
>
> The "civilization of love" about which Popes Paul VI and John Paul II speak, is one built on those values which are taught in the Torah and in the Gospels. To repeat the words of Abraham Heschel: "It is on the issue of saving the radiance of the Hebrew Bible in the minds of men that Jews and Christians are called to work together. None of us can do it alone."
>
> [...] In seeking to project your thoughts to this type of future cooperation, I am not attempting to remove our gaze from the past. Indeed, in this meeting we will examine the historical roots of anti-semitism, so closely associated with the stereotypes which have at times been influenced by theological, exegetical and popular traditions among Christians.
>
> [...] I am convinced that we cannot speak simply of *Christian anti-semitism*, because in themselves the New Testament and Christianity are not anti-semitic. Nevertheless, as the Second Vatican Council pointed out to all members of the Church, we must work

together to eliminate all forms of anti-semitism, objectively examining the historical events and ideological roots of this abhorrent phenomenon.

Indeed, it seems to me that as Christians, we have a particular obligation to take the initiative in this regard, for the faith that we profess is in a God of Love, who reconciles man to God and man to man. If we are to serve Him we must too love each and everyone of those whom He has created; and we do that by showing respect and concern for our neighbour, by promoting peace and justice, by knowing how to pardon. That anti-semitism has found a place in Christian thought and practice calls for an act of *teshuva* and of reconciliation on our part as we gather here in this city, which is a witness to our failure to be authentic witnesses to our faith at times in the past.[17]

Although the context in which Cardinal Cassidy spoke was a particular one, his words carry weight far beyond it. They touch on the "question of eternity" because they touch on the question of justice and truth. Does the Bible not teach us that truth is not an abstract definition of reality or being, but is essentially the right thinking about the right thing to do? On the Christian side *teshuva* must be part of it. It *is* part of it, as Pope John Paul II, speaking in the name of the Catholic Church, has repeatedly affirmed. And Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, a survivor of the *Shoah*, helped us to understand its meaning at the Eisenach Conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews, when he spoke about Jewish-Christian dialogue in terms of hope, "moments of warmth", and of going "beyond dialogue." "The real meaning of repentance *(teshuva)*," he said, "is not to be burdened with guilt but to learn from experiences and to turn the mistakes and the transgressions into a passion for a new future."[18]

III. "Come now, let us reason together"[19]

Rabbi Soetendorp's words seem to me the key, which opens the way towards reconciliation. We must learn that way, and we must dare to learn it together. We must reason together lest the constructive passion for a new future will be outdone by the destructive passions which we know too well and which make a genuine Jewish-Christian dialogue impossible. We must try to address together the areas of real difficulty, "reasoning together" sincerely, having one common agenda, and no other.

A first difficulty which is at the frontiers of Jewish-Christian dialogue, and yet at the same time also at its center, is our reluctance to change. Rabbi Michael Hilton spoke to this point in London on May 10, 1995, on the occasion of the Cardinal Bea Memorial Lectures organized by the Sisters of Sion's Study Centre for Christian-Jewish Relations. He said.

> Even outside the small groups of people at the centre of dialogue, we have made a great deal of progress. There is a willingness to listen and to try to understand. But when it comes to [...] actually changing what we do, there is a deal of hesitation - and even obstinacy. We are happy to listen but we do not want to change. *And he explained:* If we are one of those few who actually allows dialogue to touch us and to change us, we may find more in common with the dialogue partner than with the mass of our own co-religionists. In fact those used to dialogue face an uncomfortable dilemma. If we allow the dialogue to change how we think, and even more so if we allow it to change what we do, we run the risk of stepping outside many of the certainties and traditions of our own faith. But if we do not allow it to change us, we come along to meetings such as this and then go home and continue to perpetuate all the misconceptions which cause problems between us.[20]

I think that at least part of the solution to the problem could be found in a common reflection on the nature of the reconciliation, which must be an integral part of the new relationship which we seek to create together. Personally I have been helped in my reflection on this by listening to an excellent address which Alan D. Falconer, director of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, delivered at a Board Meeting of the WCC's Ecumenical Theological Education Programme (Trinidad, 6 May 1995). I would like to share with you some of his insights.

The theme of reconciliation is central to Christian thinking and self-understanding. Reconciliation is what the Christian Gospel is all about. It entails "change" and "exchange." It occurs through forgiveness, ending a relationship of enmity and beginning a relationship of friendship. In its root meaning, reconciliation is a relationship word through which the early Christians expressed the experience and the quality of a new relationship, given to them by God in Jesus Christ, which had set them free, so that they could be open to God and to people with whom they would never have imagined that they could become at one. In an attempt to explore this quality of relationship, Alan Falconer looked at the nature of human relationship in terms drawn from the social sciences,

using the category of "power" proposed by the New York psychotherapist Rollo May.[21]

Having noted that each human person requires power to be able to grow and develop, May looks at the way in which the use of power controls the nature and the quality of relationships between people and groups. Power can be used either to stifle or aid the individual or group in their attempts to affirm themselves. May outlines those modes of the exercise of power which stifle the sense of significance in other people. They are equivalent to what Eric Fromm termed "domination power,"[22] power exercised by human beings in their desire to assert themselves and their own self-significance, their values and beliefs, in such a way that other persons or groups in the relationship are diminished or demeaned. This destructive use of power is what Christian theology means by "sin." In the course of history, with regard to the Jews, Christians did exercise power theologically and otherwise, in such a way. In the Catholic Church this course has been totally reversed since the Second Vatican Council.

But power can also be used in a creative and constructive way, Alan Falconer pointed out. In fact Rollo May differentiates two different modes of this positive exercise of power, equivalent to what Erich Fromm has termed "potent power." These are "nutrient power" (exercised *for* the other person or persons, e.g. care for the other) and "integrative power" (exercised *with* the other person or persons, i.e. standing alongside the other supporting him, her or them to assert their own sense of self-significance). Integrative power involves a relationship where the other is free to be, and I think that this is an essential quality of the reconciliation which Jews and Christians should seek. It frees people from the sins of their past, enabling them to enter into new relationships, not through forgetting, but through their healing acceptance of responsibility for having harmed relationships before. It is a quality which, I believe, is also expressed in the Hebrew word *herut* (freedom, liberty). Christians can learn this quality from Jesus, who at his time stood alongside others who in one way or another did not "belong," freeing and enabling them "to be." By doing so Jesus provoked conflict. We too, Jews and Christians, who sincerely seek that kind of reconciliation, oftentimes seem to provoke conflict amongst our own as well as within ourselves. Yet, "the unforgiving man is not the seed of Abraham," the Talmud affirms.[23]

I do understand my friend Rabbi Jack Bemporad when I hear him say about "Forgiveness, the Reconciliation of Jew and Catholic." "We

wrestle. There is a part of us, Jews, a deep part, a dark part, that cannot help but be suspicious. Yet, if we don't forgive, and even if betrayed, forgive again, hasn't Christian anti-semitism won?"

Forgiveness is a cornerstone of both Christianity and Judaism. In the past, forgiveness may have become relatively "less Jewish" - in emphasis, not in content - since it was being preached as "more Christian".

