

NOSTRA AETATE: A CATHOLIC ACT OF METANOIA

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A. Introduction

The Second Vatican Council's 1965 Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, known by its opening Latin words, "In our time" or "In our age," *Nostra Aetate*, is rightly called a revolutionary document. Although it was the first authoritative conciliar and magisterial statement in history to address the Catholic Church's relations with the Jewish people and tradition, it nonetheless reversed centuries and centuries of standard Christian presuppositions and teachings about Jews. It launched a trajectory of unprecedented Catholic reform and creativity. Its impact continues to unfold today as we observe the declaration's fortieth anniversary, even though – in the words of Cardinal Walter Kasper, current president of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews – we are probably still only at "the beginning of the beginning"¹ of a deep-seated process of reform. Indeed, the renewal catalyzed by *Nostra Aetate* can properly be described by the Greek word *metanoia*, in Hebrew *teshuvah*, a complete "turning," a total reorientation of attitude or action. This can be demonstrated by considering Catholic perspectives before 1965, the story of the composition of the document, and the development of its key points over the past four decades. This essay will focus on the Declaration's importance for Catholic-Jewish relations, the original concern from which eventually emerged the final version that discussed all religions.

B. The Catholic Theological Stance toward Jews and Judaism before *Nostra Aetate*

The *metanoia*, the turnaround represented by *Nostra Aetate* becomes strikingly clear if one contrasts pre-Vatican II Catholic understandings with those that began to arise subsequently.

In 1938, Pope Pius XI commissioned the preparation of an encyclical letter that ultimately was never promulgated because of his death. To be titled *Humani Generis Unitas* (The Unity of the Human Race), this letter was intended to condemn racism in the wake of Hitler's rise to power in Germany. A section of the draft of the encyclical dealing with antisemitism provides a convenient synopsis of pre-Vatican II Catholic theological perspectives on Jews and Judaism.²

While rebuking circumstances in which “millions of [Jewish] persons are deprived of the most elementary rights and privileges of citizens,”³ the draft goes on to state that there is an “authentic basis of the social separation of the Jews from the rest of humanity.”⁴ This “authentic” reason for discrimination was not because of race but because of religion: “The Savior ... was rejected by that people, violently repudiated, and condemned as a criminal by the highest tribunals of the Jewish nation.... [However,] the very act by which the Jewish people put to death their Savior and King was ... the salvation of the world.”⁵

Having asserted that the “Jewish nation” bore a collective responsibility for the death of Jesus, the draft claims that Jews were doomed, “to perpetually wander over the face of the earth ... [were] never allowed to perish, but have been preserved through the ages into our own time.”⁶ The draft opined that there exists “a historic enmity of the Jewish people to Christianity, creating a perpetual tension between Jew and Gentile.”⁷ Therefore, the Church has constantly had to be on guard against “the spiritual dangers to which contact with the Jews can expose souls.”⁸ This danger, which “is not diminished in our own time,”⁹ was “the authentic basis of the social separation of the Jews from the rest of humanity.”¹⁰

It must be stressed that it is not known whether Pius XI would have approved these words. Clearly, the drafters of this text operated with theological ideas about Jews that undermined their ability to condemn the racist policies of the Nazis. Indeed, the “social

separation of the Jews from the rest of humanity” is a goal that Hitler could claim he was merely implementing.

The draft’s main theological positions about Jews – that they had killed Christ, that they were doomed to eternal wandering, and that they posed a constant danger to Christian souls – were simply restatements of elements of the perennial Christian “teaching of contempt”¹¹ that had persisted for over 1500 years. A third-century teaching by Origen is frequently quoted because it neatly summarizes so many elements of this teaching of contempt:

