

NZCCJ - AOTEAROA

MASSAH
מסע
JOURNEY

**Journal of the
New Zealand Council of Christians
and Jews**

No. 27 Spring 2009

Contents

Editorial.	1
News and Notes.	1
The Book Reviews:	
The Language of God (Collins) and The God Delusion (Dawkins)	3
The Book Thief (Zusak)	4
Journal (Berr)	5
The Misunderstood Jew (Levine)	6
Forgiveness in Judaism <i>Wendy Ross</i>	7
Decline in Christian Numbers in the Middle East.	13
Pope Benedict XVI's pilgrimage to the Holy Land. <i>David Rosen</i>	15
Father John Pawlikowski - biography and comment.	16
Times and Seasons.	Inside Back Cover

CCJ Officers

Auckland CCJ

Jewish Co-President Wendy Ross
 Christian Co-President Revd Dr Tony Stroobant
 Secretary/Treasurer Harry Hepple, 72/21 Graham Collins Drive, Mairangi Bay, Auckland
 Membership subscription: \$30, unwaged \$20. (For individual or couple)

Wellington CCJ

Jewish Co-President R. Johanna Hershenson
 Christian Co-President Revd Jenny Chalmers
 Secretary Dave Moskowitz PO Box 1110, Wellington.
 Treasurer Col. Margaret Hay SA PO Box 1110, Wellington.
 Membership subscription: \$15

NZCCJ

Patron HE The Hon. Anand Satyanand PCNZM,
 Governor General of New Zealand
 Jewish Co-President Professor Paul Morris, Victoria University
 Christian Co-President Revd Dr Tony Stroobant

Editorial Committee

Auckland:
 Christopher Honoré (Editor)
 Tony Stroobant
 Natalie Miller
 Wendy Ross

Editorial matters: 179b St John's Road, Meadowbank, Auckland 1072. Ph 09 521 1002

NZCCJ - AOTEAROA

MASSAH

JOURNEY

Journal of the New Zealand Council of
Christians and Jews

No. 27 Spring 2009

Editorial

This issue of Massah is offered with the sincere apology of the editor for the tardy delivery of the magazine.

As you will see the bulk of this issue is consumed by two main features, firstly the contents of the excellent and varied books recently read by members of the Council for Christians and Jews, and the thought provoking article on forgiveness contributed by Wendy Ross. We were invited by both Wendy and Darryl to consider the meaning and scope of forgiveness within each faith tradition and Wendy's paper helps Christians realize the debt we owe to Judaism for the basic concept and practice.

The main purpose of NZCCJ and Massah is to foster deeper understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Jews, to explore differences, celebrate what we have in common, and to work on reducing anti-Semitism in a world which is seeing a resurgence of this prejudice.

One of the ways for Christians and Jews to do this is to read authors such as Amy-Jill Levine who is an observant orthodox feminist Jew who teaches New Testament at Vanderbilt University in USA. I have heard her teach on the Hebrew Scriptures and I know she made a positive impression on those Aucklanders who met her last year when she came to the School of Theology at Auckland University. Her book, *A Misunderstood Jew*, about Jesus of Nazareth and Christian anti-Semitism and how to undo this, will repay careful study. It is reviewed in this issue of Massah.

The ICCJ have issued a renewed call to Christians and Jews to be committed to dialogue and to deepen this respectful conversation, http://www.iccj.org/en/pdf/Berlin_Paper.pdf the URL will enable us to study the most important twelfold call that this organization issues. NZCCJ Wellington has done some work on this report already, and an account of their work is included.

News and Notes



March 25: Becoming Clergy: Preparation for ordination and smicha

Rabbi Dean Shapiro spoke about the process of becoming a Rabbi and Revd Christopher Honoré, on that of becoming a Christian Minister. In this process both similarities and differences were uncovered.

There were three foci to the presentation, The Academic process, Formation, and Personal Journey.

Rabbinical education is over 5 years and includes a post graduate academic programme as well as supervised pastoral practice. Ordination, Smicha, is conferred by the Seminary.

Ministerial formation includes either a bachelor's degree in theology or a higher degree depending on whether the candidate already has a degree or not. The process may be as short as three years or as long as five. Ordination is conferred by the Church, either by a bishop in Episcopal traditions or by other authorised ministers in non episcopal traditions.

The Office of Rabbi is one of leadership and teaching, and revolves around the study of Torah; whereas the Office of Christian Minister covers Leadership, a Teaching and a Sacramental role, enshrined in the phrase a ministry of Word and Sacrament. Both have pastoral and guidance roles. Rabbi Shapiro was very clear that the Rabbinical role is in no way related to the ancient role of Cohen, nor is it to be considered in any way to be similar to Christian priesthood.

Both speakers illustrated their contributions with reference to their personal journey.

May 5: Recent Reading

The fruits of this excellent evening are amply illustrated in this issue of Massah.

News and Notes, *continued . . .*

Reviews were contributed by: Tony Stroobant, Eleanor Hooper and Ann Gluckman, with one provided later by Natalie Miller.

July 12: Jewish and Christian Perspectives on Forgiveness

Wendy Ross's excellent presentation on Forgiveness from a Jewish point of view is included in full and Darryl Milner's presentation will be published in the Summer 2010 issue of *Massah*.

A website to Note

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks issues a weekly commentary on the weekly Parsha. It is a beautifully written personal commentary. There is an audio link with this and one can have this commentary delivered by email.

The Editor finds Jonathan Sacks' comments stimulating and commends the website to readers of *Massah*: covenantandconversation@communications.chief Rabbi.org

Events yet to Come, Auckland

- **Wednesday October 28**, 7.30 pm in the Wesley Hall, St John's College, 202 St Johns Rd, Meadowbank. Wine, fruit juice, cheese, crackers, and book launch evening.

Beyond contempt: Removing anti-Jewishness from Christian Worship by the Revd Dr Tony Stroobant

Tony will talk about his research and how he hopes his study book might be used by the church. Do not miss the opportunity to purchase a signed first edition of a publication destined to become a Jewish-Christian relations classic!

- **Core Group Meetings**

Thursday 15 October and Wednesday 11 November 2009

Rabbi David Rosen will be visiting NZ and is to speak in Auckland on 24 November - Venue yet to be finalised.

Wellington Event

Jews and Christians meet to discuss the 12 points of Berlin.

The Wellington Council of Christians and Jews met to consider two documents outlining a basis for relations between the two religions.

Professor Paul Morris gave a summary of the relationship from the beginnings of Christianity, emphasising that it took 400 years for the two faiths to finally separate and noting various phases of closeness and distance subsequently.

The Ten Points of Seelisberg came about as church leaders, and a few surviving chief rabbis, met in 1947 to address the fact of Christian anti-Semitism having been a contributing factor to the Holocaust. It was a call to Christians to remember the Jewish roots of their faith and to avoid anti-Jewish teachings.