> Yet, *Jack Bemporad says*, despite previous biased Christian notions, to respond 'we forgive' is really the most self-aware, most self-determining, most *Jewish* response we can make. To respond 'we forgive' is a radical reclaiming of our own history, our own faith, our own pride and even our own God [...]. But most important, to respond 'we forgive'[...] is the first psychological step towards letting go of the pain, the anger, the suffering, the self-hatred, the humiliation... the first step towards healing. Forgiveness then, is far more than a response. It is the greatest challenge ever made to Judaism by the Roman Catholic Church... not just a theological challenge, but a human one. It challenges *both* Judaism and Christianity with the greatest threat of all: self-honesty. The consequences of this challenge is mind-boggling, not just for Jews, but for Christians, and the whole world.[24]

When I listen to these very painful, very sincere, yet very challenging words, I realize that we, my "older brother" and myself, are listening to these words together. I realize that in many ways his story is also my story, but I also realize that we are learning how to start writing together a new story which could startle the rest of the world. In fact it is this experience which gives me hope that as long as we stay together in fighting for the real cause, utterly transparent, far more than the actual few will eventually join us. When "J'accuse" gives way to "I forgive," memory is being freed to become the cornerstone in a common project. But we do need one another in the process indeed, a process which involves our hearts as much as our minds.

IV. Learning together

I believe in what Blaise Pascal has said, namely that "le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas." But, on the other hand, it is the mind which informs the heart, therefore study and research are necessary. It is true that "a more accurate understanding of the story of the relationship between the two faiths is vital to Jewish-Christian dialogue today," as Rabbi Michael Hilton writes in his book *The Christian Effect on Jewish Life*.[25] It is also true that in order to be more accurate, the

understanding of this story must be the result of a common effort, of a constructive confrontation between our different ways of "reading" history (the onset and demise of the Christian anti-Jewish tradition, the infrastructure that has supported European civilization; the paradigms of modernity). But then not only of reading history, but also of reading the Bible.

As Father Lawrence Frizzell has pointed out, "foremost among the areas suggested by Vatican Council II for fraternal dialogue amongst Catholics and Jews is the study of Sacred Scriptures (*Nostra Aetate 4*)." Of course, "differences will persist between Jewish and Christian interpretations of the total message, but we can profit from the insights offered by the other tradition [...]. Knowing the hermeneutical tools employed by each tradition, Christians and Jews together can plumb the depths of God's gift in the Word."[26] And Michael Hilton has made the same point:

> The post-war period has seen the establishment of Jews and Christians studying the Bible together [...]. For many Jews, study with Christians has led to a re-examination of their own Jewish identity. Christians have much to learn from seeing the way Jews view the Hebrew Bible, and place different interpretations on texts familiar to Christians; and Jews too have much to learn from seeing how Christians view their own texts. Jews who debate with Christians the meaning of scripture are part of a long and honourable tradition. *Indeed*, Jewish-Christian dialogue is not new: in past centuries, it was often based on discussions of biblical texts. Jewish responses to Christian claims influenced Jewish interpretations of scripture.[27]

Furthermore, and I am quoting Rabbi Michael Hilton again, "we cannot accord the two faiths an equal and distinct right to exist while we continue to regard Judaism as the unchanged word of the Bible from which Christianity deviated, or Christianity as the true fulfillment of the prophets which the Jews rejected."[28] Indeed both Jews and Christians must reconsider much that they have taken for granted about themselves and about one another for so long. Today, as a result of what the Church in Council, searching into her own mystery, has rediscovered, but also in the wake of the *Shoah*, Catholic theologians are finding themselves grappling with difficult questions. After the *Shoah*, some Jewish theologians do too. But it seems to me that the actual Jewish-Catholic dialogue *experience* has not yet found its proper place in the process. Or is it unrealistic to think of such a thing? If some Catholic theologians do take up the challenge - because they are in a position

which allows them, or forces them, to do so - "by contrast, the dialogue experience appears often to have little impact on Jews," Rabbi Michael Hilton told us at the Cardinal Bea Memorial Lecture which I have mentioned before. "[It] does not encourage us to rethink," he said.

> We are happy to demonstrate the antiquity of our faith, and to assist our Christian friends and neighbours to understand the Jewish roots of Christianity. We allow dialogue to reinforce our preconceptions about our history instead of challenging them. *And he continued*: Many Christians today look to Jews to learn something of the origins of their own faith. So often, dialogue consists of Jews explaining to Christians features of Jewish life, which Christians enjoy because they feel they are learning something of their own history and roots. Yet we Jews have expressed little or no interest in features of Christian life which are part of the history of Judaism [...]. For dialogue to work, it has to be conducted on a basis of equality between the two faiths.[29]

He then raised the question, also raised by David Novak (in his book *Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Jewish Justification*),[30] of what function Christianity could have in Jewish life. "My own researches suggest," he concluded, "that what needs to be added to the discussion is the extent of the influence that the two faiths have had on *each other.*"[31] Again, this is something we ought to learn about together, lest we let fear put out the flame. Over history both Jews and Christians have been enriched by the peoples in whose lands they have lived. They have also been enriched by each other. "A better understanding of the relationship between our two faiths through history leads to the inevitable conclusion that our histories are impossibly intertwined. The Jew and Christian can never separate - can never chart completely separate paths."[32] But this ought not to be cause of fear, for we cannot converge either! We are different and we will remain different, yet, in the words of Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, "we are linked for good". It is time for both Jews and Christians to start freeing themselves from prejudice and suspicion, and this can only happen in relationship, in real friendship between real people.[33]

I refuse to take seriously, for example, the phone-calls I usually receive from *informed* Jewish colleagues (obviously pressurized by their agencies) who, while knowing our position and continuing efforts to implement the teachings of the Church, complain whenever some Catholic individual (or individuals) who wishes to defy that teaching, acts or makes statements to the contrary. After all, *both* communities have people who make blunders or who would like to see Jewish-

Christian relations blow up. None of us can claim exclusivity here. On the other hand I do take seriously the phone-calls I receive from Jewish friends, such as young Kalman from New York who simply says: "Remi, I am thinking of you, I miss you." There is no prejudice or suspicion here. There is trust and warmth and friendship, and as far as I am concerned, there is hope, because I know that especially for the new generation that which was impossible, is no longer impossible. As Donald Dietrich puts it: "Essentially, Christians and Jews are to build God's Kingdom and not carve out spheres of interest or develop isolated agendas."[34]

In the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, we have decided to look forward rather than backward, in order to become more effective instruments in a common response to a variety of challenges in today's world to which both our communities are called to respond. For example, the Church wishes to respond to the aspiration for more humanity in a society which, while being in search for unity is, at the same time, caught in the cross-pressures of competing interests, loyalties, systems and dynamics which all seem to have lives of their own, irrespective of the very meaning of the human person which, we believe, should be at the center of it all. As Pope John Paul II stated in his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*:

> Our times are both momentous and fascinating, while on the one hand people seem to be pursuing material prosperity and to be sinking ever deeper into consumerism and materialism, on the other hand we are witnessing a desperate search for meaning, the need for an inner life, and the desire to learn new forms and methods of meditation and prayer. Not only in cultures with strong religious elements, but also in secularized societies, the spiritual dimension of life is being sought often as an antidote to dehumanization.[35]

In our dialogue encounters we have learned that religious Jews share with Christians the concern about what Rabbi Ronald Sobel has called the "forces of irreligion that are addressed not to the dignity of the spirit but to the degradation of the soul."[36] Rabbi Leon Klenicki too has put it in the realm of interreligious encounter:

> Christians and Jews are encountering each other by facing God in new historical conditions. This is a response to God's call beyond Christian-Jewish voluntary or forced alienation. It is a time of joint response to the evils of the world.[37]

In fact, in the mind of the Church our relations with the Jewish people are not just a "matter of *fact*" or a "matter of *fate*" (as a result of history, in a spirit of blame and feelings of guilt, or as a result of being thrown together into a threatening world), but also a "matter of *faith.*" Our relations "are part of the very fabric of our religious commitment and our respective vocations as Christians and Jews", Pope John Paul II has affirmed.[38] And Rabbi Ronald Sobel, commenting on the development of Jewish-Catholic relations since Vatican II, responded: "Truly, this is God's doing," and he explained:

> In the twenty past years we, God's children, both Jew and Catholic, have come to realize [...] that in a world of many currents and crosscurrents Judaism and Christianity are not so much on opposite sides of the fence as we are on the same side; that though we shall never share some of the same theological convictions we do share many of the same human dreams; that though we shall probe the mystery of God each in our own way [...] we view our world today with the same anguish and the events of our time with the same apprehension.[39]

In other words, what is a "matter of faith" must also become a "matter of fact;" it needs to be translated into daily practice. Of course, Jews and Christians may, and do, perceive the voice of God differently. We may understand differently the words that God speaks ("Where are you?;" "Where is your brother?" - Gen. 3:9; 4:9). Yet we are challenged by these words to meet together and to learn together how to realize our respective responses in the face of the challenges of history.