One of the facts which show that Jesus was some divine and sacred person is just that on his account such great and fearful calamities have now for a long time befallen the Jews... For they committed the most impious crime of all, when they conspired against the Savior of mankind, in the city where they performed to God the customary rites which were symbols of profound mysteries. Therefore that city where Jesus suffered these indignities had to be utterly destroyed. The Jewish nation had to be overthrown, and God's invitation to blessedness transferred to others, I mean the Christians, to whom came the teaching about the simple and pure worship of God. And they received new laws which fit in with the order established everywhere.¹²

Among other possible observations, it is clear that the collective blaming of “the Jews” for the crucifixion of Jesus, together with attendant consequences, has endured down the centuries from the patristic era to the preparation of the encyclical draft in 1938. In the words of Cardinal Edward Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews from 1989-2000, “preaching accused the Jews of every age of deicide.”¹³

However, another long-standing Christian belief expressed by Origen did not appear in the draft of *Humani Generis Unitas*. This is the notion that God’s covenant with the Jewish people, and hence their calling as God’s Chosen People, had ended because of the crucifixion and had been transferred to the Church. Notably, the draft asserted:

Israel remains the chosen people, for its election has never been revoked. Through the ineffable mercy of God, Israel may also share in the redemption that Israel’s own rejection has made available to the Gentiles, who had themselves been unbelievers.¹⁴ ... [St. Paul] holds out still the possibility of salvation to the Jews, once they are converted

from their sins, and return to the spiritual tradition of Israel, which is properly theirs by their historic past and calling....¹⁵

Key to analyzing this comment theologically is the phrase, “return to the spiritual tradition of Israel.” The authors of the draft apparently believed that their Jewish contemporaries had departed from Israel’s heritage. Israel here is understood as biblical Israel, whose traditions are significant to the authors only because they prepared for the coming of Christ and the Church. Thus, their argument is that while Jews remain the Chosen People, they have betrayed their own spiritual heritage because of their rejection of the Christian message. In this wayward state, they stand outside of salvation despite their chosen status.

C. The Conception and Gestation of *Nostra Aetate*

Such was the Catholic theological landscape when Angelo Roncalli was elected Pope John XXIII on October 20, 1958. As a Vatican diplomat during the Second World War, he had facilitated the escape of thousands of Jews from the Nazis. His experiences surely motivated him when he became pope. On March 21, 1959, only two months after announcing that a great council would be held, he ordered the removal of the word *perfidus* from the Good Friday prayer for the Jews. The next year, John XXIII greeted a delegation of American Jews with the biblical words, “I am Joseph your brother,” suggesting that reconciliation between Catholic and Jews was imaginable, something akin to the Genesis reconciliation between Joseph and the brothers who had subjugated him. Most importantly, on September 18, 1960, he directed Cardinal Augustin Bea, S.J., president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, to prepare a draft declaration for the upcoming council that would address the relations between the Church and the people of Israel.

However, the process of bringing *Nostra Aetate* to birth was a prolonged and difficult labor. Despite John XXIII's desire, it was not clear whether the proposed statement should be a free-standing document, part of the planned constitution on the Church, part of an ecumenical text on Christian unity, or, as ultimately happened, be contained within a declaration on the Church's relations with all the other religions of the world. After all the bishops assembled in 1962, it became clear that there was opposition to the endeavor from both inside and outside the Council. Some bishops recoiled at the thought of changing long-standing teachings, while others feared for the safety of Christians in Arab countries. The press offices of various Middle-eastern countries publicly campaigned against any statement that absolved "the Jews" of the crime of crucifying Jesus. Various procedural maneuvers were employed in an effort to scuttle the document, at one point causing Pope Paul VI to intervene to reinstate the proper process.

The eventual decision to address Judaism within the larger context of all the world's religions was a compromise that weakened the text's stress on the unique relationship between the Church and Israel, but was necessary, in the colorful image of Cardinal Kasper, "in order to save the furniture from the burning house."¹⁶ Despite these travails, on October 28, 1965 the declaration was officially promulgated after a final, overwhelmingly favorable vote of 2221 bishops for and 88 against.¹⁷ For the first time in its almost two thousand year history, a formal council of the Catholic Church had issued an authoritative declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations.