62 years later, the International council of Christians and Jews has produced another document, the 12 Points of Berlin, which includes a call to Jews as well as to Christians, and a call to all people of goodwill.

After an outline of the content of these documents, the meeting of 40 plus people broke into four groups to discuss what might be missing from the documents, and what can be done to further good Jewish Christian relations, on the general premise that any friendship, respect and understanding among different groups in society can only make the world a better place.

Among the suggestions were: continuing having meetings such as that evening's, fostering individual friendships among people of different faiths, supporting teaching about religion in schools and other institutions such as nursing and police schools.

The meeting concluded by agreeing unanimously to endorse, with a few comments, the 12 points, which are due to be adopted by the International Council of Christians and Jews at their conference in Berlin early July.

The Book Reviews

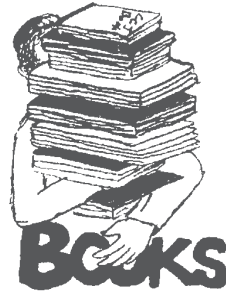
Auckland CCJ - 5 May 2009

Francis Collins, The Language of God.

Simon and Schuster. N.Y. (2006)
ISBN-13: 978-0743286398

Richard Dawkins, The God Delusion.

Bantam Press, Great Britain (2006)
ISBN-13: 978-0618680009



earth from a single living cell until the present, where humankind represents the present apex of complex evolution. But scientists are divided as to whether it is still possible to believe in “God” or whether evolution alone has provided a sufficient answer. These two books provide opposing views.

Before discussing these specific books let's look at words used by Rudolf Otto, a German Lutheran, Professor of

Theology at Marburg University, who in 1917 wrote “The Idea of the Holy”, which was not published in English until 1924. He used the adjectives supernatural and numinous to define God and the phrase *mysterium tremendum* to describe the feeling of awe - something many humans may experience, maybe in a holy place, but also in music, in nature, - in any particular event in time or place - when one’s “soul” is moved and one “knows” there is “God” who is beyond, yet personal.

Richard Dawkins, who currently holds the Chair of Public Understanding of Science at the University of Oxford published *The God Delusion* in 2006. He is Britain’s most famous atheist.

The author of earlier books in *The Selfish Gene*, he coined the word meme which can be applied to any form of cultural transmission. A meme is to ideas as the gene is to the inheritance of hereditary material. He believes that evolution provides the complete answer, and quotes Einstein: “I don’t try to imagine a personal God - it suffices to stand in awe of the structure of the world insofar as it allows our inadequate senses to appreciate it.”

Reviewed by Ann Gluckman

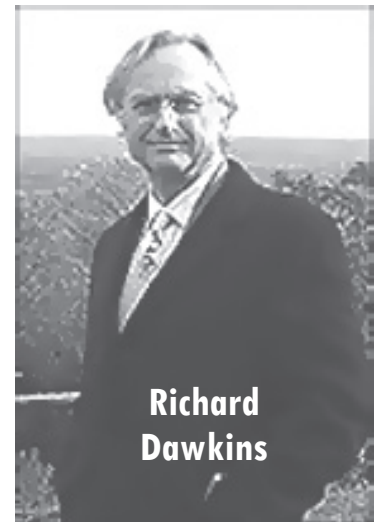
2009 marks the bi-centenary of the birth of Charles Darwin, whose monumental work “*On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection- or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) - now known by the simpler title *Origin of Species* - propounded the Theory of Evolution which at the time of its publication came into conflict with religious thought.

When I started Botany, Geology and Zoology at Auckland University College, in 1945, Mendelian theory, Darwinism, chromosome theory, the shifting of tectonic plates of the earth were all exciting, relatively new concepts.

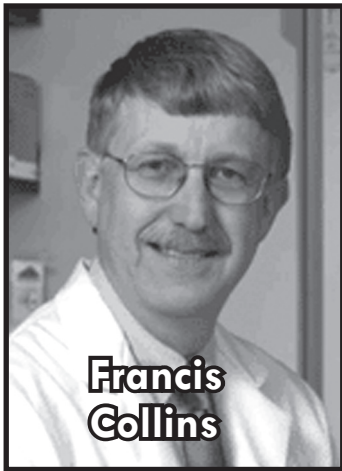
After the Second World War the progress of sciences has been immense. The World Genome Project has stretched the understanding of the mechanisms of evolution and Astrophysics is expanding the magnitude and understanding of the Universe exponentially.

It was not until 1949 that it was recognised that DNA, not protein, was the instrument for transferring inherited characteristics. In 1953 Watson, Crick and Wilkins, using work of Rosalind Franklin deduced the DNA molecule, in the form of a double helix, as carrying the information capacity.

Two books, both written in the past three years, by highly reputable biologists, agree that evolution is the process by which, over vast millions of years, life has evolved on



Equally eminent in the world of science is American Francis Collins, Head of the World Human Genome Project, who works at the cutting edge of DNA - the code of life. He published *The Language of God* in 2006.



He sees the evolution of humankind working through the identical evolutionary processes as Dawkins, but he is a believer in God and he firmly rejects the concepts of young-earth creationism, intelligent design and the views of agnostics. He postulates, as did C.S. Lewis in *Mere*

Christianity the Moral Law - that a sense of right and wrong is an intrinsic quality of being human, and is not just a consequence of cultural traditions, that exist in the teaching of all great religions.

I strongly recommend reading both *The Language of God* and *The God Delusion*. Collins' book is short, easy to read and for a believer it presents faith and present day science as compatible and presenting no conflict. Initially an atheist, Collins became a believer as a result of his work. He is certain evolution through DNA is the language of God.

The God Delusion is a much longer book. It is highly thought-provoking and challenging. Julian Barnes, the author of *Flaubert's Parrot* reviewing *The God Delusion* in the *New Statesman* wrote, "It should be read by everyone from atheist to monk. If its merciless rationalism doesn't enrage you, at some point, you probably aren't alive."

I re-read Dawkins' *The God Delusion* in Antarctica last year. In that awesome majesty, in the intense silence broken only by the sudden thunders of breaking avalanches and calving glaciers, and in places by the shriek of birds, and penguin chatter, and awareness of one's insignificance - my 'soul' was stirred by the awesome, *mysterium tremendum* of God. Dawkins had truly challenged my thinking. He posed propositions to which I had to find my own answers.

The Book Thief, by **Markus Zusak,**

Knopf Books Doubleday, 2005.
(ISBN-13: 9780330423304)

Reviewed by Tony Stroobant

This is a remarkably accomplished (and now hugely popular) novel of the second world war.

The book thief of the title is Liesel Meminger, an abandoned child in war-time Germany. These are perilous times: Liesel's father has been taken away, branded a communist.

Her mother disappears forever, after giving her up to foster parents.

