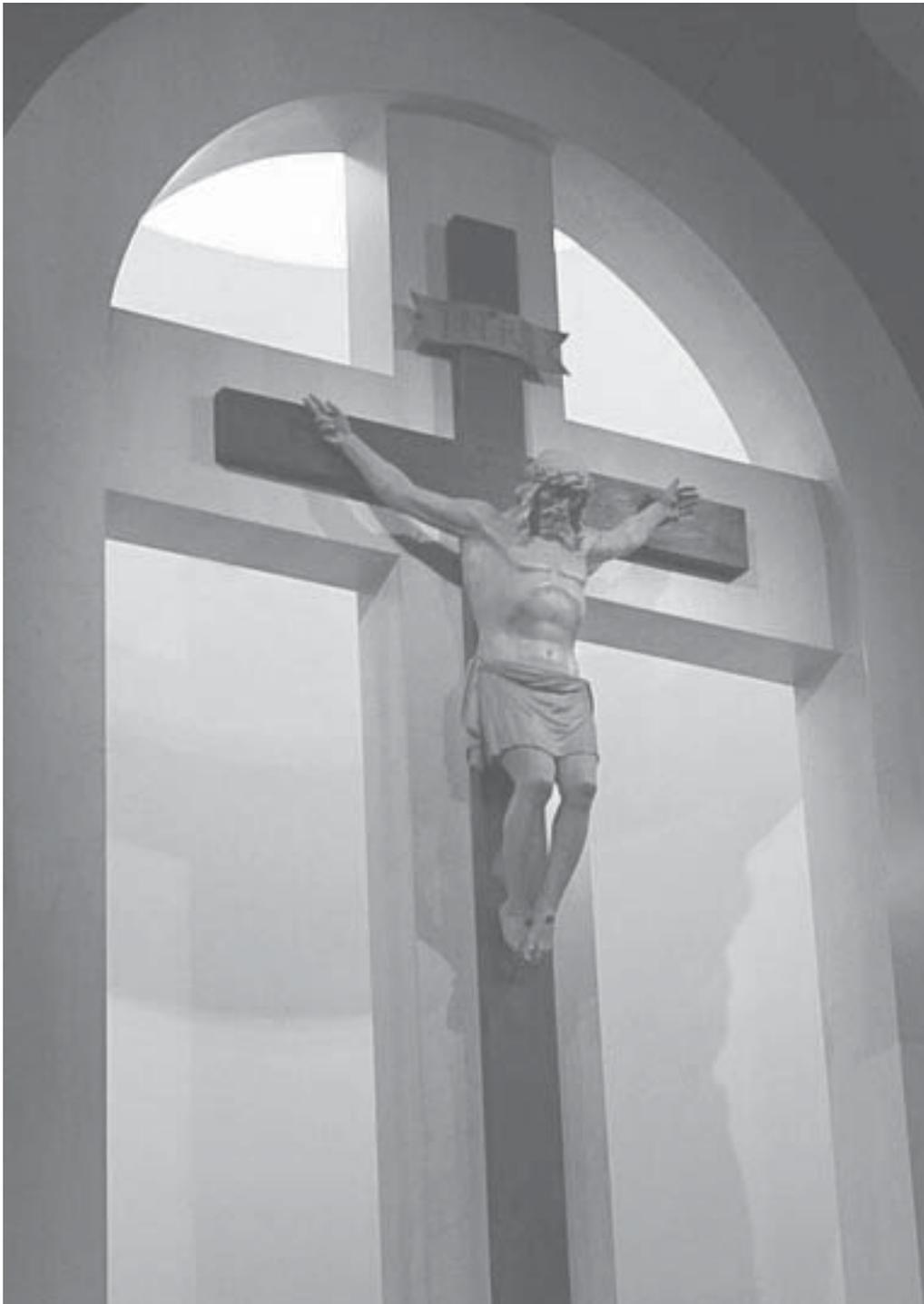




The Hebrew Catholic

"And so all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26)



Jesus
of
Nazareth
King
of the
Jews

Christ the King Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Association of Hebrew Catholics ~ International

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Elias Friedman, O.C.D., 1916-1999

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Send a copy of the publication with the reprinted article to the AHC at its U.S. address.

The views expressed in the published articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the AHC.

The Association of Hebrew Catholics aims at ending the alienation of Catholics of Jewish origin and background from their historical heritage, by the formation of a Hebrew Catholic Community juridically approved by the Holy See.