I think that the Chief Rabbi of England, Jonathan Sacks, has formulated this very well.

> There are two quite distinct challenges to religious leadership as this century and this millennium draw to their close. One challenge is very simple. We have to restate for a new generation a compelling sense of the sheer beauty and majesty of the Judeo-Christian ethic. And we can do it. We have to repeat again for children who have not heard it and need to hear it, our belief in the sanctity of human life as bearing God's image and his likeness [...]. And there is the second challenge that we must as religious people face fairly and honestly. For the real secular challenge to religion does not come from any scientific world view. It comes from the voice of conscience itself, from the claim that religion has sometimes made us passive in the face of human suffering, has even itself contributed, God forbid, to human suffering. Until religions

can live at peace with one another, they will not command the respect of our young people. They will be seen as part of the problem, and not as part of the solution. Those are the two great challenges. Let me here and now pay tribute in both regards to the work over these last few decades of the Catholic Church itself, which in recent years has been both an extraordinarily powerful moral voice, reminding us of those eternal truths that we have been in such great danger of forgetting, and which has shown, especially in the field of Catholic-Jewish relationships, that religions can learn to live at peace with one another, that we can begin to heal the pain of centuries and meet in understanding and mutual respect.

It is not easy to be a person of faith. But let us realize that every single word of faith that you or I speak touches and strengthens the faith of other people [...] and that it is by sharing our faith, even where our faiths differ, that we recreate a world of faith for our children.[40]

V. By way of conclusion

I would like to conclude with the significant words which Pope John Paul II spoke to the hundreds of Catholics and Jews, including survivors of the *Shoah*, who were present at a concert which took place in the Vatican on 7 April 1994 in commemoration of the *Shoah*:

> The melodies and songs that re-echoed in this auditorium were the expression of a common meditation and a shared prayer. Different voices blended in a unison of sounds and harmonies which moved and involved us intimately. We prayed in the knowledge that the Lord, if invoked, responds, cheering those who despair, breaking the chains of the oppressed, dispelling the shadows that linger in life's dark valleys.[41]

On that unforgettable night, many Jews and Catholics discovered the depth, another depth, of what "learning together" could mean. It means remembering and forgiving. It means research and study and confrontation, reasoning and sorting out. It means standing together to oppose the forces of evil. It even means fundamental agreements and diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel. But above all, it means stretching the walls of our hearts, the limits of our memories, the protective nets spun around our feelings. It means the explosion of fears, and the discovery that it is possible indeed to reach out to each other in friendship and love. "As we listen together this evening to the music that will be performed for us," the Pope said,

"may we all be moved to repeat in our hearts David's Song of Ascents: "How good and how pleasant it is, when brothers live in unity!" (Ps. 133:1).

NOTES

1 Rabbi A. James Rudin, "Catholics, Jews: 20 Good Years," in *The New York Times* of February 23, 1985.

2 Cf. Erika Weinzierl, "The Beginnings of John M. Oesterreicher's Work for Christian-Jewish Understanding," in *Standing Before God* (in Honor of John M. Oesterreicher), ed. by Asher Finkel and Lawrence Frizzell, New York: KTAV, 1981, p. 14.

3 Ibid. p. 15.

4 Ibid.; my emphasis.

5 Ibid., pp. 16-17.

6 Cf. ibid., p. 14.

7 Cf. Gerhart M. Riegner in his Preface to the volume *Fifteen Years of Catholic-Jewish Dialogue 1970-1985* (Selected Papers, published by the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee), Rome, 1988.

8 Cf. Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration 'Nostra Aetate' (n. 4), December 1, 1974; Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church, June 24, 1985 (both documents were published by the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews); and papal teachings. These documents and the texts of papal statements can be found in *Information Service*, published by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican City. Cf. a comment made by Donald J. Dietrich (*God and Humanity in Auschwitz*, New Brunswick/London: Transaction Pub., 1995, p. 73): "Despite the fact that the negative religious baggage had not been discarded, opportunities for dialogue had at least been exposed, and the problematic issues could now be confronted more openly. As the points of contention were discussed, the creative seeds of Nostra Aetate blossomed into more refined documents, reflecting a deeper understanding of the issues."

9 Rabbi Irving Greenberg, "Judaism and Christianity: Their Respective Roles in the Strategy of Redemption," in *Visions of the Other. Jewish and Christian Theologians Assess the Dialogue*, ed. by Eugene J. Fisher, New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1994, p. 27.

10 Rabbi Irving Greenberg in a paper read on February 2, 1994 in Jerusalem, at the International Jewish-Catholic Conference on "Religious Leadership in Secular Society."

11 Ibid.

12 Message published in the *Osservatore Romano* of April 17, 1993.

13 John Paul II during the *Angelus* of Sunday, June 11, 1995.

14 Cf. Eugene J. Fisher and Leon Klenicki (eds), *Pope John Paul II on Jews and Judaism 1979-1986*, Washington DC, 1987, p. 67.

15 Cf. *Information Service*, n. 75, 1990, p. 176.

16 Eugene J. Fisher (ed.), *Visions of the Other*, (Mahwah: Paulist, 1994)., in the Introduction.

17 In *Information Service*, n. 75, 1990, pp. 174-175.

18 Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, "Towards a Europe of Compassion", in *Common Ground* (The Journal of the Council of Christians and Jews), n. 1, 1995, p. 24.

19 Isaiah 1:18.

20 Michael Hilton, "How far dare we go?," in *The Month*, June 1995, p. 222.

21 Cf. Rollo May, *Power and Innocence*, (New York: Norton, 1972).

22 Cf. Erich Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1942), p. 139.

23 *Babylonian Talmud*, Bez. 32b.

24 Cf. a *manuscript* by Michael Shevack and Jack Bemporad, 1992. See Michael Shevack and Jack Bemporad, *Our Age: The Historic New Age of Christian-Jewish Understanding* (Hyde Park: New City Press, 1996) p. 64-73 on forgiveness.

25 London, 1994, p. 2.

26 "A Hymn of Creation in Daniel," in *Standing Before God*, p. 41.

27 *The Christian Effect on Jewish Life*, op. cit., pp. 131, 242.