Liesel's foster father is Hans Hubermann, a gentle painter, decorator and part-time accordion player. His wife and Liesel's foster mother is Rosa. She has a face, says the narrator, "decorated with constant fury"- hardly surprising, given all that is happening around her, and over which she has no say!

Not the least of the problems of the Hubermann family is that they are hiding a Jew, Max Vandenburg, in their basement. Max's father saved Hans Hubermann's life when they were soldiers together in the first world war. Now Hans Hubermann is almost recklessly compassionate towards those who suffer in this one, particularly Jews. However, while it is the presence of the Jew in the basement that sets up the dramatic tension, the story belongs to Liesel.

Liesel's struggles are like those of any child in such times—finding enough to eat, living through increasing Allied air raids, drawing what comfort she can from her friend Rudy Steiner, doing her share to shelter Max Vandenburg in the basement. Liesel "acquires" her first book - *The Gravedigger's Handbook* - on her way to Munich with her mother, during which her six-year-old brother dies and is buried. She picks the book up from where it has been accidentally dropped and now lies partially hidden in the snow. Thus begins her love affair with books and with words.

With the help of her foster father, Liesel learns to read. The couple of books he is able to give her are not enough, so Liesel learns to steal also. The first comes from a Nazi public book burning in the town square.

Liesel's next book is made for her - a strangely beautiful short story written and illustrated by Max Vandenburg, the Jew in the basement, (ironically) over white-washed pages of a copy of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

But after two years, Max leaves to spare the Hubermanns from discovery, and walks away to an uncertain future. Now Liesel has to get her reading matter from somewhere else. Daringly, she chooses the library of the mayor's wife. This woman, a recluse since the death of her son in the last war, could easily stop Liesel's repeated acts of thievery, but instead opens up to life a little again by her complicity.

The stolen books, read out loud by Liesel in instalments, help distract those who huddle in the basement during the increasingly heavy and frequent air raids.

As the war, in all its fury, draws to an end so does the story. To tell more would be to spoil it....

Journal

By **Hélène Berr.**

Translated by **David Bellos**
Quercus, London, 2008.
ISBN 978 1 84724 574 8 HB

Reviewed by: **Eleanor Hooper**

This book is an English translation of a diary originally written in French by Hélène, a young Jewish woman living in occupied Paris. It contains entries she began writing on Tuesday, 7 April in 1942 until Tuesday 15 February 1944. There are also an introduction and an essay from the translator, and an afterward written by her niece.

Hélène Berr was born on 27 March, 1921, in Paris. Her parents, Antoinette and Raymond Berr, were both Jewish and came from families that had been French for many generations. Hélène had three older sisters and a younger brother. She was a highly intelligent young woman, excelling at her private secondary school in languages and philosophy, and in 1940-41 gained a degree at the Sorbonne in English language and literature. Her diary in the original contains many English words and phrases. She continued her studies during the war years, although was restricted in which courses she could take because she was Jewish.

From 1941 she became involved in a clandestine network to save Jewish children from deportation, helping to place children with families prepared to look after them. Her journal references to this work are written in a kind of code.

Hélène's journal began by recording events in her daily life, including her growing relationship with a fellow student, a young Czechoslovakian man who later became her fiancé. He left France in November 1942 to join the Free French and later served with the Allied Forces.

Hélène stopped writing in her journal on 28 November 1942 but resumed her entries on 23 August 1943, with a new purpose. By this time there was open discrimination against the Jewish people in Paris, and Hélène's family had become subject to persecution and were frequently obliged to leave their apartment to avoid arrest. As the months went by, her friends and relatives were vanishing, and Hélène herself had miraculously escaped being deported when she was absent from work one day.

On 10 October 1943 Hélène writes (p.157) "I have a duty to write because other people must know. Every hour of every day there is another painful realisation that other folk do not know, do not even imagine, the suffering of other men, the evil that some of them inflict. And I am still trying to make the painful effort to tell the story. Because it is a duty, it is maybe the only one I can fulfil. There are men who know and who close their eyes, and I'll never manage to convince people of that kind, because they are hard and selfish, and I have no authority. But people who do not know and who might have sufficient heart to understand – on those people I must have an effect. For how will humanity ever be healed unless all its rottenness is exposed? How will the world be cleansed unless it is made to understand the full extent of the evil it is doing. Everything comes down to understanding . . ."

Hélène made some comments about Christianity. After reading the Gospel of Matthew, she wrote, (p. 161) "What I found in the words of Christ was no different from the rules of conscience which I have instinctively tried to



obey myself.” Further on she wrote, “Should anyone ever be anything except a disciple of Christ? The whole world should be Christian, yes it should, if you have to use labels. But not Catholic, not what men have done with Christianity.” She also felt that if there had been a mass uprising of Christians against the persecutions the Jews were suffering, it would have won the day.

Her last journal entry (*p.263*) is on 15 February 1944 but that was not the last of Hélène’s writing. The book next carries a copy of a letter from Hélène to her sister, 8 March 1944, 10.20 am, written from a police cell on the day she was arrested. She begins by saying the doorbell rang at 7.30 am. Elsewhere in the book the information is provided that Hélène and her parents had decided to spend a night in their apartment instead of their usual hiding place. Her letter requests her sister to send clothing and a few other essential items and to pass on several messages.

In the afterward her niece wrote: (*p.272*) – “Hélène survived deportation for over a year. In early November 1944 she was transferred from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen. One morning, five days before the camp was liberated by the British army, Hélène, sick with typhus, could not get up from her bunk for reveille. When her fellow inmates returned to the hut, they found her lying on the floor. She had been brutally beaten. The last spark of life she had clung to had gone out.”

How did this book come to be? Hélène had the foresight to give the pages of her journal to the family’s cook for safekeeping, who, after learning of her death, gave them to her fiancé. He in turn passed them to Hélène’s niece in 1994, and she in turn, with her family’s agreement, donated the manuscript to the Memorial de la Shoah in Paris in 2002. It was published in France in January last year with this English translation coming out some months afterward.

One may ask – why didn’t people such as Hélène’s family try to get out? Didn’t they see the signs of what was coming? We have to remember hindsight is something that comes AFTER the event. Most people would not have comprehended the depths of depravity that were reached in hidden places during World War 2.

The book ends (*p.290*) by declaring Hélène’s journal “an historic document showing just how the Final Solution was imposed: by incremental stealth, by secrecy, in an atmosphere of utter confusion. It explains and demonstrates how so many people really did not know what was going on before their eyes.

“It was just as impossible for Hélène to know what Auschwitz meant as it is impossible for us not to know...We should resist the temptation of wishing that the young woman had understood sooner and drawn the conclusions that, with the hindsight we cannot now disown, we think we would have reached in time. Smugness is not a useful reaction to this searing work. We should rather pause and ask: Are we sure we know what is going on before our eyes?”