The *kerygma* of the AHC announces that the divine plan of salvation has entered the phase of the *Apostasy of the Gentiles*, prophesied by Our Lord and St. Paul, and of which the *Return of the Jews to the Holy Land* is a corollary.

*“Consider the primary aim of the group to be,
not the conversion of the Jews
but the creation of
a new Hebrew Catholic community life and spirit,
an alternative society to the old.”*
A counsel from Elias Friedman, O.C.D.

The Association of Hebrew Catholics is under the patronage of
Our Lady of the Miracle

(who in the Church of St. Andrea della Fratte in Rome,
on 20 January 1842, converted Alphonse Ratisbonne)

and

Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

Miriam, Our Lady of the Miracle, pray for us!

Saint Edith Stein, pray for us!

What They Have Said

“If the church today is not missionary, it is fatally destined to become co-responsible for the progressive disappearance of the Christian faith.”
Cardinal Camillo Ruini, Vicar for Rome”

ברוך הבא בשם יהוה

(Baruch haba b'Shem Adonai)

Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord

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News and Notes

About this issue

Again, it has been more than six months since we mailed our last issue, #78. And again, I apologize. For our new subscribers, while we strive to be a quarterly, please be assured that you will receive all four issues of your subscription, though they be late.

Our primary effort during this period has been the discernment of where we were going to relocate. In the *President's Memo*, you will find the surprising results.

About our cover

We very much appreciate the crucifix that blesses our parish. It seemed to be very appropriate for Lent, for the arrival of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*, and as an exclamation of what we believe.

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Based upon issue #77, the National Serials Data Program of the Library of Congress has just assigned an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) to *The Hebrew Catholic*. This number is an internationally accepted eight-digit number which serves as a brief, unique, and unambiguous identifier for serials. The ISSN will appear in the masthead on page 2.

The ISSN will ensure that scholars, researchers, abstracters, and librarians throughout the world can accurately identify, cite, and order *The Hebrew Catholic*.

AHC co-sponsors course at Ave Maria College

Dr. Calvert Shenk, Organist and Director of Music at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit, will teach a short summer course at Ave Maria College in Ypsilanti. The course will be held in the Academic Building, Room 107, from 9am-12 Noon on three consecutive Saturdays: July 10, 17, and 24. The registration deadline is June 25, 2004; fee is \$45, Please call the Ave Maria College Receptionist, 1-734-337-4110, for more information.

Course Title: "Chanting the Word of God: from Synagogue to Ecclesia."

Course Description: There has been much speculation about possible connections between ancient Hebrew liturgical chant and the origins of Gregorian plainsong. We will explore common musical elements and look for fundamental relationships between the two genres.

Our web site - Wanted: Havurah contact

In the last issue, we noted that we had recently established our web site and store. Since that issue, we have been getting a steady stream of visitors and book orders from around the world. Some have been leaving messages,

a few of which we share in our *Letters* column.

For the present, I am slowly working to place all the material we have, including all back issues of *The Hebrew Catholic*, on this site. Eventually, I hope our site will serve as an interactive forum to connect and support our members, supporters and havurot.

We would like to list our havurot on the web site. If you are part of a havurah, or are willing to start one, please send us contact info and we will include you on this list.

Wanted: Hebrew Catholic Response to "Passion"

Many of you are probably aware of the controversy surrounding Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. The controversy has involved Christians, Jews and others. There was also a response by some Hebrew Christians on the "Jews for Jesus" web site.

Since this movie is Catholic in its underlying theology, we would love to produce an issue providing our perspective. If you are Hebrew Catholic and have seen this movie, we would be happy to consider including your reactions in the next issue (#80) of *The Hebrew Catholic*.

If you wish to contribute your thoughts, please do so as soon as possible. We hope to begin the next issue by the end of April.

Wanted: participants in a conversation regarding the future of the AHC - return card

There have been many changes in the Church since Fr. Friedman launched the AHC and since his book, *Jewish Identity*, was published. In the last decade, we have explored many of the paths indicated by Father and have learned much.

We have made many contacts in the Church, and many agree with our desire to preserve the calling and heritage of the People Israel within the Church.

We have the beginning of a public voice in *The Hebrew Catholic*, on our web site, and in our email discussion group. We are just in the beginning, as well, of establishing havurot.

However, all that the AHC could undertake and accomplish remains a promise for future fulfillment. Most of those who support our work are spread throughout the U.S. and other countries. All administrative work, production of *The Hebrew Catholic*, book sales, etc. is done by two people in Ypsilanti.