28 Op. cit.

29 Op. cit., p. 224.

30 New York/Oxford, 1989, p. 138.

31 In *The Christian Effect on Jewish Life* he writes: "The apparent truth that Judaism was the breeding ground out of which Christianity sprang may not be as simple as it appears [...]. Rabbinic Judaism certainly was influenced by the reaction to a Christian view of the world. This is the clear implication of scholarship which dates the vital phase in the formation of Judaism after the time of Jesus [...]. Crucially, the Christian scriptures throw light on Jewish practice at the time, more than the other way around [...]. Yet the implications of this have not begun to permeate the Jewish world [...]. Why has it never been admitted ? Part of the answer clearly lies in the history of hostility between the two communities [...]. Yet, Jews should become as aware of the Christian aspects of their heritage as Christians are of their Jewish roots [...]. Let us meet as equals, and may God guide our deliberations" (pp. 202-203; 208; 243-244). Also Rabbi Leon Klenicki has written on *Christian Influences on Jewish Religious Practice*; cf. *Common Ground*, n. 2, 1995, pp. 25-26.

32 Rabbi Michael Hilton, op. cit., p. 226.

33 Cf. ibid.

34 Donald J. Dietrich, *God and Humanity in Auschwitz*, op. cit., p. 82. My critical stance towards the practice of some Jewish agencies to mobilize the mass-media all the time in an effort to rally support for the "Jewish cause" (or their own cause ?), seems to be shared by some Jews as well, e. g. Rabbi Henry Siegman : "There is no doubt that sensitivity to each other's pain, knowing where and when the other person hurts, and seeking to alleviate or prevent that pain is the ultimate meaning and purpose of fraternal dialogue. But I have come to the conclusion that there is something particularly distortive of the relationship, and misleading, of its genuine character and depth in the frenetic efforts in which we engage with such monotonous regularity to extract public statements from Christian officials at every turn in Jewish affairs. Indeed, it seems to have become a major industry of American Jewish life, whose major beneficiaries, insofar as I can tell, are the advertising agencies and metropolitan newspapers. Of course, Jewish existence continues to be fragile and vulnerable, and we need understanding friendship and public support as desperately as we ever did. But if these are to have any meaning and practical consequence, then they must be spontaneous expressions rather than ritualistic responses to heavy-handed pressure exercised by Jewish organisations, including my own". Cf. "Ten Years of Catholic-Jewish Relations : A Reassessment", in *Fifteen Years of Catholic-Jewish Dialogue 1970-1985*, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

35 N. 38.

36 In his address to Pope John Paul II on April 19, 1985, on the occasion of a theological colloquium held at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum) in Rome, where Catholic and Jewish scholars commemorated the 20th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*. See, Pope John Paul: *Spiritual Pilgrimage. Texts on Jews and Judaism 1979-1995*. Edited by Eugene J. Fisher and Leon Klenicki (New York: Crossroad, 1995) p. 50.

37 *The Once and Future Dialogue: Christian-Jewish Relations at the Turning Point*, in PACE (Issues), May 1993, p. 15.

38 Statement of John Paul II to the Jewish and Christian participants of the Angelicum Colloquium.

39 Op. cit., p. 50.

40 "From slavery to freedom: the journey of faith", in *The Tablet* of June 10, 1995, pp. 734-735.

41 *The Osservatore Romano*, English edition, n. 15, April 13, 1994.

Into the Third Millennium
Remembering the Past to Shape the Future

Reverend Remi Hoeckman, O.P.

I. Memoria futuri

Remembering the past for shaping the future: it makes sense to Christians and Jews, especially in the realm of the relationships between them. This is also the perspective of my reflections which are essentially based on papal teaching. That *memoria futuri* makes sense to Jews and Christians alike is particularly obvious in Jerusalem, the Holy City which the Israeli Jewish educator, Daniel Rossing, has called "the capital of memory,"[1] and which, for Jews, has always been "the capital of hope and longing" as well. *La-Shanah Ha-Ba'ah Bi-Yerushalayim* – next year in Jerusalem! As the psalmist says:

> By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and cried, as we remembered Zion. On the willows therein we hung up our harps. For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked us for mirth: sing for us some of the songs of Zion. But how can we sing the Lord's song on foreign soil? If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand be paralyzed. Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not elevate Jerusalem above my greatest joy.[2]

Also for Christians, Jerusalem is the city in which remembrance gives reasons for hope. It is the place where Jesus ate his last Passover meal, when he took a loaf of bread and after giving thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."[3] Christians have done this ever since, and they will keep doing this "until he comes in glory."[4]

In fact, for us Christians and Jews, to remember is not just a matter of recalling to mind reminiscences of events which totally belong to the past, and which, therefore, could be allowed to "disappear" together with the past. On the contrary, it is the purposeful remembrance of a past which is constitutive of the present, and which, at the same time, arouses a passion for the future. In other words, we remember for the future. As the Holy See's *Reflection on the Shoah: We Remember*, says: "History itself is *memoria futuri*."[5]

To use theological language, one could say that memory is tied to redemption. David Patterson, a scholar in Jewish studies and an expert in Holocaust literature, has put it like this:

> Tied to redemption, memory is tied to meaning and direction, to past and future, and above all to humanity; tied to redemption, memory is tied to life and the movements of the soul. And the primary movement of the soul is the movement of return arising through an act of response.[6]

According to Patterson, the meaning of this sequence is close to the three basic meanings of the Hebrew word *teshuvah* (often translated as "repentance"),[7] i.e. response, return, redemption. An assault on memory, then, is also an assault on a person's or a people's identity, on human life and dignity, on the very idea of humanity, and indeed on God himself. It is extermination, cancellation, annihilation. Was this not what the Nazis set out to do when they decreed the murder of all European Jews? This is why Elie Wiesel and Primo Levi have described the *Shoah* as essentially a war against memory. David Patterson has illustrated this point as follows:

> A fictional example of how the Nazis' war against memory was articulated can be found in an episode in Steven Spielberg's film, *Schindler's List* (1993). In the scene, the German officer Amon Göth proclaims to his troops immediately prior to the liquidation of the Cracow ghetto: 'Jews have lived in Cracow for 600 years. By the end of the afternoon those 600 years will a rumor.' The writers of Holocaust memoirs have always confronted the war on memory [...]. Writing [...] the Holocaust memoirs therefore entails far more than recording the reminiscences of a life; it is an act of remembrance made in response to an assault on memory. Without this act of remembrance there is no returning to life.[8]

Reading Holocaust memoirs, Patterson came to a striking realization, namely that «memory, in all of these works, is memory for the future». And he qualifies this statement by adding: "The future is not a *what*; the future is a *who*."[9]

As a Christian, I understand this language very well. After all, may I recall the example of Abraham, who is also a «father of faith» to us? His reward was a son, a future,[10] yet to be fulfilled. Today, *we* are the future; *we* bear responsibility for what our world will be tomorrow. Patterson, referring to the actual proliferation of Holocaust memoirs, teaches that

"the writers of late-life memoirs are our mothers and fathers."[11] "We are the children to whom they respond when they take up the overwhelming task of remembrance," he says, "and we are the ones who must, in turn, answer their response [...]. All too soon the last remnant of living memory will pass [...]. Yet when that living memory passes, it does not pass away; it passes *on* – to us."[12]

In this regard, I have sometimes quoted Judith Banki, of the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding, who wrote in 1987 (she was then the Associate National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee):

> We are not responsible for the prejudices of the world into which we were born, but we are responsible for fighting them. We are not accountable for past events over which we had no control, but we are accountable for the future. We [Christians and Jews] are jointly responsible for facing history and for forging new traditions of human and spiritual solidarity – for the sake of our children, our world, and the sanctification of the One who is Holy to all of us.[13]

And in their book entitled *Our Age*, written "for those who dare to believe that the past need not condemn the future" (and the past to which the authors refer is two millennia of Jewish-Christian conflict), Rabbis Jack Bemporad and Michael Shevack point in the same direction: "No one should be so obsessed with the past that they prevent themselves from moving into the future. No one should **live** in the past," they affirm. Yet, they also emphasize that "the past is not just something you should ever toss away and forget. Quite to the contrary, it must be remembered, heeded, learned from, so that it will never repeat itself."[14] The understanding of *memoria futuri* which these Jewish friends have, is totally shared by us.