The Misunderstood Jew

By Amy-Jill Levine

HarperOne, 2006

ISBN-13: 978-0060789664

Reviewed by Natalie Miller.

It is a rare experience to read a book by an Orthodox Jew whose impeccable research and wide-ranging scholarly expertise can put the case so succinctly for understanding between Christians and Jews.

Her ability to express in simple terms the reasons for the polarisation of Jews and Christians due to shared ignorance of the facts about Jesus’ Jewish origins is a credible indictment of the sometimes staggering religious ignorance of Jews and Christians alike. She exposes blatant misinterpretations of the writings of the sages in the New Testament, in periodicals and books which perpetuate anti-Semitism. She shows how better education and thorough investigation could dispel the disinformation which foments distrust between Jews and Gentiles.

She shows how scholars of both religions could make a substantial contribution not only towards the removal of anti-Christian and anti-Semitism in a new approach to teaching in religious and other institutions, but could play a positive role for decades of students to come, in eliminating perverse attitudes which have plagued Christians and Jews two thousand years.

Her writing is inspirational. Her chapter devoted to the Lord's Prayer, the depth of her analysis of almost each word and how scholars have argued and will continue to argue which translation and versions fit within the Jewish and Christian context, is a remarkable treatise. Here her scholarly investigation is remarkable for its exhaustive and in-depth authentic exposition.

This is a book for scholars of all persuasions. Not only does she expose the ignorance that abounds, and at times the outright hateful prejudice that exists between the groups, but she shares solutions on how to tackle the problems that good learning, teaching and understanding can bridge the divide in interfaith relationships

Her tributes to the Roman Catholic Church in particular, in their efforts to acknowledge the Jewish Bible (the Old Testament for Christians) leads one to believe that great possibilities exist for exploring common roots with Judaism – and

similarly urges Jews to consider the extent to which reciprocation is warranted and urges them to grant that the church is also under its own covenant with God. She urges the engagement in open dialogue to broaden one's horizons.

There is no need to convince either side of the 'better' aspects of their religion. She emphasises that the whole purpose of acceptance of each other's religion is the major factor in having better understanding of the two religions. She emphasises the importance of good research and education.

One could only hope that this important book might become mandatory reading in Universities, Christian colleges and Orthodox Seminaries everywhere. Aspiring teachers, Pastors, Priests and Rabbis could then in turn teach young children to take with them the inspiration to learn how to find solutions which could be brought to concerns in the future.

Forgiveness in Judaism

Wendy Ross

“A reporter asks David Bain if he can ever forgive his father. What a question, even if it had been proven that the father had committed the murders. I couldn't believe that such a question would be asked.”

Even more do I feel at odds with the, to me, mindless phrase, to forgive and forget, other than for something inconsequential. First, to forget is not possible and second it's not desirable. *Sachor*, in Hebrew, remember, is a central idea of Judaism. We are 'remembrancers', a word coined by Professor George Steiner. And surely memory is an essential element in the moral progress of man.

Anyway, the situation I've just described led me to suggest forgiveness as an interesting and useful topic for CCJ to discuss, since my reaction to the question put by this and similar interviewers was horror and incomprehension and I wondered whether my reaction came from an instinctive Jewish perspective and whether the Christian perspective could be very different. Having suggested the topic, I was then expecting us to find someone knowledgeable to discuss it from a Jewish point of view with Darryl but have

ended up having to tackle it myself. That's what happens when you make rash suggestions.

I must at this stage acknowledge a debt to Solomon Schimmel, the author of "Wounds Not Healed By Time: The Power of Repentance and Forgiveness", which I found most helpful in preparing this talk.

I did discover as I read, that an important aspect of the discussion this evening is that there are no clear dividing lines between what Jews think and what Christians think. There's a very big overlap.

However there is a discernable tendency, which is well illustrated by a story told by the famous Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, about an experience he had towards the end of the war. He was summoned to the bedside of a dying SS officer who wanted Wiesenthal's forgiveness, on behalf of the Jewish people, for the atrocities he, the officer, had committed.

Wiesenthal stood there, struggling within himself, then walked away. He subsequently felt torn, unsure whether he'd done the right thing and wrote to a number of Jewish and Christian theologians, philosophers and jurists, asking for their opinions. On the whole, the Jews he wrote to felt he'd done the right thing, the Christians did not.



Rabbi Albert Friedlander would have agreed with Wiesenthal. “Can we forgive?” says Friedlander. “Who are we to usurp God’s role? You cannot go to the six million.”

The Jewish point of view is that the only person who can forgive is the victim and the victims were dead.

John Taylor, a Christian commentator on Wiesenthal’s story, suggests that ‘this religious doctrine (that is, no authority to forgive on behalf of another) makes it difficult for non-Jews to determine how much of the Jewish responses are based on religion and how much are based on revenge.’

Revenge is a word that is sometimes used in a quite anti-Semitic sense and I would absolutely reject that notion. I think we are in fact a remarkably unvengeful people.

Schimmel discusses the different attitude in the Bible to vengeance within the cohesive group and vengeance to outsiders. He quotes Leviticus 19: 17-18 to demonstrate that vengeance must be controlled: “You shall not hate your brother, but reason with him, don’t take vengeance or bear a grudge but love your neighbour as yourself; I am the Lord.” In other words, try to resolve differences amicably, offer reparation, material or psychological to re-establish bonds of brotherhood. Hidden resentment and revenge are prohibited. Give your brother a chance to reflect upon his behaviour and the hurtful effect it had on you so that he can improve himself. And rebuking is better than festering resentments. King David, says Schimmel, lost two sons because of his failure to rebuke.

And if your enemy’s ox or donkey strays, bring it back because by helping your enemy you might reconcile with him. The objective of the law is peaceful and harmonious relationships.

Vengeance outside the group is another matter and demonstrates an evolving attitude. God directs Saul to annihilate the Amalekites. Their guilt is tribal and transgenerational. Schimmel asks how this notion harmonizes with the notion of individual guilt and responsibility and a just God. But within the developing Bible, he writes, there is unease at this harshness. Ezekiel, for example, says that a child shall not suffer for his father’s iniquity nor the parent suffer for the iniquity of a child.

And through the prophetic books of the Bible, God controls his anger to give the wicked an opportunity to repent – he tempers justice with mercy and compassion. But if they don’t repent, they will not be forgiven. Like God, we should be patient and forbearing with those who wrong us, and give them a chance to repent.

If, however, they do not, they need not be forgiven and can be punished.

We can see from the Book of Jonah, the Jews struggled with the tension between the understandable and even justifiable animosity that they felt towards enemies and their belief in the redemptive value of repentance for everyone. The Book of Jonah is read on Yom Kippur, the day of repentance and atonement.