To advance our work, we will need more people to help chart our course, more people helping to make it happen.

If you are interested in the future of the AHC and wish to participate in a discussion that can help shape that future, please return the enclosed card with your contact info, including your email address if you have one.

We expect to begin the conversation in June and we will contact all those who volunteer to participate before then.

Letters

This is your column, your means to express your thoughts and to communicate with our readers. We invite your comments and views. We will attempt to publish all letters as received. However, we reserve the right to edit letters because of excessive length, personal comments, or inappropriate matter.

We honor all requests to not publish the letter writer's name. We will also withhold the writer's name if we feel the contents warrant it.

France: Regarding "The Promise"

Time goes by very quickly and once again we are on the threshold of a Jewish New Year.

We are closely following the events in Israel and keep praying for Peace in Jerusalem.

The enemies of Israel are not leaving this country in peace and strike each time there is a glimmer of hope of peace. It must be Providence, Fate – a sign of the times.

Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger has published an interesting book, "The Promise", which caused a lot of turmoil. I have translated for you an interesting article about this book. The article was published in the French magazine, "Express," less than a year ago.

There was also an interesting argument between Cardinal Lustiger and Michael Sabbah, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, an Arab priest... (cf. "Jewish Christian Dialogue Between Two Bishops" published in "Temoignage Chretien" No. 3050 of February 27, 2003).

I hope you have settled all your problems in your new environment and the headquarters of our Association.

Wishing you...Shana Tova and the blessings of our Lord,
Arnold Linker, France
Ed. See "Israel Explained to the Nuns ..." on page 17.

South Africa: Discovered her Jewish origins

Thank you so much for sending me No. 78, of *The Hebrew Catholic*. I was so glad to get it...

If it is at all possible, please let me have a copy of the *Novena to St. Edith Stein*; I've lost mine. She is such a powerful saint, I'd really like to pray to her more. I have her picture (the last one from the AHC calendar, taken before her death) on my wall right now.

I always enjoy reading the mysterious *Stories from the Diaspora* and the latest one by Roy Schoeman has been no exception to the rule in the way it demonstrates the amazing way God leads people to Him so gently and surely if they really seek Him in good faith. It's most reassuring to read about it.

I am a convert to Catholicism, too, and can understand how one thirsts for fulfillment in receiving the Eucharist

and how one has to struggle against so many odds just to find the path to Jesus. I don't expect it is ever easy to be a convert, but the rewards are so high in terms of satisfaction! In our family, we didn't even know about our Jewish origins until we were all grown up and I had already become a Catholic. When I found out about it, I really fell in love with Judaism. If I hadn't been a Catholic at that point, I sometimes think I might have chosen to be a Jew in my faith; this would have been getting things the wrong way round. I was saved from that.

*Best wishes and God bless,
Cherry Methven, South Africa*

Regarding new headquarters

Shalom in Yeshua HaMashiach,

Happy New Year, although this is late as the new Jewish year has already commenced, I do hope this New Year will bring new and significant developments for AHC.

Please find enclosed a postal money order written out to the Association of Hebrew Catholics (AHC). It is a donation to be used wherever most needed in the ongoing ministry of AHC.

Regarding finding a new headquarters for AHC, do pray for direction and discernment; however, although I do not know the mind of Adonai, I believe that New York City, with over a million and a half Jewish population as well as a sizeable Catholic population would indeed be your best location. Actually when I had heard that you were moving to Ypsilanti the last time you moved, I was a little disappointed and surprised that you were not considering New York. Of course at that time it seemed as though a door of opportunity had opened in Ypsilanti but now it seems the door has closed. I realize it may be difficult in terms of finances and resources to move to new York City, but I believe in the long term that would be a good move. Do you have any contacts, supporters there? Perhaps they can help.

G-d bless and thank you for sending *The Hebrew Catholic*.

*Sincerely in Messiah Yeshua,
Anthony Patterson, South Australia*

South Africa: Husband's grandfather was Jewish

Thank you for the latest copy of AHC – as usual, I read it from cover to cover. I gave it to my husband who really found it most interesting. As much as I'd love to keep every copy, I don't. I circulate them so that more people become aware of the tremendous work you are doing.