On April 7, 1994, on the eve of *Yom Hashoah*, a concert in commemoration of the *Shoah* was held in Vatican City. It was conducted by Maestro Gilbert Levine. Before the concert actually began, Pope John Paul II spoke to an audience which included Jewish survivors, and said:

> We remember the long history of anti-semitism which culminated in the **Shoah**. But it is not enough that we remember; for in our own day, regrettably, there are many new manifestations of the anti-semitism, xenophobia and racial hatred which were the seeds of those unspeakable crimes. *Humanity cannot permit all that to happen again.* Our shared hope is [...] that with the help of Almighty

God we [Catholics and Jews] can work together to prevent the repetition of such heinous evil [...]. In the face of the perils which threaten the sons and daughters of this generation, Christians and Jews together have a great deal to offer to a world called by the Creator to defend and protect life, but so vulnerable to voices which propagate values that only bring death and destruction.

After the concert, the Pope spoke again on this point and said:

Among those who are with us this evening are some who physically underwent a horrendous experience, crossing a dark wilderness where the very source of love seemed dried up. Many wept at that time and we still hear echoes of their lament. We hear it here too; their plea did not die with them but rises powerful, agonizing, heartrending, saying: Do not forget us!. It is addressed to one and all [...]. In our memory they are all present, they are with you, they are with us.

We have a commitment, the only one perhaps that can give meaning to every tear shed by man because of man [...]. This is our commitment. We would risk causing the victims of the most atrocious deaths to die again if we do not have an ardent desire for justice, if we do not commit ourselves, each according to his own capacities, to ensure that evil does not prevail over good as it did for millions of the children of the Jewish nation. We must therefore redouble our efforts to free man from the spectre of racism, exclusion, alienation, slavery, and xenophobia; to uproot these evils which are creeping into society [...]. Evil always appears in new forms [...]. It is our task to unmask its dangerous power and neutralize it with God's help.[15]

Exactly one year before these words were spoken, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto, John Paul II had sent a message to the Jewish community there, in which he said very much the same thing, but adding a new dimension to it, namely his belief that memory needs healing in order to become healing:

We remember, and we need to remember, but we need to remember with renewed trust in God and in his all-healing blessing [...]. As Christians and Jews, following the example of the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing for the world (cf. Gen 12:2 ff). This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to be first a blessing to one another. This will effectively occur if we are united in the face of the evils which are still threatening: indifference and prejudice, as well as displays of anti-semitism[16].

That the Church is taking this commitment seriously has been testified by the late Geoffrey Wigoder in his address to the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee meeting in Jerusalem in 1994. "One of the great advances in our relationship since World War II is that on the issue [of anti-semitism and its proliferation] the Catholic Church instead of being part of the problem has become part of the answer," he said. The fact that article 2 of the Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel, signed in Jerusalem on December 30, 1993, states the following, confirms this observation:

> The Holy See and the State of Israel are committed to appropriate cooperation in combatting all forms of antisemitism and all kinds of racism and of religious intolerance and in promoting mutual understanding among nations, tolerance among communities and respect for human life and dignity.[17]

On September 29, 1994, the first Ambassador of the State of Israel to the Holy See, Mr. Shmuel Hadas, presented his credentials to the Pope. In his address to His Holiness he spoke about his joy, but also about the challenge which this totally new appointment held for himself as well as for his country; a challenge, he said, "which we accept during these years of transition," towards a future in which "a sincere wish for reconciliation" will prevail. "We are hopeful that together we shall be able to transmit a message of peace, fellowship and justice. Christians and Jews must understand that the moment has come when their mission is to co-operate in carrying out the basic commandments at the heart of their beliefs." And he concluded: "I trust, Your Holiness, that the words of Psalm 133, 'Behold how good it is and how pleasant, where brethren dwell at one', will inspire my work." "Obviously," Ambassador Hadas also pointed out, "this is not the conventional language of international diplomacy. It could not be otherwise: our relations, despite their dramatic changes over the centuries, still retain the indelible seal of their common origin. For this reason, the signing of the Fundamental Agreement was more than a diplomatic initiative; it was a step of historical significance. A unique act, for its protagonists are unique."[18] And Pope John Paul, in his response to Ambassador Hadas, put it in the perspective of the *future*:

> I hope that these Jewish-Christian exchanges will continue and be deepened, and that they will enable both to better serve the great causes of humanity.[19]

As a matter of fact, the Pope has been doing this throughout his pontificate. He is convinced that just as we, Christians and Jews, "are not meeting each other just for ourselves," but for the sake of "humanity at large,"[20] we do not remember the past just for our own benefit, but "in order to draw from it the lessons"[21] which will enable us to "offer to others a sign of hope for the future."[22] As he wrote in his letter of April 9, 1993 to the Carmelite Nuns at Auschwitz, "how the future will grow from this most painful past largely depends on whether [...] 'the love which is greater than death' will stand watch". It will also depend on whether we will really want to remember, not only the hurt that has kept us apart, but also the root which links us together for good.[23]

II. Tertio Millennio Adveniente

On November 10, 1994, Pope John Paul II published his Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* ("On the Coming of the Third Millennium"), addressed to the whole Catholic Church, in which he speaks of the Jubilee of the Year 2000.

I would like to single out two essential aspects of this event. Basically, for Christians, it is an occasion for celebrating the end of the second millennium of the Christian era, for commemorating the birth of Jesus. It is essentially a Christian concept. Catholics call this year a holy year, but we also call it a jubilee year, and here we draw on a Jewish concept.

In Luke's gospel (4:16-30) it is reported that Jesus of Nazareth, going back one day to the synagogue of his home town, stood up to read from Sacred Scripture. Taking the book of the Prophet Isaiah, he read the following passage: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor*" (61 :1-2). "Today," Jesus said after ending the reading, "this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21), thus indicating that the long-expected "time" was beginning in him.[24]

The Christian concept of time — "In Christianity time has a fundamental importance"[25] — and history, is linked to this understanding, i.e. our understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation – I am obviously talking Christian theology now – as the divine moment in which, as it were, "time becomes a dimension of God, who is himself eternal."[26] "From this relationship of God with time there arises the duty to sanctify

time. This is done, for example, when individual times, days or weeks [and years for that matter] are dedicated to God"[27], as is also the case in the Jewish tradition.[28]

Looking at the past, Pope John Paul II recognizes that the prescriptions for the jubilee year in reality largely remained ideals — "more a hope than an actual fact" [...], thus becoming "a *prophetia futuri.*"[29] However, he places the development of the social doctrine of the Church in this very realm, pointing out some of its basic components, i.e. the safeguarding of human dignity, equality and freedom; the promotion of justice and peace, and the protection of the weak; care for the riches of creation... as tasks for today and tomorrow.