D. The Teaching of *Nostra Aetate*

Although chapter 4 of the Declaration, the section concerning Jews and Judaism, is fairly brief, each phrase was repeatedly discussed and refined by the Council. The chapter has proven

to be tremendously influential. The following seven items summarize its main points. In the subsequent forty years each of them has been expanded upon and intensified in official Catholic documents, as will be noted. Ongoing questions and issues will also be briefly mentioned.

1. ***Nostra Aetate* repudiated the long-standing “deicide” charge** by declaring that “Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or accursed as if this followed from holy scripture.”

This refutation of any notion of a divine curse upon Jews was an explicit reversal of a presupposition held universally by Christians for more than a millennium. No longer was it permissible for “preaching [to] accuse the Jews of deicide,” as Cardinal Cassidy had put it. This in itself justifies describing the Declaration as revolutionary.

2. ***Nostra Aetate* stressed the religious bond and spiritual legacy shared by Jews and Church.** It acknowledged the Jewishness of Jesus, his mother, and the apostles, and recognized Christianity’s debt to biblical Israel. This has become foundational in later Catholic ecclesiastical and theological writings. For example, John Paul II wrote movingly that “Jesus also came humanly to know [Israel’s scriptures]; he nourished his mind and heart with them, using them in prayer and as an inspiration for his actions. Thus he became an authentic son of Israel, deeply rooted in his own people’s long history.”¹⁸

It remains an open question, though, whether most Christians in their religious imaginations really picture Jesus as “fully a man of his time, and of his environment – the Jewish Palestinian one of the first century, the anxieties and hopes of which he shared,”¹⁹ or if they envision of him purely in terms of later Christian concepts. Lingering habits of imagining Jesus as opposed to a supposed heartlessness or legalism of contemporary “Judaism” have not fully grappled with an appreciation of Jesus’ Jewishness. Likewise, understanding what could be called the Jewishness of the early Church – in other words,

that the Church was for many decades a movement *within* the diverse late Second Temple period Jewish world – has not really penetrated Christian thinking at large, which is more comfortable thinking of a Church cleanly and distinctively separated, and even opposed to “Judaism” from as early as Pentecost, if not from Jesus’ ministry itself.

On the other hand, the spiritual connectedness between the two traditions has been strongly emphasized since *Nostra Aetate*, perhaps most powerfully during John Paul II’s historic visit to the Great Synagogue of Rome: “The Jewish religion is not ‘extrinsic’ to us, but in a certain way is ‘intrinsic’ to our own religion,” he declared. “With Judaism therefore we have a relationship which we do not have with any other religion. You are our dearly beloved brothers and, in a certain way, it could be said that you are our elder brothers.”²⁰ This familial attitude has been widely disseminated.

3. ***Nostra Aetate* strongly implied that God and Jews abide in covenant.** Citing Romans 11, the Council Fathers observed that “the Jews remain very dear to God, for the sake of the patriarchs, since God does not take back the gifts he bestowed or the choice he made.” This was reinforced, as Eugene J. Fisher has pointed out,²¹ when *Nostra Aetate* rendered an ambiguous Greek verb in Romans 9:4-5 in the present tense: “They *are* Israelites and it is for them *to be* sons and daughters, to them *belong* the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them *belong* the patriarchs, and of their race according to the flesh, is the Christ.”

Nostra Aetate’s implicit recognition that Israel abides in a perpetual covenantal relationship with God has subsequently been made fully explicit. John Paul II repeatedly taught that Jews are “the people of God of the Old Covenant, never revoked by God,”²² “the present-day people of the covenant concluded with Moses,”²³ and “partners in a

covenant of eternal love which was never revoked.”²⁴

The draft for the unrealized encyclical *Humani Generis Unitas* could also state that Israel’s “election has never been revoked,”²⁵ but after the Second Vatican Council it was no longer possible to subordinate this notion to an alleged divine curse on Jews for the death of Jesus. Therefore, post-*Nostra Aetate* Catholic teaching has proceeded from a renewed awareness of the perpetuity of the Jewish people’s covenant with God to unprecedented expressions of admiration for the post-biblical Jewish religious tradition.