It's quite strange – My husband's grandfather was Jewish, and to the best of my knowledge my family were not aware that any of our ancestors were Jewish – & yet I have this tremendous love of & am drawn to Judaism far more than my husband – I feel the more I know about Judaism the more at peace I will be with Catholicism & so read any article I can, to increase the depth of my knowledge.

Keep up your wonderful work ... you are always in my prayers. God bless,
Regards,
Sue Bloom, Republic of South Africa

Canada: In Second Year of Havurah

Peace be with you!

It has taken me some time, but after a few months in the second year (from September to June) of our havurah founded by Father Donald Arsenault, who told us warmly about your publication, "The Hebrew Catholic", encouraging us to subscribe, I finally decided that I will subscribe.

So, here I am, and here is a U.S. draft to pay a subscription for one year.

We do not have any Jews in our havurah at the present time. It's not a priority from what I understand. We do pray for Israel, for the protection of all Jews, and also that the veil upon their hearts (the one that keeps them from being able to acknowledge and recognize the true Messiah which God sent and to accept Him as their true Messiah) be torn completely, just like the great veil of the Temple of Jerusalem was "torn in two from top to bottom", as it is said in the Gospel of Matthew (27:51), when Jesus died.

And we study about the roots of Christianity in Judaism to help us gain a more accurate view of Judaism and of the Jewish people.

May the Lord God bless your good work abundantly and make it very fruitful, so that your harvest be a real good one in our blessed Lord.

Good days in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour!
Denis Laplante, Canada

Netherlands: Congratulations re Bishop Gourion

My cordial congratulations with the Ordination of Abbot John Baptist Gurion in Jerusalem, to Auxiliary Bishop of the Hebrew-speaking Catholics in Israel ...

Wonderful! Joint in prayers, *Totus tuus in Christo,*
Ant. Van Uden pr., The Netherlands

Australia: In Her Prayers

Many thanks for your letter ...

I regret that I am so far away and unable to give you more of a "hands on" help. I do so thoroughly enjoy reading the newsletters and learning more about AHC and its members.

Yourselves and Andrew and the Association are in my prayers, and how glad I am to have met Sr. Mariana Handley in Melbourne. In fact, Sister comes from an area just a short distance from here – she is a delight to meet!

... Do have a peaceful and joyous Christmas – I look forward to hearing from you soon. *Yours in Christ,*
Lillian Withers, Australia

Some Messages at or about our web site

I heard about your site on Catholic Answers on the radio. I was born Jewish, came to Christ about 10 years ago, joined a Messianic Jewish congregation until 3 years later when I attended RCIA and came into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil 1996.

Rich

What a find this site has been! As a practicing Roman Catholic, with an ethnic Jewish background – I feel this speaks to a large part of why I chose to be Catholic as opposed to Anglican. Thanks for this resource. Peace!

Grace

I am a Hebrew Catholic new to this site.

Sandy

Shalom from Mexico. I'm Catholic of Hebrew tradition and I'm very happy to know you. As St. Teresa Benedicta said: "Praise be Jesus Christ... for ever"

Isadora

I am so glad you had the response of D. Moss on the website about the relations and covenant of the Jews. I am on a Catholic Apologetics site and a Southern Baptist was presenting it as official church teaching.

Thank you, thank you and God Bless!

Joseph

Your site is wonderful, a real gift! I hope to learn a lot from it. I'm a cradle Catholic. A friend & I have been reading whatever we have been able to find about our "roots" from the Hebrews. I will be ordering one of your books soon.

I have a web site I would be pleased for you to look at, since I've done some chaplets dedicated to the Holocaust Saints, especially Edith Stein. I've been very interested in her for about the past 10 years. Any suggestions you might have would be appreciated. The address is:

www.chaplets-and-rosaries.com – or –
www.rosariesandchapletsktcreations.com

Again, thank you for your web site & God bless,

Kathleen Riney

Hello! I have known of the AHC for some time and I was wondering if there are any chapters or members in the Bay Area in California.

I am an ex-Roman Catholic considering returning to the Roman Catholic Church. I am also half-Jewish (father's side).

J.

President's Memo

*"So too at the present time there is a remnant,
chosen by grace."* (Rom. 11:5)

Shalom Chaverim (Friends):

I write this as Lent Begins. Ash Wednesday marked the first public showing of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. And the controversies that have surrounded this picture lead me to some reflections on this very special time in history and on our work.

It is not surprising that there are those amongst the Jewish people who serve as sentinels regarding the re-emergence of anti-semitism. There is certainly enough historical and contemporary experience to justify such watchfulness and concern.