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik uses the word hate in a very uncompromising, extreme paper which many Jewish commentators found infuriating. Soloveichik, scion of an illustrious rabbinic dynasty, relates the story of a Catholic nun who said that ‘hatred is in the Jewish religion.’ One usually associates such a remark with classical anti-Semitism. But Soloveichik said, ‘She was right’.

His article was titled ‘The Virtue of Hate’. In it he says that while Christians bestow forgiveness on saints and sinners alike, Jews insist that ‘while no human being is denied the chance to become worthy of God’s love, not every human being engages in actions so as to be worthy of that love, and those unworthy of divine love do not deserve our love either.’ There was an uproar in response to this overstatement of the differences between Judaism and Christianity, mainly from Jews concerned about the repercussions for the interfaith conversation.

In response, Soloveichik stressed that the hate at the heart of his piece was of a very specific kind. ‘The point of my article,’ he wrote, “is that Judaism does countenance hating extreme and egregious evildoers: Hitler, Stalin, Arafat, Hussein, bin Laden and the like.” ‘For example, a Jew in a concentration camp need not pray that Hitler repent; rather, this Jew can and should pray that Hitler experience the wrath of God.’

In 2006 there was a documentary made in the United States called ‘Forgiving Dr Mengele’, featuring a woman who, along with her sister, had been subjected to Mengele’s experiments on twins. This engendered controversy in the Jewish community as to whether she has the right to forgive him and I would agree that she does not. I was pleased to see that the reviewer of the movie felt that the issue was really one of semantics, since the woman had not really forgiven the Nazis but rather had ‘empowered herself’ by exorcizing that evil from her past.

Now my feeling about that is, who cannot be glad if she has found a psychological method of dealing with the past which enables her to function in the present as she would wish. But I wish the word ‘forgiveness’ had not been used. I don’t like the idea of forgiveness as a means of making the forgiver “feel better”. I would agree with Schimmel that that represents narcissistic self-help rather than the moral indignation and pain at evil that she was entitled to feel. Forgiving can be therapeutic, which is not necessarily forgiving in a moral sense.

A similar story is told of a woman invited back to the city of Graz in Austria to attend the dedication of a new synagogue and memorial erected by the city fathers in what the journalist called a visual appeal for forgiveness for the atrocities of 1938. The woman was interviewed by a reporter of a local Graz newspaper and said that although one can never forget or totally forgive, it was time to let go. She had built up such a hatred and dislike for everything Austrian, that it didn’t leave her any peace. She feels that the visit has softened those feelings and that you cannot really blame second and third generations for the ‘sins of the fathers.’ However she feels there is grave doubt as to whether the Austrians are truly repentant.

Some of us here today heard a remarkable story recently from Rabbi Lau, the chief rabbi of Tel Aviv. As a small child he was taken with his mother to a concentration camp. His mother pushed him towards the men as she was taken away with the women and children, never to be seen by her son again. He saw his father battered to death. He was beaten and starved but survived, by luck and wits. He was gathered up with 220 other boys after the war and taken to an orphanage in France. They were dead inside. They weren’t human beings. Then a visitor, a rabbi, came and talked to the boys. He said something that made them cry and the whole lot of them cried for about five minutes.

They hadn’t cried for years – when they lost their fathers and they lost their mothers and they went through every possible nightmare, they didn’t cry.

At that point, as they wiped their wet faces, they began to realise that if today they could cry, then tomorrow they could laugh and they could hope and they could have families. They knew

that they were human beings. That is how they saved themselves, made it possible to live again, not by forgiving their tormenters. Rabbi Lau didn't mention forgiveness.

I have focused quite a bit on the Holocaust so far. I guess when Jews talk about forgiveness, the Holocaust is the topic that dwarfs all others.

It is central to our belief that God forgives and since our purpose is to strive to be God-like, we must forgive. But forgiveness is a long process, whether between man and God – where there is no intermediary, only a hot-line – or between man and man.

The seventh month, like the seventh day, is a holy month, beginning with the New Year – Rosh Hashanah – and the blowing of the shofar, the oldest of wind instruments, to rouse those, says Rabbi Hertz, who have fallen asleep in life.

Rosh Hashanah is also known as Yom ha-Din, the Day of Judgment, when we are judged, and when we review our deeds of the year. It stresses the Divine power of moral regeneration with which God has endowed the human soul.

Rosh Hashanah begins the ten days of repentance, or ten days of awe, leading up to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. On Yom Kippur all Jews come together to ask forgiveness from God for all the sins we have committed against Him.

But where these sins have harmed a human being you can't ask forgiveness from God until you have asked forgiveness from the person you have wronged. If forgiveness has not already been sought, it must be sought in these ten days. Again, that can be a long process.

The sins that don't involve another person are mostly ritual sins, such as eating forbidden food, desecrating the Sabbath, being cruel to animals. (As an aside, let me say that although we don't eat pig meat because we regard it as ritually unclean, cruelty to any animal including pigs is abhorrent in Jewish law.)

Of course you can't repent of your ritual sins, ask forgiveness and go out and sin again. There has to be a genuine determination not to sin again. As it says in 2 Chronicles 7:14: If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and shall turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Yom Kippur is a total fast day – 24 hours without any food or water. Actually it's more like 26 hours because you have to get to the synagogue by sunset, when the service begins with Kol Nidre, a prayer in song that is solemn, mysterious and awe-inspiring. The service ends 24 hours later with wine and bread and then you have to get home for your special meal. There is no-one to tell you that you must fast, it's up to every individual and I have no idea what proportion of people follow the law 100%, 0% or somewhere in between. Fasting is intended to help prove to man that his soul has mastery over his body. The vast majority of Jews, whether they fast or not, do observe it as a solemn day, go to the synagogue and I believe do get a sense of at-one-ment with God and man. At-one-ment is literally what atonement means.

Now, there would be no point in talking about repentance, forgiveness, sin or any of these ideas, if human beings did not have free will. According to Judaism, humans are not born evil but we have two competing sides to us: the good inclination and the evil inclination. By the time one gets to the age of maturity and responsibility one has to earn the respect of others and of God on the basis of how one lives one's life. The evildoer who refuses to repent will be held accountable and not forgiven for his sins.

We are not "fallen", we have the free will to choose but we don't always choose according to our good inclination. Mind you, there's not a lot of room for self-righteousness because, as we say in the funeral service, "there's no-one who does only good and sinneth not."

And we hear about the evil inclination in Genesis 4.7 "Sin, like some wild beast, crouches at the door of the human heart, ready to spring upon the man who gives it the opportunity; but he can rule over it." Self-conquest, self-control, self-discipline are the duties.

Now what is this long process, required by Jewish tradition, leading to forgiveness?