Thus, the Vatican’s 1974 *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration, Nostra Aetate No. 4* insisted that Christians “must strive to learn by what essential traits Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience.”²⁶ Unlike the 1938 draft, these *Guidelines* could no longer continue the Christian habit of defining the Jewish heritage according to Christian categories or limiting Judaism’s value to biblical Israel. Therefore, the *Guidelines* went on to warn that both the “Old Testament and the Jewish tradition must not be set against the New Testament in such a way that the former seems to constitute a religion of only justice, fear and legalism, with no appeal to the love of God and neighbor.”²⁷ This was a stereotypical contrast used by Christians over the centuries to devalue Judaism. In addition, the *Guidelines* pointed out that the “history of Judaism did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather went on to develop a religious tradition ... rich in religious values.”²⁸

The 1985 Vatican *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Teaching in the Roman Catholic Church* praised post-biblical Judaism for carrying “to the whole world a witness-often heroic-of its fidelity to the one God and to

‘exalt Him in the presence of all the living’ (Tobit 13:4).”²⁹ The *Notes* also cited John Paul II in reminding Catholics that “the permanence of Israel [was] accompanied by a continuous spiritual fecundity, in the rabbinical period, in the Middle Ages and in modern times, taking its start from a patrimony which we long shared, so much so that ‘the faith and religious life of the Jewish people as they are professed and practiced still today, can greatly help us to understand better certain aspects of the life of the Church’ (John Paul II, 6 March 1982).”³⁰

These formal expressions of esteem toward post-biblical Jewish traditions and the official encouragement of Catholics to learn both from these traditions and from the living Jewish community are not to be found in pre-Vatican II Catholic practice, which instead urged avoidance of Jews and occasionally destroyed Talmuds and other Jewish writings. This reversal is the result of *Nostra Aetate*’s repudiation of the deicide charge and its affirmation of the Jewish People’s covenant with God. Nonetheless, the full, theological ramifications of this recognition of Israel’s covenanting are still being explored.³¹

4. *Nostra Aetate* deplored “**all hatreds, persecutions, displays of antisemitism** directed against the Jews at any time or from any source.” While *Nostra Aetate* did not confess *Christian* antisemitism or discuss the perennial Christian teaching of contempt for Jews, subsequent documents acknowledged Christian wrongdoing and labeled antisemitism as a sin against God and humanity. John Paul II would insist that a confrontation with the horrors of the Shoah must lead the Church to repentance. “For Christians the heavy burden of guilt for the murder of the Jewish people [during the Shoah] must be an enduring call to repentance; thereby we can overcome every form of antisemitism and

establish a new relationship with our kindred nation of the Old Covenant.”³² John Paul II related this moral and spiritual challenge to the proper observance of the beginning of the third millennium of Christianity. Thus, on the First Sunday of Lent during the Great Jubilee of 2000, an unprecedented “Mass of Pardon” was offered at St. Peter’s Basilica. The highest officials of the Roman Catholic Church joined with the pope in asking God’s forgiveness for the sins of Christians during the previous millennium. Among the sins confessed was the teaching of contempt and Christianity’s treatment of “the People of Israel.” Christian penitence has perhaps been expressed most iconically to date in Pope John Paul II’s prayer at the Western Wall on March 26, 2000. Following the Jewish custom of inserting written prayers into the remains of the foundations of the Second Temple, John Paul II placed these words. “God of our fathers, you chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your Name to the Nations: we are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant.”³³ The prayer was signed by the pope personally and stamped with the official papal seal, as if to establish without question the seriousness and permanence of the Catholic Church’s ongoing commitment to reform and fellowship with the Jewish people. This is yet another manifestation of *metanoia* since such authoritative public expressions of remorse and solidarity were unheard of before *Nostra Aetate*.