But some who raise the spectre of anti-semitism have other agendas. In the January issue of *Inside the Vatican*, the staff offers us an excellent review of the entire controversy surrounding Gibson and his *Passion*. In one of the articles, entitled "Gibson and His Enemies", the author Tom Platak writes:

"The real enemies of Mel Gibson's Passion ... are an assortment of subversive academics, ecclesiastical apparatchiks, and heavy-handed enforcers of political correctness whose opinion of traditional Christianity is so negative that they hope to silence Gibson because he professes it."

Consider that some of the people who have quarreled with Gibson's *Passion* are the same people who produced *Reflections on Covenant and Mission*, (See *The Hebrew Catholic*, #77) where it was argued that the Jews do not need Jesus.

An agenda: of the Church

The faith given to the apostles by Jesus has been passed down and preserved by the Church under the protection of the Holy Spirit for two millennia. This faith includes the call to proclaim the love and mercy of God, won for us by Jesus of Nazareth, to every person in the world.

In addition, this faith calls us to a sacrificial love of others in keeping with Jesus' offering of himself on the cross.

Accordingly, in our time, the Church has called all Catholics to a familial appreciation of the Jewish people and of Judaism. She has condemned anti-semitism and in her teachings has forever repudiated the calumny that all Jews were responsible for the death of Christ. And she has begun a dialogue with the Jewish people, as with others, to embark upon a new era of trust, mutual respect, and cooperation.

So, the agenda of the Church is the agenda of Jesus: to proclaim the Gospel to Jew and Gentile while living out its message of love and mercy.

An agenda: not of the Church

In *Salvation is From the Jews*, Roy Schoeman writes:

"Not only does God seem to very much want the conversion of the Jews, but His adversary seems to very much want to prevent it. We have seen evidence of this in the evolution of Jewish theology since biblical times away from the expectation of a personal Messiah, in the incitement to Jewish hostility to Christianity produced by repeated "Christian" persecution of Jews, and in past and present attempts to exterminate the Jews. It is precisely this seemingly diabolical fury against the Jews that provides the best evidence, outside of the Scriptures themselves, that the Jews have yet a crucial role to play in the salvation of all mankind. (pp. 354-335)

The *Catechism* states that Jesus will not return until "all Israel" recognizes Him (cf. par. 674). It is therefore ironic that now that the Church is addressing anti-semitism and other obstacles to faith, there are Catholics who have embarked upon a campaign to deny the Gospel to the Jews. Two thousand years after Jewish believers brought the Gospel to the Gentiles, these particular Catholics now believe that the Jewish Jesus is only for the Gentiles.

An agenda: in union with the Church:

The *signs of the times* discussed in *Jewish Identity* and elsewhere, include: the apostasy of the Gentiles and the disappearance of Christendom, the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland and the recapture of Jerusalem, the rebirth of paganism and the growing culture of death, the large number of Jews coming to faith in Jesus, and the Second Vatican Council.

As it was before, so it is today: within a world mired in sin, God works with faithful remnants of His people. Many of these remnants remain in the traditional faith, piety and orders of the Church, providing a stability and continuity so necessary for the barque of Peter to enter the third millennium. Other remnants have been inspired by the Holy Spirit to form new communities and movements, renewing and giving birth to new ways to live and proclaim the Gospel in the third millennium.

And within this climate of apostasy and renewal, Elias Friedman, OCD was called to launch the Association of Hebrew Catholics (AHC).

A collective Israelite witness to Jesus . . .

Again, in *Salvation is From the Jews*, Roy writes:

"In confronting Jewish hostility to Jewish conversion, it is most important, especially for Christians who are

trying to work for the Lord and for the coming of His Kingdom, to be aware of the experiences and perceptions of Jews who have received the grace of conversion. For with one voice they all attest to the same thing – that in their perception they were far more Jewish after their conversion than before it, and that their deepest, archetypically Jewish thirst for God could never have been met outside Christianity.” (pp. 354-355)

In the apostolic era, Jews who had come to faith in Jesus committed themselves to defending and propagating the faith, sometimes at the cost of their lives. These apostolic Jewish believers, as a remnant of their people, gave collective witness to the truths revealed through Abraham, Moses, the prophets, and now through Jesus the Messiah, who is King and Lord of Israel.

After approximately the fourth century, that collective witness ceased to exist in the Church. Roy writes above: *“with one voice they all attest to the same thing.”* And individually we do *“attest to the same thing.”* However, if we interpret *“one voice”* as *“collective voice,”* then it is safe to say that, as a collective, we are mostly silent.