It's a complex phenomenon, affected by many factors, and mature forgiveness, says Schimmel, "entails difficult emotional and intellectual work. When practised thoughtlessly or simplistically, it is ineffective and counter-productive and can even be dangerous to oneself, to the person forgiven and to society." I was pleased to read those words because they really made me realise

why the whole subject had been making me uneasy. “Some anger,” he says, “is morally justifiable, and the absence of anger at injustices toward oneself or others is a vice rather than a virtue.”

The key concept of forgiveness is Teshuvah, (repentance), literally return – return to God - and is regarded as part of the structure of God’s creation. It contains five elements:

First of all is admitting that you have done wrong, that is, confession: Confession to God? No, God knows, but honest examination of oneself. Which leads to:

True humility and contrition which leads to:

A serious attempt to put things right. This might include monetary recompense where appropriate. But there can be no monetary recompense for murder. Premeditated murder is considered so heinous, the Bible prohibits monetary compensation in lieu of capital punishment. Man is made “in the image of God” according to the Bible and so killing an innocent human being is a sacrilegious act, an attack on God. In Israel, however, only one man has been sentenced to capital punishment and that was Adolf Eichmann.

Then sincere repentance – teshuvah – return –which lies at the root of man’s life as a moral being, combined with a resolve to change. Without this resolve, confession is quite unreal. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the man of iniquity his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” (Isaiah 55.7)

Finally an approach to the offended person, asking for forgiveness, which one doesn’t have to grant if one is unsure of the genuineness of the offender. One may withhold forgiveness if it is for the good of the person asking. It may be appropriate to withhold forgiveness to teach the supplicant not to take it lightly. It’s an exercise in which the offended helps the offender improve his moral education.

The offender may have to approach again and again but that’s all. After the third time the sin belongs to the person who refuses to forgive.

Now there are different kinds of forgiveness in the Jewish tradition. At a basic level there is mechila, which means that if the offender is sincerely repentant, the offended person should

relinquish his claim against the offender. This is not a reconciliation, more like a pardon granted by the modern state.

The second kind of forgiveness is slichah. It is an act of the heart, an empathy, an understanding that the offender is human, frail and deserving of sympathy.

The third kind is ‘atonement’ (kappara) or purification (tahora) – an existential cleansing but only granted by God, not man.

We’ve looked at the stages of teshuvah and the different types of forgiveness and I just want to note here that the acts of repentance and forgiveness are inextricably linked in the Jewish view. The forgiveness doesn’t normally come without the repentance. There are situations, however, when God has forgiven the Jewish people without their sufficient repentance, as we sometimes forgive family members or friends who have hurt us because we need to take a broad perspective, looking at their total relationship with us and the good they’ve done in the past. Here is Jeremiah, describing God’s relationship with Ephraim:

“Is Ephraim my dear son?
Is he the child I delight in?
As often as I speak against him,
I still remember him,
Therefore I am deeply moved for him;
I will surely have mercy on him,
Says the Lord.”

And then:

“I will be their God and they will be my
people
I will forgive their iniquity and remember
their sin
No more.”

“This clash between disappointment and hope, anger and mercy, punishment and forgiveness, mirrors human experience and expresses the yearning for reconciliation between God and man and, by extension, between one person and another,” says Schimmel.

Now to get on to a situation I mentioned earlier, what about indirect apology and forgiveness? What about sins committed by one’s antecedents? What of the sins of the father? Can there be such a thing as an indirect, second-hand apology and forgiveness in the Jewish tradition?

Steve Greenberg wrote a paper entitled: “The Pope’s Apology and the Grounds for Forgiveness”, in which he discusses Pope John Paul II’s sincere apology to the Jewish people. But should he have apologised?

Can he apologise?

Greenberg felt that he could but that the Pope’s apology did not go to the crux of the matter, in that he apologised in the name of Christians for the centuries of anti-Jewish teaching that laid the foundations of the Holocaust. (I’m not suggesting that the Church is responsible for the Holocaust.)

Greenberg feels that he should have apologised in the name of the institution (the Church) and the religion (Christianity).

But then I have been saying that in Judaism a person cannot ask for forgiveness from someone other than the offended person. Also, since the Pope himself was a good man, how can he, why should he apologise on behalf of the wrongdoers?

Schimmel offers a Catholic idea, that all Catholics are connected in a “mystical solidarity”. He sees this idea as coming from the Jewish view, which qualifies the idea of individual responsibility, in that all members of the community of Israel are morally and spiritually responsible for one another.

Elliot Dorff, a Conservative Jewish scholar, develops from this idea a notion of a secondary sense of regret and forgiveness – we might call it reconciliation or acceptance.

And so, even though, in some eyes, the Church’s repentance might fall short, it is still of value. Jews and Catholics can take many steps toward reconciliation, even in the absence of full repentance.

As another example of the innocent asking forgiveness on behalf of the guilty: King Hussein of Jordan visited every one of the Israeli families of the seven girls murdered by a Jordanian soldier. He asked forgiveness from each of them. He wasn’t the murderer. But the impact on the Israeli public was spectacular and was a turning point in the relations between Jordan and Israel.

Schimmel asks himself, elaborating on the theme of group repentance and forgiveness, whether as an American he carries some blame for slavery and decides that he does, since he has benefited from some of the results.

In the same way we in New Zealand have obviously accepted some responsibility for Maori land confiscation and other acts against Maori that happened before we were born.

And even if sometimes the sin is too great to be forgiven, that does not necessarily preclude efforts at some sort of reconciliation, as in the case, on a national level, of Germany and Israel.

But listen to this story about the South African Truth and Reconciliation Committee.

I read of a situation at one of the hearings where a white policeman confesses to having burned twelve people alive, intentionally. He expressed great remorse and the audience started clapping and hugging him. All was forgiven apparently.

A rabbi at the forum was appalled. He felt that the policeman was beyond human forgiveness and that a grave injustice had been done to the memory of the innocent victims. It was just too easy. Justice must also take its course, says Schimmel, for whom the key to forgiveness is the correct balance between repentance, justice and forgiveness.

To finish, here are a few words from Rabbi Lewis Eron, a Jewish Community chaplain in New Jersey:

“The great drama of our Torah revolves around the themes of sin and forgiveness, human error and Divine forbearance. The great teaching of our scripture is that forgiveness is available to those who seek it. The great hope of our tradition is that we all avail ourselves of this gift and turn in repentance from our errors and mistakes to live fuller lives. The great dream of our people is that we can use this insight to strengthen the spiritual bonds that unite us with each other and with our God. God’s ability to forgive our ancestors after the sin of the golden calf and keep them as his people is our abiding model of the spirit of forgiveness. The spiritual drama at Sinai is the very human drama of high expectations and deep disappointments followed not by despair and rejection but by struggle, forgiveness and reconciliation. We live out that drama every day of our lives.”