5. ***Nostra Aetate* stressed the need for accurate biblical interpretation and religious education:** “all must take care, lest in catechizing or in preaching the word of God, they teach anything which is not in accord with the truth of the Gospel message or the spirit of

Christ.” This sentence introduced a hermeneutical principle for Catholic biblical interpretation that has been further intensified in later documents.³⁴

Of particular note are the studies issued by the Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1993 and 2001. Especially significant is the instruction in the 1993 text that: “Clearly to be rejected also is every attempt [to use] the bible to justify racial segregation, antisemitism, or sexism whether on the part of men or women. Particular attention is necessary, according to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council (*Nostra Aetate*, 4), to avoid absolutely any actualization of certain texts of the New Testament which could provoke or reinforce unfavorable attitudes toward the Jewish people. The tragic events of the past must, on the contrary, impel all to keep unceasing in mind that, according to the New Testament, the Jews remain ‘beloved’ of God, ‘since the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable’ (Rom. 11:28-29).”³⁵

However, the controversy over the 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ* vividly established that conscious or unconscious presumptions about the Bible shape people’s understandings of those New Testament passages most connected with attitudes toward Jews and Judaism. By combining crucial scenes unique to specific Gospels and importing non-biblical elements from writings attributed to Anne Catherine Emmerich, that film produced a more negative depiction of Jewish characters than any single Gospel conveys.³⁶ The fact that many Catholics failed to discern the movie’s problems in this regard demonstrates that much work remains to be done in promoting Catholic principles of biblical interpretation.

6. ***Nostra Aetate* called for Catholics and Jews to collaborate in “biblical and theological enquiry and ... friendly discussions.”** This mandate directly contradicted

the prior practice of discouraging Catholics from conversing with Jews on religious matters, as expressed by the worry in the draft of *Humani Generis Unitas* about “the spiritual dangers to which contact with the Jews can expose souls.”³⁷ This reversal has contributed to an enormous number of dialogues on all levels around the world, to the establishment in the United States alone of over two dozen academic centers to promote Christian-Jewish studies,³⁸ and to many joint research initiatives among Jewish and Christian scholars. Such continuing research is bringing to light new evidence of how the Jewish and Christian communities have been interacting – both negatively and positively – for centuries. This ongoing interaction has exerted a major influence on how both traditions live out their covenantal relationship with God.

The past forty years of dialogue and joint activities that *Nostra Aetate* made possible has also shown that Jews and Christians come together with different interests, concerns, historical knowledge, and (mis)conceptions about each other. Christians tend to want to talk “religion,” including why don’t Jews “believe in Jesus,” while Jews are more inclined to discuss social justice issues. Jews, understandably, tend to wonder if the unprecedented Christian overtures to dialogue are only a temporary cessation of the conversionary campaigns of the past, while Christians, usually unfamiliar with the history of Christian oppression of Jews, can be shocked and guilt-ridden when learning of it for the first time. Christians may find it difficult to understand the depth of Jewish fears for the survival of the State of Israel or fright over upsurges in antisemitic incidents, while Jews tend to avoid expressing their general mystification over Christian claims that something called “salvation” is the result of the crucifixion of an individual Jew among the thousands of Jews executed under Roman imperial rule.

Sometimes lurking beneath the surface of interreligious encounters is a fear of what the dialogue will lead to. Co-religionists who have not had much experience of Christian-Jewish dialogue will accuse Christians of “watering down the faith” and will charge Jewish participants with inviting “assimilation.”

However, authentic interreligious dialogue has nothing to do with syncretism, or some sort of melding of two religious traditions. The boundaries between the two related heritages of Christianity and Judaism must be respected and maintained. However, the dialogue may cause those boundaries to be reconfigured or understood differently.