St. Paul, speaking to Gentile believers about the Jews who did not believe in Jesus, said that *“as regards election they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.”* (Rom 11:28-29)

But the irrevocable call of Israel has always been collective, and it is to be a blessing. Thus, if St. Paul’s *non-believing* Jewish brethren retained that irrevocable call, how much more ought the remnant who *believe* retain the call. In fact, the call should be acknowledged as being raised to a new dignity and potency by baptism. And is this not what we see in that apostolic Jewish community which established the Church, experienced persecution and martyrdom, and sent missionaries throughout the Mediterranean?

... in the third millennium ...

Imagine that thousands, or tens of thousands, of Hebrew Catholics throughout the world were somehow able to connect and share thoughts and experiences, to find times to celebrate and worship together, to join in common ventures, and to find ways to proclaim together the messianic kingdom of God made present in Jesus.

Imagine, as well, all the people that God could bless through this collective witness: people who have only met Jews who don’t believe; people who argue that Jews don’t need Jesus; people who never understood the Jewish milieu out of which Jesus came and from which the Church was formed; those who have drifted away from the deposit of faith; and countless others.

Imagine these Hebrew Catholics, once again living out their collective and irrevocable calling, united with their Gentile brothers and sisters in Christ. What blessings God could bestow as we all responded to the Church’s call for a *new evangelization*.

... with Christ the King.

In the last issue, I wrote that the original reason we came to Michigan had dissolved with the decision of Tom Monaghan to transform Ave Maria College in Michigan into Ave Maria University in Florida.

After we mailed issue #78 last August, Kathleen and I fully entered into the process of trying to discern where now to live and establish the work of the AHC.

We communicated with many people in a variety of dioceses; we traveled to Denver and spent a week with the Community of the Beatitudes; we spoke with a religious order that was interested in helping us relocate to New York City; and we prayed.

One of the obstacles we encountered was the improved relations between a diocese and the Jewish communities within the diocese. Our presence was seen as a potential disturbance. The Jewish communities were quite happy with improved relations with the Catholic community, which was understood to be Gentile. A Hebrew Catholic presence, however, would not be welcome as it would be seen as a back-door to evangelization. Moreover, we were warned to expect contention from the Catholic participants in the Catholic Jewish dialogue within the diocese. Interestingly, Fr. Friedman made these same points in *Jewish Identity* which was published in 1987.

Finally, we reviewed our situation here:

- we believe that God led us here in 2001
- we have the approbation of Bishop Mengeling
- we have a Chancery office that is very supportive
- our new parish home, Christ the King Church, is orthodox and reverent in the celebration of Mass
- the people of the parish are very encouraging
- the pastor, Fr. Ed Fride, is also supportive, has a degree in Jewish studies, and can celebrate Mass in Hebrew
- Renewal Ministries, an apologetic and evangelistic ministry headquartered here, is supportive of our work
- we’ve had no sense that God wants us to leave this area.

By the end of January of this year, Kathleen and I came to a sense of peace about remaining here in the Diocese of Lansing, Michigan.

We are grateful that we are still able to live in the house provided by Ave Maria College when we first moved here. Because the house is small, we conduct our work from the basement while much of our material remains packed in cartons in separate storage facilities. It is clear that this arrangement cannot last too much longer, so we ask you to pray with us for a new place to live and to set up the work of the AHC. In your prayers, please also ask our patrons to intercede for the guidance, the people, and the provisions needed to advance our Lord’s work.

Wishing you the blessings of Passover and Easter
In the hearts of Yeshua, Miriam and St. Edith Stein,

David

Stories From Eretz Yisrael

A Hebrew Catholic Sabra

by Shlomit R.

My name is Shlomit R., I'm a 47 year old native Israeli (Sabra), born in the north of Israel.

After 40 years of being Roman Catholic in secret and going to Church, I felt the time had come to share some of my experiences concerning my conversion, or may I say, my Jewish faith as a whole. I hope that in this act, we can encourage one another to be stronger, especially in those hard days for Israel, the Middle East and the entire world. Also, in this opportunity, I also want to say a prayer for the Arabs and the enemies of Israel, may they allow the Lord to convert their hearts!



I was born in Israel in a Kibbutz. Both my parents are non-observing Jews, but they are good Zionists and Israelis. They identified themselves with the Jewish heritage and culture, and they are still living in Israel.