Furthermore (and here we touch on a very important aspect of the Church's understanding), although "the term 'Jubilee' speaks of joy" - "The Jubilee of the Year 2000 is meant to be a great prayer of praise and thanksgiving, especially for the gift of the Incarnation of the Son of God and of the Redemption which he accomplished [...], for the gift of the Church" — "nevertheless, the joy of every Jubilee is above all a joy based upon the forgiveness of sins, the joy of conversion" and reconciliation.[30] Therefore – the Pope teaches the Catholic faithful at this time, "as the eve of the new millennium approaches — the Church rejoices, gives thanks, and asks forgiveness, presenting her petitions to the Lord of history and of human consciences."[31] "We look today with a sense of gratitude and yet with a sense of responsibility at all that has happened in human history since the Birth of Christ", he says, "particularly the events which have occurred between the Year 1000 and 2000. But in a very particular way, we look with the eyes of faith to our own century, searching out whatever bears witness not only to man's history but also to God's intervention in human affairs."[32]

We could turn the sequence around. This is what the Pope does when, in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, he refers to "the profoundly disturbing experiences of the Twentieth Century, a century scarred by the First and Second World Wars, by experience of concentration camps and by horrendous massacres."[33] And he has without any doubt the *Shoah* in mind, the "dehumanizing outrages» of Auschwitz which «have finally opened the eyes of many,"[34] "the crime which [...] remains an indelible stain on the history of the century that is coming to a close," "a major fact of the history of this century [...] which still concerns us today."[35] He also names **new** dangers and threats, e.g. "the serious threat of exaggerated nationalism,"[36] violence and hatred: "We see peace derided, brotherhood mocked, harmony ignored, mercy scorned", he says.[37]

"This obliges the European nations to make a serious examination of conscience and to acknowledge faults and errors."[38] However, this is obviously true for other nations as well, as it is true for the Church.

"The Church should become more fully conscious of the sinfulness of her children, recalling all those times in history when they departed from the spirit of Christ and his Gospel and, instead of offering to the world the witness of a life inspired by the values of faith, indulged in ways of thinking and acting which were truly forms of counter-witness and scandal,"[39] the Pope writes in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*. Alluding to a traditional Catholic practice at the official opening of a Holy Year he explains: "The Holy Door of the Jubilee of the Year 2000 should be symbolically wider than those of previous Jubilees, because humanity [...] will leave behind not just a century but a millennium. It is fitting that the Church should make this passage with a clear awareness of what has happened to her during the last ten centuries. She cannot cross the threshold of the new millennium without encouraging her children to purify themselves, through repentance, of past errors and instances of infidelity, inconsistency, and slowness to act. Acknowledging the weaknesses of the past is an act of honesty and courage which helps us to strengthen our faith, which alerts us to face today's temptations and challenges and prepares us to meet them.[40]

That is why the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews clearly and loudly declared: "At the end of this millennium the Catholic Church desires to express her deep sorrow for the failures of her sons and daughters in every age. This is an act of repentance (*teshuvah*), since, as members of the Church, we are linked to the sins as well as the merits of all her children;" this "is not a matter of mere words, but [...] of binding commitment."[41] This statement is then followed by a point where, in the realm of Catholic-Jewish relations, *memoria futuri* and *prophetia futuri* meet: "We pray that our sorrows for the tragedy which the Jewish people has suffered in our century will lead to a *new relationship* with the Jewish people. We wish to turn awareness of past sins into a firm resolve to build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Judaism among Christians or anti-Christian sentiment among Jews, but rather a shared mutual respect, as benefits those who adore the one Creator and Lord and have a common father in faith, Abraham."[42]

In *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, the Pope has made the point of *memoria futuri/prophetia futuri* strongly (obviously from the perspective of the Christian faith) when he speaks of *hope*: "The basic attitude of hope, on

the one hand encourages the Christian not to lose sight of the final goal which gives meaning and value to life, and on the other, offers solid and profound reasons for a daily commitment to transform reality in order to make it correspond to God's plan [...]. Christians are called to prepare for the Great Jubilee of the beginning of the Third Millennium *by renewing their hope in the definite coming of the Kingdom of God*, preparing for it daily in their hearts, in the Christian community to which they belong, in their particular social context, and in world history itself."[43] And he lists among the signs of hope already present, "the increased interest in dialogue with other religions and with contemporary culture."[44]

One of the poles around which the journey between the past and the future evolves – the Pope calls it "a journey of authentic conversion," "a journey to the Father"[45] — is the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments to which both Jews and Christians are witnesses in a society in which «the very foundations of an ethically correct vision of human existence often seems to have been lost."[46] In fact, John Paul II is very much aware of the tasks and challenges that Jews and Christians share in this regard, and so are many of our Jewish friends. For example, the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee at its thirteenth meeting in Prague (September 3-6, 1990) — referring to the *new spirit* which is in the making in Catholic-Jewish relations today – called for "a deepening of this spirit [...], a spirit which emphasizes cooperation, mutual understanding and reconciliation; goodwill and *common goals* to replace the past spirit of suspicion, resentment and distrust [...]. This new spirit would also manifest itself in the work that the two faith communities could do together to respond to the needs of today's world. This need is for the establishment of human rights, freedom, and dignity where they are lacking or imperilled, and for responsible stewardship of the environment [...]. After two millennia of estrangement and hostility, we have a sacred duty as Catholics and Jews to strive to create a genuine culture of mutual esteem and reciprocal caring. Catholic-Jewish dialogue can become a sign of hope and inspiration to other religions, races, and ethnic groups to turn away from contempt, toward realizing authentic human fraternity. The new spirit of friendship and caring for one another may be the most important symbol that we have to offer to our troubled world."[47]

III. Prophetia futuri

In a speech which he delivered on January 15, 1994 to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, Pope John Paul II shared a prophetic vision of the future with them.

> Having for too many years experienced a division imposed by reductive ideologies, the world should not now be experiencing a season of exclusions: on the contrary, now should be the season of coming together and of solidarity [...]. Glancing at the world today, we can only state with deep regret that too many human beings are still their brother's victims. But we cannot resign ourselves to this [...]. Let us act in such a way that humanity will more and more resemble a genuine family in which each individual knows he is listened to, appreciated, and loved, in which each is ready to sacrifice self for the benefit of the other and no one hesitates to help the weaker one [...]. Each one of us is invited to the boldness of brotherhood.

As a matter of fact, the theme of brotherhood is important in Jewish-Christian relations, because it is an essential part of The Great Story which we share. As the Jewish scholar, the late Geoffrey Wigoder, has once put it: "From our common belief in the Fatherhood of God stems our common belief in the brotherhood of Man."[48] Moreover, Christians understand themselves as "Abraham's sons according to faith."[49] That is why Pope John Paul II can affirm, as he has done many times, that "between Judaism and the Church [...] there is a relationship at the very level of their respective religious identities;"[50] that "the encounter between Catholics and Jews is not [only] a meeting of two ancient religions each going its own way, and not infrequently, in times past, in grievous and painful conflict," but that "it is a meeting between 'brothers'."[51]

The Pope summarized this very well during his visit to the Synagogue of Rome on April 13, 1986, when he told the Jewish community there: "You are our dearly beloved brothers and, in a certain way, it could be said that you are our elder brothers." At the end of his address he praised God for that joyful meeting (and joyful it was !), for what he called "the rediscovered brotherhood" [...] between the Church and Judaism everywhere, in every country, for the benefit of all."