Decline in Christian Numbers in the Middle East

From the New York Times Published: May 12, 2009

JERUSALEM — Christians used to be a vital force in the Middle East. They dominated Lebanon and filled top jobs in the Palestinian movement. In Egypt, they were wealthy beyond their number. In Iraq, they packed the universities and professions. Across the region, their orientation was a vital link to the West, a counterpoint to prevailing trends.

But as Pope Benedict XVI wends his way across the Holy Land this week, he is addressing a dwindling and threatened Christian population driven to emigration by political violence, lack of economic opportunity and the rise of radical Islam. A region that a century ago was 20 percent Christian is about 5 percent today and dropping.

Since it was here that Jesus walked and Christianity was born, the papal visit highlights a prospect many consider deeply troubling for the globe's largest faith, adhered to by a third of humanity — its most powerful and historic shrines could become museum relics with no connection to those who live among them.

"I fear the extinction of Christianity in Iraq and the Middle East," the Rev. Jean Benjamin Sleiman, the Catholic archbishop of Baghdad, said in a comment echoed across the region.

The pope, in a Mass on Tuesday at the foot of the Mount of Olives, addressed "the tragic reality" of the "departure of so many members of the Christian community in recent years."

He said: "While understandable reasons lead many, especially the young, to emigrate, this decision brings in its wake a great cultural and spiritual impoverishment to the city. Today I wish to repeat what I have said on other occasions: in the Holy Land there is room for everyone!"

On Sunday in Jordan the pope argued that Christians had a role here in reconciliation, that their very presence eased the strife, and that the decline of that presence could help to increase extremism. When the mix of beliefs and lifestyles goes down, orthodoxy rises, he implied, as does uniformity of the cultural landscape in a region

where tolerance is not an outstanding virtue.

A Syrian international aid worker said, "When other Arabs find out that I am Christian, many seem shocked to discover that you can be both an Arab and a Christian." The worker asked to remain anonymous so as not to bring attention to his faith.

The Middle East is now, of course, overwhelmingly Muslim. Except for Israel, with its six million Jews, there is no country where Islam does not prevail. This includes Lebanon, where Christians now amount to a quarter of the population, and the non-Arab countries of Iran and Turkey.

Local Christians are torn between sounding the alarm and staying mum, unsure whether attention will reduce the problem or aggravate it by driving out those who remain.

With Islam pushing aside nationalism as the central force behind the politics of identity, Christians who played important roles in various national struggles find themselves left out. And since Islamic culture, especially in its more fundamental stripes, often defines itself in contrast to the West, Christianity has in some places been relegated to an enemy — or at least foreign — culture.

"Unless there is a turn toward secularism in the Arab world, I don't think there is a future for Christians here," said Sarkis Naoum, a Christian columnist for the Lebanese newspaper *Al Nahar*.

Just as some opponents of President Obama sought to defame him by claiming he was a Muslim, so in Turkey was President Abdullah Gul accused of having Christian origins. Mr Gul won a court case last December against a Member of Parliament who made the accusation.

A century ago there were millions of Christians in what is today Turkey; now there are 150,000. There is a house in Turkey where the Virgin Mary is believed to have spent her last days, yet the country's National Assembly and military have no Christian members or officers

except temporary recruits doing mandatory service. Violence against Christians has risen.

Among Palestinians, Islam is also playing an unprecedented role in defining identity, especially in Gaza, ruled by Hamas. Benedict's arrival in Jerusalem on Monday prompted a radical member of the legislature in Gaza to call on Arab governments not to greet him because of his contentious remark in 2006 regarding the Prophet Muhammad.

The West Bank Palestinian leadership, more secular, tries to include Christians to ward off separatist sentiments and stop the population decline. It has been a losing battle. In 1948, Jerusalem was about one-fifth Christian. Today it is 2 percent.

Rafiq Husseini, the chief of staff of President Mahmoud Abbas's office, said of the exodus of Christians: "It is a very negative thing if it continues to happen. Our task, from the president downwards, is to keep the presence of the Christians alive and well."

In Bethlehem, where the Church of the Nativity marks where Jesus is said to have been born, Christians now make up barely a third of the population after centuries of being 80 percent of it. Emigration is the first option for anyone who has the opportunity, and there are large communities of Christian emigres throughout the West to absorb them.

"Economy, economy, economy," said Fayez Khano, 63, a member of the Assyrian community, explaining the reasons for the continuing exodus while cutting olive-wood figurines in his family workshop on Manger Street. Mr. Khano's three adult children live in Dublin, and since business is slow he and his wife are about to go to Dublin for six months.

The story has been similar in Iraq. Of the 1.4 million Christians there at the time of the American invasion in 2003, nearly half have fled, according to American government reports and local Iraqi Christians.

Many left early in the war when they were attacked for working with the Americans, but the exodus gained speed when Christians became targets in Iraq's raging sectarian war. Churches were bombed, and priests as well as lay Christians were murdered. As recently as March 2008, an archbishop was kidnapped and killed outside the northern city of Mosul.

And in Egypt, where 10 percent of the country is Coptic Christian, the prevalent religious discourse has drifted from what was considered to be a moderate Egyptian Islam toward a far less tolerant Saudi-branded Islam.

In Saudi Arabia, churches are illegal. In the rest of the Persian Gulf region, Christians are foreign workers without the prospect of citizenship.

The decline of the Christian population and voice in the region is not only a source of concern for Christians, but for broad minded Muslims as well.

"Here in Lebanon, Muslims will often tell you Lebanon is no good without the Christians, and they mean it," said Kemal Salibi, a historian. "The mix of religions and cultures that makes this place so tolerant would disappear."

Reporting was contributed by Isabel Kershner from Bethlehem, Rachel Donadio with the Pope, Sebnem Arsu from Istanbul, Robert F. Worth from Beirut, Lebanon, Mona el-Naggar from Cairo and Campbell.

Advance Notice

A national CCJ conference in Auckland on 4 July 2010 is to feature as keynote speaker, Fr John Pawlikowski.

Please turn to page 16 for a brief biography - together with a comment from Fr John.



Pope Benedict XVI's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

by Rabbi David Rosen,

Date posted: Thursday 28 May 2009

Robertson from Baghdad.

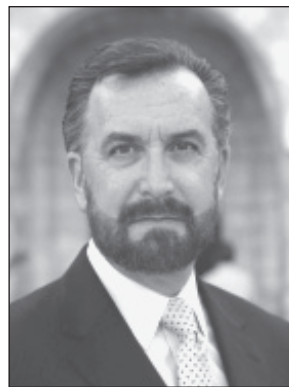
The fact that virtually all parties directly involved in the papal visit to the Holy Land (Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories) consider it to have been a success, makes one wonder why it did not appear that way in much of the western press (albeit not everywhere; the Italian media, for example, gave far more comprehensive coverage of the trip and definitely reflected the positive tenor of the visit).