In my early childhood, because of my father's work, we moved for a while to South America. When I was about 7 years old, a new Roman Catholic maid came to live with us, and from her I learned about Catholicism. Every day she used to escort me back and forth to school. On our way, we used to pass through the Parish Church, where we stopped to say a short prayer while kneeling down in front of the Holy Virgin. I loved doing so, although I couldn't explain why.

Once, my maid took me on her free day to a pilgrimage of the shrine of the Virgin. I was very impressed there, especially about the holy atmosphere and the quietness and peacefulness. I still remember praying there, as it would be today!

When I was 10 years old we had to return to Israel, and before doing so, my maid took me for the last time to Church, where we used to go nearly every day, and offered to baptize me. This unusual step came, since she was afraid that in Israel I won't be going much to Church and will forget the Holy Faith. I agreed to be baptized, in spite I knew I was a Jew. I guess I agreed to it, because I hoped my parents wouldn't mind. However, to be in the safe side, I didn't tell them a word until I was 23 y/o and out of their house.

From the age of 10 to 23 years old I hardly went to Church. I did it only in very rare occasions, sneaking in and hiding, as I felt embarrassed doing it and was afraid of my parent's reaction. I also didn't know what to answer

if the Arabs, etc. will ask what a Jewish child is doing there alone.

When I was 23 years old I became independent from my parents and felt free to come back to Church. This happened while passing through a personal crisis, which involved a disappointed relation with a man.

Many questions then rose on my mind. I was asking myself - why in Israel we still are suffering from war and terror acts (and I speak in the late 70s)... Why my mother had to pass the Shoa (Holocaust) and concentration Camps while losing her parents and her brother... Why some friends of mine died (whether in war or in terror acts, etc.)... And why I couldn't experience love...

I remember, when I was 18 years old, reading the famous book of Victor Frankl "*Man's Search for Meaning*." I didn't realize then how close he was to our faith, but I did feel then a very strong attractiveness to our Lord Jesus Christ.

When people ask me why I am Catholic, I always quote Pascal: "*It is the heart which perceives God and not the reason*"; and "*If God does not exist, one will lose nothing by believing in him, while if he does exist, one will lose everything by not believing.*"

I believe that human beings are not only a "Social" animal, but also a "Religious" one. From the beginning of history (or may I say, from my early childhood), I always searched for a meaning of life, for the spiritual meaning. I do believe that because I was made by the Image of God, I always will search for His Image. I believe God is inside of all of us. We only have to open ourselves to Him.

In the Roman Catholic traditional Church I feel at home. I believe that our Lord Jesus Christ gave the Key of Faith to Petrus, our First Pope. Jesus ordered Petrus to build His Church. For me the Catholic Church has the genuine faith and it is source of it. For me the Church is the one that has been guarding the True Faith for the last 2000 years. I want to be close to the roots of faith, and for me they are in the Catholic Church. I do remember what our Lord said to Petrus: "What you will forbid on earth, it will be forbidden in heaven", so I believe in the authority of the Holy Father.

David Moss once said to me: "*If Christ is not the Christ of the Jews, he is not the Christ of anyone.*"

So, I don't forget that "*Salvation is from the Jews*" (St. John, chapter 4), and I do pray for my Jewish sisters and brothers to come back to our Lord.

What makes me very sad is the devil. Whenever people in Israel start to be interested about our Holy Faith, the

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A Hebrew Catholic Bishop of Jerusalem

Andrew Sholl

Ed. This article, written by Andrew, was partly based upon an article that appeared in French in Ha-Mikhtav (The Letter), Paris, No. 28, October 2003, edited by Marie-Thérèse Huguet.

Today, Sunday, the 9th November 2003, the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica of Christ the Saviour, the seat of the Holy Father as Bishop of Rome, should be a great day of rejoicing for all Hebrew Catholics, indeed all Catholics.

Why especially Hebrew Catholics? For today, near Abu Gosh in Israel, will take place the Episcopal Ordination of Father John Baptist Gurion (“lion cub” in Hebrew), until now Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary of the Resurrection, Abu Gosh, and from this day, Auxiliary Bishop of Jerusalem, a Hebrew Catholic of Sephardic Jewish origin and background, who came to Israel in 1976.

As Auxiliary to Patriarch Michael Sabbah, himself the first Palestinian Arab “Latin” Patriarch of the Holy City, the new Hebrew-speaking Bishop will take charge of the relatively small, but significant, Hebrew-language Catholic community of Israel.