Memoria futuri, prophetia futuri: Jews and Christians, instead of being a curse for each other (as in the past), becoming a blessing for each other and for humanity at large (hope for the future). The vision is quite clear, but is it also possible? I believe it is, at least for Jews and Christians of *faith* (and I am not understanding this word in a narrow sense). There is a solid basis for it in what *Nostra Aetate* (the Second Vatican Council Declaration) describes as "the spiritual patrimony" which is common to us, a "common spiritual root, which is the consciousness of the brotherhood of all people."[52] John Paul II himself is positive: "It is ultimately on

such a basis that it will be possible to establish – as we know is happily already the case," he says — "a close collaboration towards which our common heritage directs us, in service of man and his vast spiritual and material needs."[53] In fact, addressing what he called "the problems of morality," Pope John Paul spoke to the Jewish community of Rome (April 13, 1986) about "the great field of individual and social ethics." "We are all aware of how acute the crisis is on this point in the age in which we are living," he said. "In a society which is often lost in agnosticism and individualism and which is suffering the bitter consequences of selfishness and violence, Jews and Christians are the trustees and witnesses of an ethic marked by the Ten Commandments, in the observance of which man finds his truth and freedom. To promote a common reflection and collaboration on this point is one of the great duties of the hour." And he told the Diplomatic Corps on January 13, 1997, "what the international community perhaps lacks most of all is not written conventions or forums for self-expression [...], but a moral law and the courage to abide by it."

One condition that would enable Jews and Christians to truly serve that cause will be their willingness to give reconciliation, and indeed friendship, a chance. "Friendship stands against exclusion and makes people stand together in the face of threat," the Pope told a delegation of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith who visited him at his summer residence in Castelgandolfo on September 29, 1994.

Is this not the meaning of the call to be a blessing for the world and therefore to one another? Have we not learned from history that when there is no religious space for the other, in no time there may not be any space at all for the other? This is why – and I cannot but speak as a person of faith – Jews and Christians need to create such a religious space for one another; a space which is needed for engaging on a journey of mutual exploration of one another's faith tradition and history, perceptions and expectations, and above all of the image of God in one another – for it is from such a discovery that moral responsibility will grow also, a responsibility for one another as well as for the world. In my own spiritual journey, I have come to realize that we cannot give a truthful answer to God's question "Where are you?" without answering also the other question which God is asking us: "Where is your brother?"[54]

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman (USA) and other Jewish friends have reminded us of the common commitment that Jews and Christians have to what he calls "the sacred imperative of *tikkun olam*, the mending of the world". As he told His Holiness in Miami, on September 11, 1987:

A basic belief of our Jewish faith is the need 'to mend the world under the sovereignty of God' ... *L'takken olam b'malkut Shaddai.* To mend the world means to do God's work in the world. It is in this spirit that Catholics and Jews should continue to address the social, moral, economic, and political problems of the world [...]. But before we can mend the world, we must first mend ourselves. A meeting such as this is part of the healing process that is now visibly under way between our two communities [...]. Catholics and Jews have begun the long overdue process of reconciliation. We still have some way to go [...]. Yet in a world of increasing interreligious, interracial, and interethnic strife, the progress in Catholic-Jewish relations is one of this century's most positive developments [...]. We live in a historic moment. Clearly, as two great communities of faith, repositories of moral and spiritual values, Catholics and Jews need to move together in this new moment. The last quarter-century has irreversibly changed the way we perceive and act towards each other.

Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks of Great Britain is thinking along the same lines, as we can read in an article which he wrote for *The Tablet*:

...Where in our culture will we find something that gives us the power to change? In these convenantal institutions of families and communities.

Yet, with a few honourable exceptions, our culture and our media have nothing but contempt for, or at best indifference to, those great human and humanising covenantal institutions: the stable family sanctified by the bonds of marriage and the faith community with its glorious vision of human possibility. This is what distresses me beyond measure in our contemporary culture. When I visit run-down neighborhoods today, I see the same poverty that my parents and grandparents knew, but with one important, even momentous, difference. Today I see a poverty of hope, a circling wall of despair whose symptoms we know only too well, from crime to drug and alcohol abuse, to depressive illness, to violent anger.

So I believe the time has now come for our faith communities to become a countercultural presence, a force to challenge the tin gods of fame and power and success which are great for those who win, but hell for those who lose; and to protect against a world, a society that knows the price of everything and the value of nothing, as it travels the road of economic affluence and spiritual poverty, of ever stronger governments and markets and ever weaker families and communities. That is a road that cannot but end in

tragedy. And what will renew our faith communities is the knowledge that in our homes, our denominational schools, our congregations, our places of worship, values are kept alive that are dying elsewhere: fidelity, altruism, decency, civility, reverence, restraint. Without those values and virtues, human dignity cannot survive. Without them, liberal democracies will discover that they face social pathologies that they are impotent to solve.

When religion tries to explain the world, it fails. When religion tries to control the world, it fails. But when religion tries to change a life, then it succeeds.

The time has come for us to work together as faith communities in genuine partnership with governments on the one hand and businesses on the other, to create local welfare initiatives based not simply on the power of the state, nor simply on the wealth of the market, but on our faith in human beings. Because it is that faith which changes lives and builds the landscape of hope.[55]

Another well-known Jewish scholar, Rabbi Irving Greenberg (USA) also goes in this direction. To the question "How can Judaism and ¡

Whatever Judaism and Christianity try to do, they will have to do together and to each other first. Their moral and cultural credibility depends on overcoming the legacy and image of their mutual hatefulness; it depends on their ability to set a standard of mutual respect [...]. They face a common threat of being swamped by secularization and modernity which neither is strong enough to handle alone [...]. It is time [...] for reconfiguring the relationship, for overcoming the internal degradation of the other, for a new alliance of the people of God for the sake of witnessing to humanity and perfecting the world.[56]

I would like to conclude these reflections with the words with which Mordecai Waxman concluded his address to the Pope in Miami: "In an age of great challenges and great possibilities there is a compelling need for a 'vision for the times', hazon l'moed (Hab 2:3). Our vision for Catholics and Jews is a prayer of the synagogue. At the end of the Torah reading, the scroll is held high so the entire congregation may see the words of God, and together the congregation prays, hazaq, hazaq, v'nithazeq, "Be strong, be very strong, and let us strengthen one another." We share this vision. We also share this prayer, in remembrance of the past and with good hope for the future. *Memoria futuri, prophetia futuri.* I do hope though that it does not remain what it still is today, a prophecy.[57]

FOOTNOTES:

1 "Journey Into 'The Between'" in *Pilgrimage in a New Millennium – Spiritual Reflections from Christians and Jews in the Holy Land*, edited by Ron Kronish, Jerusalem, Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israe, 1999, p. 7.

2 Ps 137: 1-6. At the General Audience of April 28, 1999, Pope John Paul II spoke on Jewish-Christian dialogue in the context of preparations for the third millennium (cf. the English edition of *The Osservatore Romano*, May 5, 1999). He said: "Israel, a people who build their faith on the promise God made to Abrah©): 'You shall be the father of a multitude of nations' (Gn 17:4; Rm 4:17), shows Jerusalem to the world as the symbolic place of the eschatological pilgrimage of peoples united in their praise of the Most High."

3 Luke 22:19.

4 Cf. the Catholic liturgy of the Eucharist.

5 Published by the *Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews*, on March 16, 1998. I have spoken on this theme at Tel Aviv University, on January 19, 2000.

6 "The Twilight of Memory: Reflections on Holocaust Memoirs, Past, Present and Future, in Dimensions - A Journal of Holocaust Studies," vol. 13, n. 1 (1999) p. 19.

7 Rabbi Avraham Soetendorp, a survivor of the Shoah, told the participants of the Eisenach Conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews in 1995: "The real meaning of repentance (teshuvah) is not to be burdened with guilt but to learn from experiences and to turn the mistakes and the transgressions into a passion for a new future". Cf. "Towards a Europe of Compassion" in *Common Ground* (the Journal of the Council of Christians and Jews in Great Britain), 11 (1995) 24. Pope John Paul II expressed a similar view in an address to the new Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See, on November 8, 1990: "Guilt should not oppress and lead to self-agonizing thoughts, but must always be the point of departure for conversion."