From a Jewish perspective, Benedict XVI's encounters in Israel with the highest civic, political and religious leaders could hardly have been warmer, and having been present at most of them, I can personally confirm this. While, inevitably, his visit to Israel generally, and to the Kotel or Yad VaShem in particular, could not have the same historic significance as when John Paul II visited them as the first pope ever to do so, Benedict followed in his footsteps, showing the deepest respect towards both Jewish tradition and Jewish suffering.

Moreover, when still in Jordan and speaking to an Arab audience that was Muslim as well as Christian, he emphasized the unique bond of Christianity with Judaism – something quite amazing considering the sensitivities of the Church's relationship with the Muslim world. Among his notable speeches during his visit, those he made both on arriving and leaving Israel were more than admirable in terms of affirming Israel's integrity, the need to guarantee her secure future and his repeated condemnations of anti-Semitism and all hostility towards the Jewish people. Even when demonstrating sincere compassion for Palestinian suffering and national aspirations, Benedict was at pains to warn strongly against any use of violence.

There was some disappointment over the pope's speech at Yad Vashem. Some of that disappointment was based on unrealistic expectations of what he might say there, and in truth, if he had only demonstrated a little more personal emotion, his sincerity would have come across better. He could even have just added 'as I said when I was in Auschwitz/Birkenau,

Rabbi David Rosen is the Chairman of IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee on Inter religious Consultations and Director of the American Jewish Committee's Department for Inter religious Affairs and its Heilbrunn Institute for International Inter religious Understanding. He also serves on the Israeli Chief Rabbinate's Commission for Inter religious Dialogue, and represents the Chief Rabbinate on the Council of Religious



Institutions of the Holy Land. He was a member of the Permanent Bilateral Commission of the State of Israel and the Holy See that negotiated the establishment of full diplomatic normalization of relations between the two; and in November 2005 he was made a papal Knight Commander of the Order of St Gregory the Great for his contribution to promoting Catholic-Jewish reconciliation. This article is based on a presentation Rabbi Rosen gave to the Council of Christians and Jews in May 2009.

to stand here as a German Pope is especially difficult.' That would have probably placated the critics. Some of the criticism just demonstrated ignorance. The complaint that Benedict used the term 'kill', rather than 'murder' reflected unfamiliarity with the English translation in the Bible of the sixth commandment in the Decalogue. The words that Jews translate as 'you shall not murder', appear in the vernacular as 'you shall not kill'! (In fact, in response to this criticism, Benedict XVI specifically referred in his parting speech to the six million 'brutally murdered' during the Shoah.)

However, other criticism reflected downright anti-Christian prejudice. Of course there are real historical reasons for this, but why did much of the media bother to highlight these, rather than the very significance of the fact that Pope Benedict XVI was there paying his respects to the six million Jewish victims of the Shoah (and also clearly condemning Holocaust denial)?

One cannot avoid the conclusion that there is a widespread grudging attitude towards Benedict XVI in the media and even hostility in some quarters, and it is not too difficult to analyze this.

As a generalization, it is fair to say that the media is liberal and very secular. Religious conservatism is not the favourite flavour of the day.

However, while John Paul II was no less conservative than Benedict XVI, he was a great communicator and had ‘superstar’ status. The human desire to be associated with superstars, especially evident with media, substantially raised John Paul II above such prejudicial attitudes. However, Benedict XVI does not have those communication skills and does not have the same kind of image. Above all, he has made a number of serious faux pas since becoming pope and has shown himself to be vulnerable to mistake. As a result, there is a widespread hawkish attitude towards him that waits for a slip-up on which to pounce.

Aside from Benedict’s successful pilgrimage in John Paul II’s footsteps, there were two significant aspects in which he went further than his predecessor. The first was in the degree of focus on the local Church, and the second was the focus on interfaith relations. In this regard, the media understandably picked up on how an event to support interfaith work in the Holy Land at the Notre Dame Centre in Jerusalem was hijacked by an extremist Muslim cleric.

However, the real interfaith moment during this pilgrimage was in Nazareth, where, led by a rabbi singing a song of peace, the Pope held and raised hands in prayer and celebration with the other religious leaders on the dais, before hundreds of religious figures from the different faith communities in Israel. This event reflected the real spirit of the papal visit, but most major media outlets did not even report on it.

Father John Pawlikowski

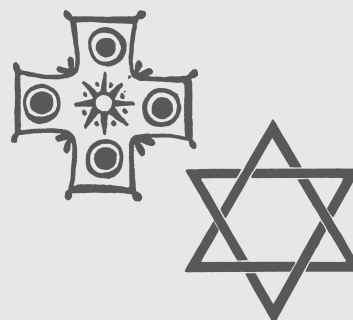
Father John Pawlikowski, Professor of Ethics and Director of the Catholic-Jewish Studies Programme at the University of Chicago, is a leading figure in Christian-Jewish dialogue worldwide.

Dr. Pawlikowski’s extensive study of the Nazi Holocaust has enabled him to appreciate the ethical challenges facing the human community as it struggles with greatly enhanced power and extended responsibility for the future of all creation. His scholarly interests include the theological and ethical aspects of the Christian-Jewish relationship and public ethics.

Dr. Pawlikowski is also president of the International Council of Christians and Jews and author of *Christ in the Light of the Christian Jewish Dialogue* and co-editor with Judith Banki of *Ethics in the Shadow of the Holocaust*.

For more than forty years, Father John Pawlikowski has urged Catholics and others to confront the long history of Christian anti-Semitism. In a *Voices on Anti-Semitism* podcast presented on January 18, 2007, Dr. Pawlikowski made this observation:

“I think the struggle for human rights, the struggle for human dignity, is at the core of an authentic understanding of the teachings of Christ, but I think also there’s a self-interest on the part of Christians and all religious people, in preserving the dignity of the other. There cannot be peace in the world without peace among the world’s religions, so the protection of the human rights and human dignity of another is also in many ways the protection and guarantee of our own human rights and our own human dignity.”



Times and Seasons

Important holy days for this calendar year

Judaism

5769

Purim	March 10
Pesach	April 9-16
Yom HaShoah	April 21
Yom HaZikaron	April 28
Yom Ha'Atzmaut	April 29
Shavuot	May 29-30
Tisha B'Av	July 30

5770

Rosh HaShanah	September 19-20
Yom Kippur	September 28
Sukkot	October 3-9 (Reform Judaism)
	October 2-9 (Orthodox Judaism)
Simchat Torah	October 11 (Reform Judaism)
	October 10 (Orthodox Judaism)
Chanukah	December 12-19

Christianity

2009

Ash Wednesday	February 25
Palm Sunday	April 5
Good Friday	April 10
Easter Day	April 12
Ascension Day	May 21
Day of Pentecost	May 31
Trinity Sunday	June 7
All Saints	November 1
All Souls	November 2
Advent Sunday	November 29
Christmas Day	December 25

MASSAH
מסע
JOURNEY