Fortunately, the past four decades have demonstrated that interreligious dialogue actually leads participants to a deeper understanding of their own tradition as a result of being asked new questions or of viewing their own tradition from the other’s perspective. It is the universal experience of everyone I know who has been involved in dialogue beyond a superficial level that their own identities as Jews or Christians have been enhanced by the dialogue. They are not the same Christians or Jews that they were before experiencing dialogue, but they understand themselves to be more committed and discerning Christians or Jews. This transformation in self-understanding can be expected to continue to evolve in the coming century.

7. *Nostra Aetate* expressed **no interest in further efforts to baptize Jews**, relegating the resolution of the Jewish and Christian disagreement over Jesus’ significance and identity until the eschatological dawning of God’s kingdom: “Together with the prophets and that same apostle, the church awaits the day, known to God alone, when all peoples will call on God with one voice and serve him shoulder to shoulder.” This phrase was carefully considered during the Council’s deliberations, especially after controversy arose in the

public media in the summer and fall of 1964 over whether a leaked draft paragraph would encourage Catholics to try to baptize Jews. Famed Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel repeatedly and sensationally declared that he was “ready to go to Auschwitz any time, if faced with the alternative of conversion or death.”³⁹

This was the context for two crucial days of deliberation in the Second Vatican Council on September 28 and 29, 1964. Several cardinals and bishops specifically addressed the topic of conversionary efforts toward Jews. In different ways they urged that the question of a collective Jewish turn to Christianity should be understood as an eschatological matter; in other words, that it was not the task of Catholics in historical time to try to baptize all Jews.⁴⁰ Thus, the final wording of *Nostra Aetate* – that the Church awaits a day known to God alone – was intended to convey, in the words of Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro of Bologna that “only an eschatological turn of events will bring [Jews and Christians] to the common messianic meal of the eternal Pasch.”⁴¹

Today, unlike some other Christian communities, the Catholic Church allocates no financial or personnel resources for the baptism of Jews. However, the theological reasons for this abandonment of previous and persistent Christian efforts have not yet achieved a definitive articulation in Catholic teaching,⁴² no doubt because Catholic insight into the nature of Israel’s covenanting with God is still emerging. The theological question that lingers is how the universal grace made available by Jesus Christ relates to or is manifested in the covenantal life between God and the Jewish people. There are a number of avenues that are being explored in pursuit of this question, but they have not yet achieved articulation in a Catholic magisterial document.

E. Conclusion

Hopefully, the above considerations have illustrated the process of *metanoia*, of *teshuvah*, begun by *Nostra Aetate*. Its authoritative reversal of the tenets of the “teaching of contempt” has made possible an ongoing turnaround in relations between Catholics and Jews that will continue to unfold into the future. In my opinion, it is a journey that has gone too far for there to be any possibility of turning back. As Cardinal Cassidy has put it:

Let us then turn to consider the future. Our first aim must of course be to press forward. To stand still is to risk going backwards – and I feel absolutely confident in stating that there will be no going back on the part of the Catholic Church. At the same time, there can be a lessening of enthusiasm, a growing indifference or even a renewed spirit of suspicion and mistrust among members of the Catholic community should our efforts to keep up the momentum slacken. . . . We remember, but we refuse to be tied down to the past by chains that hold us back from building a new future, a new partnership between Jews and Catholics, a future based on mutual trust and understanding.⁴³

NOTES

- ¹ Walter Cardinal Kasper, “The Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews: A Crucial Endeavor of the Catholic Church,” address delivered at Boston College on November 6, 2002. Available at: http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/articles/Kasper_6Nov02.htm
- ² See Georges Passelecq and Bernard Suchecky, *The Hidden Encyclical of Pius XI* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1997).
- ³ *Ibid.*, 246.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 247.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 248-249.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 249.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 251-252.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 252.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 247.
- ¹¹ The phrase was coined by the French historian Jules Isaac. *The Teaching of Contempt: Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964.