8 Ibid., p. 20.

9 Ibid., p. 22.

10 Cf. Daniel Rossing, op. cit., p. 38.

11 "If we are to oppose the Nazi view of the human being, then we must embrace the view that the Nazis opposed, namely that we are essentially connected to every human being, as family members are essentially connected to each other": op. cit., p. 22.

12 Ibid., p. 22-23.

13 In a paper entitled "Catholics and Jews: Confronting the Holocaust Together."

14 *Our Age – The Historic New Era of Christian-Jewish Understanding*, (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1996) pp. 10 and 64.

15 Cf. *The Osservatore Romano*, weekly edition in English, 15 (1994) p. 6.

16 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Spiritual Pilgrimage – Texts on Jews and Judaism 1979-1995, edited by Eugene J. Fisher and Leon Klenicki, (New York: Crossroad, 1995) 169. The addresses of or to the Pope quoted in this paper are printed in this volume.

17 It is interesting to note that the very Preamble of the Fundamental Agreement describes the nature of the particular context in which such a statement is made: "Aware of the unique nature of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people, and of the historic process of reconciliation and growth in mutual understanding and friendship between Catholics and Jews ...".

18 Cf. *The Osservatore Romano*, weekly edition in English, 41 (1994) 4-5.

19 Cf. ibid., p. 4. Pope John Paul II has illustrated the content of this hope during his visit to the Synagogue of Rome on April 13,1986, when he reminded us that "Jews and Christians are the trustees and witnesses of an ethic marked by the Ten Commandments, in the observance of which man finds his truth and freedom". And in his address to Jewish leaders in Miami, on September 11, 1987, he said: "It is my sincere hope that, as partners in dialogue, as fellow believers in the God who revealed himself, as children of Abraham, we will strive to render a common service to humanity [...]. We are called to collaborate in service and to unite in a common cause wherever a brother or sister is unattended, forgotten, neglected, or suffering in any way; wherever human rights are endangered or human dignity offended; wherever the rights of God are violated or ignored."

20 Address to the Anti-Defamation League, March 22, 1984.

21 Address in the Synagogue of Rome, April 13, 1986.

22 Address on the Fortieth Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, April 25, 1983. In his promulgating letter to the President of our Commission, dated March 12, 1998, just before the publication of the document *We Remember* by our Commission, the Pope was very explicit: "It is my fervent hope that the document: *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, which the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews has prepared [...], will indeed help to heal the wounds of past misunderstandings and injustices. May it enable memory to play its necessary part in the process of shaping a future in which the unspeakable iniquity of the *Shoah* will never again be possible. May the Lord of history guide the efforts of Catholics and Jews and all men and women of good will as they work together for a world of true respect for the life and dignity of every human being, for all have been created in the image and likeness of God."

23 Cf. *Nostra Aetate* 4, based on Rm 11:17-24. During his meditation at Mauthausen concentration camp, on June 24, 1988, the Pope cried out: "You people of yesterday, and you people of today, if the system of extermination camps continues somewhere in the world, even today, tell us, what message can our century convey to the next? [...] Tell us, how should today's person be and how should this generation of humanity live in the wake of the great defeat of the human being ? [...] Tell us, how must nations and societies be ? [...] Speak, you have the right to do so – you who have suffered and lost your lives. We have the duty to listen to your testimony."

24 Cf. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (TMA), 11.

25 TMA, 10.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Cf. Ex 23: 10-11; Lev 25: 1-28; Deut 15: 1-6.

29 TMA, 13.

30 TMA, 16, 32.

31 TMA, 16.

32 TMA, 17.

33 TMA, 18.

34 Cf. John Paul II's addresses to the delegates of a meeting of Episcopal Conferences and other experts in Catholic-Jewish relations, on March 6, 1982; to the Jewish community of Rome in their main synagogue on April 13, 1986; and to the audience after the Vatican concert in commemoration of the **Shoah** on April 7, 1994.

35 The Pope's letter to Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, President of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, on the occasion of the publication of the document **We Remember**, and the first paragraph of this document itself.

36 TMA, 18.

37 Address after the concert on April 7, 1994.

38 TMA, 27. In his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, published in 1991, Pope John Paul II wrote about "the crimes against God and humanity" which have been committed in the past, and he made the following appeal: "May the memory of those terrible events guide the acts of everyone, particularly the leaders of nations in our time, when other forms of injustice are fuelling new hatred and when new ideologies which exalt violence are appearing on the horizon" (n. 17).

39 TMA, 33.

40 TMA, 33.

41 The document *We Remember*, V.

42 Ibid. The Pope insisted on this again at the General Audience of April 28, 1999.

43 TMA, 46.

44 TMA, 46 and 52, 53. From October 24 to 29, 1999, shortly before the opening of the Jubilee Year, an Interreligious Assembly was held in Vatican City. About 200 people of different religious traditions – Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and others – gathered together for common reflection on the challenges presented by the new millenium. The title for chosen the meeting was "On the Eve of the Third Millennium, Collaboration between Different Religions". The participants reflected together on the human family's common pilgrimage and sought ways to promote a future of peace and solidarity among the whole of mankind.

45 TMA, 50.

46 TMA, 50.

47 In *Information Service* (the official bulletin of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity), 75 (1990) p. 175-177.

48 "A Jewish Reaction to the Notes" in *Fifteen Years of Catholic-Jewish Dialogue 1970-1985*, published by the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, Rome, 1988, p. 269.

49 Gal. 3:7; cf. the Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, 4.

50 Cf. for instance his addresses to Jews delivered in the Vatican on March 12, 1979, and in Saõ Paolo, Brazil, on July 3, 1980.

51 Address to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, in the Vatican, on March 22, 1984.

52 Pope John Paul II in an address given during his pastoral visit to Brazil, on October 15, 1991.

53 Address to a group of Catholic and Jewish leaders on March 6, 1992. It is interesting to mention that at its 1994 Jerusalem meeting, the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee published *A Common Declaration on the Family;* and another one on *Ecology* at its meeting in Vatican City in March 1998. A third one, on *Violence*, was prepared and should have been made public on the eve of *Yom Hashoah* at the site of the tragic attack on the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, in 1996. Unfortunately it never happened, because that scheduled meeting never took place. Another field of cooperation is the advancement and protection of human rights. At a meeting which took place in the Vatican in February 1993, we explored the possibilities in the light of the Vienna United Nations World Conference on Human Rights which was to take place soon afterwards. Our discussion demonstrated a clear convergence of views and showed that the Jewish concerns were similar to those expressed by the Holy See at the first Session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference. Cf. my address to the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists at their meeting in Rome in 1994.

54 Cf. Gen 3:9, 4:9.

55 "Our Nation's Poverty of Hope," in *The Tablet* of July 8, 2000, p. 916-917. In this lecture Father Hoeckman quoted again from Rabbi Sacks' essay "From Slavery to Freedom..." *The Tablet* of June 10, 1995. With his approval this more recent text replaces the earlier one, which can be found at the end of the previous essay (Editor).

56 In his paper entitled "Jews and Christians: Facing the Modern World", read in Jerusalem on February 2, 1994, at an International Jewish-Christian Conference on Religious Leadership in Secular Society. On that occasion Greenberg remarked: "Although the **halacha** is a touch more accepting of abortion, I sleep better at night knowing that the Catholic Church's opposition keeps at bay the potential cheapening of life."

57 At the General Audience of April 28, 1999, the Pope concluded his speech expressing "hope that at the dawn of the third millennium sincere dialogue between Christians and Jews will help create a new civilization founded on the one, holy and merciful God, and fostering a humanity reconciled in love."