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- ¹² Origen, *Contra Celsum*, IV, 22.
- ¹³ Edward Cardinal Idris Cassidy, “Reflections: The Vatican Statement on the Shoah,” *Origins* 28/2 (May 28, 1998): 31.
- ¹⁴ Passelecq and Suchecky, *Hidden Encyclical*, 251.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 250.
- ¹⁶ Kasper, “A Crucial Endeavor.”
- ¹⁷ See John M. Oesterreicher, *The New Encounter between Christians and Jews* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1986) for the story of the development of *Nostra Aetate*.
- ¹⁸ John Paul II, “Address to the Pontifical Biblical Commission,” April 11, 1997. Available at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/johnpaulii/pbcapril111999.htm>
- ¹⁹ Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Teaching in the Roman Catholic Church* (1985), III, 12. Available at: http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/Vatican_Notes.htm
- ²⁰ John Paul II, Address at the Great Synagogue of Rome, April 13, 1986, 4. Available at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/johnpaulii/romesynagogue.htm>
- ²¹ Eugene J. Fisher, “Official Roman Catholic Teaching on Jews and Judaism: Commentary and Context,” *In Our Time: The Flowering of Jewish-Catholic Dialogue*, ed. Eugene J. Fisher and Leon Klenicki (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1990), 6.
- ²² John Paul II, “Address to the Jewish Community in Mainz, West Germany,” November 17, 1980. Available at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/johnpaulii/Mainz.htm>
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ John Paul II, “Address to Jewish Leaders in Miami,” September 11, 1987. Available in Eugene J. Fisher and Leon Klenicki, eds., *Spiritual Pilgrimage: John Paul II – Texts on Jews and Judaism 1979-1995* (New York: Crossroad, 1995): 105-108.
- ²⁵ Passelecq and Suchecky, *Hidden Encyclical*, 251.
- ²⁶ Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews: *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration*, *Nostra Aetate No. 4* (1974), Prologue. Available at: http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/Vatican_Guidelines.htm
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, III.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Teaching in the Roman Catholic Church* (1985), VI, 25. Available at: http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/Vatican_Notes.htm

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Most recently in a collection of essays by members of the Christian Scholars Group on Christian-Jewish Relations: Mary C. Boys, ed. *Seeing Judaism Anew: Christianity's Sacred Obligation* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

³² John Paul II, "Address to the New Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Holy See," November 8, 1990. Available in Fisher and Klenicki, *Spiritual Pilgrimage*, 138.

³³ John Paul II, "Prayer at the Western Wall," March 26, 2000.

³⁴ Eugene J. Fisher, "Official Roman Catholic Teaching," 7.

³⁵ Pontifical Biblical Commission, "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church" (1993), IV,A,3. Available at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/documents/catholic/pbcinterpretation.htm>

³⁶ See my analysis, "Gibson's The Passion of the Christ: A Challenge to Catholic Teaching" at http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/reviews/gibson_cunningham.htm.

³⁷ Passelecq and Suchecky, *Hidden Encyclical.*, 252.

³⁸ Visit the webpages of the Council of Centers for Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR) at www.ccjr.us.

³⁹ Beatrice Bruteau, ed., *Merton and Judaism, Holiness in Words: Recognition, Repentance, and Renewal* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2003), pp. 223-224.

⁴⁰ This, of course, does not exclude individual Jews who might choose to exercise their freedom of religion and seek baptism.

⁴¹ Oesterreicher, *New Encounter*, 204-205.

⁴² Though see the text and discussion of the 2002 dialogue document of delegates of the U.S. Bishops Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the National Council of Synagogues, "Reflections on Covenant and Mission" at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/cjrelations/resources/articles/#reflections>

⁴³ Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, "Catholic-Jewish Relations: 1990-2001." Address delivered at the 17th meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, New York, May 1, 2001. Available at: <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/articles/cassidy2.htm>