There are wonderful milestones that our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II initiated when he named Fr. Gurion to the Episcopate on the 14th August 2003. I am sure the Holy Father would have been conscious of the fact that since the middle of the second century, no Hebrew Catholic was named a Bishop of Jerusalem, certainly not knowingly! Why was this?

We know from history that at least five of the first Bishops of Jerusalem beginning with James the Less (a cousin of the Lord Jesus, or as Scripture says, “the brother of the Lord”) were Hebrew Catholics, or to be more precise at the time, “of the Way”. Indeed, it was not until the Bar Kochba Rebellion was put down in blood by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, that Jerusalem, renamed *Aelia Capitolina* (*Aelius* being Hadrian’s family name), was forbidden to Israelites in the middle of the second century A.D. Thus no Hebrew Catholic was henceforward appointed to Jerusalem until today! *Sissu ve-simchu ... rejoice and be glad!*

Let us pray earnestly that Bishop Gurion’s elevation to the Episcopate, albeit as Auxiliary Bishop to Latin Patriarch Sabbah, will bear a mighty harvest in the extremely tense situation in the Holy Land, and especially in Jerusalem.

It is not without significance that Father Gurion chose to be consecrated Bishop in the Church of Our Lady, Ark of the Covenant, near Abu Gosh, where the original Ark of the Covenant stayed 1,000 years before Christ, before

David had it brought into Jerusalem with dancing and great joy. The original Ark was made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, and contained the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, whereas Mary is the living Ark of the Covenant, giving us Jesus, our Saviour, today’s Feastday.

The new Bishop is already quite well known in Israel: especially as a man of peace, having made his Abbey a veritable oasis of peace, where Jews and Arabs, Israelis and others, including Christians from everywhere met and dialogued. Indeed, this year he was awarded the prize for Judeo-Christian Friendship, something that was largely well-received in Israel, as was his nomination as Auxiliary Bishop of Jerusalem.

May the Lord bless Bishop Gurion and give him the wisdom of Solomon in this most difficult part of His Vineyard.

Arab Patriarch Sabbah has an Auxiliary – But He Speaks Hebrew

By Sandro Magister

Ed. The following article from the online magazine [www.chiesa](http://www.chiesa.espressonline.it/english) is reprinted with permission and may be found at: http://213.92.16.98/ESW_articolo/0,2393,41875,00.html. The link to the home page is: www.chiesa.espressonline.it/english

ROMA – In mid-August, John Paul II placed beside the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, Michael Sabbah, an auxiliary bishop with a special task.

The task is that of “the pastoral care of the Catholic faithful of Jewish expression” who live in the Holy Land.

The new bishop is Jean-Baptiste Gourion. And his background is perfectly in line with the task the pope has given him.

Gourion is a converted Jew. Born in Oran, Algeria in 1934, he received baptism at the age of 24 and entered the French abbey of Bec as a Benedictine monk. In 1976 he moved to Israel, to the village of Abu Gosh, and founded a new abbey. Since 1990 he has headed the Œuvre Saint-Jacques for the pastoral care of the Hebrew Catholics.

His nomination was considered for a long time, and has always had more opposition than support. As recently as last May it was seen as not being very likely. But then John Paul II became personally involved. He pulled it off, but at the cost of displeasing many.

One sign of this discontent is the interpretation with which the French Catholic weekly “La Vie” gave the news of the nomination. It described it as “completely political,” done to “restabilize the Vatican’s relations with Is-

rael” and destined to “divide the Christians of the Holy Land even more.”

But even more expressive of the opposition to the nomination is an important article by Drew Christiansen published on May 10 – before the Vatican decision – in the weekly magazine of the Jesuits of New York, “America.”

Christiansen, a Jesuit, is not only the associate editor of “America,” but also a counselor for international affairs to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “with special responsibility for the Middle East.”

In his article – entitled “A Campaign to Divide the Church in the Holy Land” – Christiansen attacks, name by name, those who supported the creation of a special ecclesiastical jurisdiction for the Hebrew Catholics.

These would be, in the first place, Abbot Gourion and the leaders of the Œuvre Saint-Jacques “in alliance with sympathetic elements in the French Church” (read: the cardinal of Paris, the Jewish convert Jean-Marie Lustiger); in the second place, in the Vatican, Dominican Father Georges Cottier, official theologian of the pontifical household, and Ignace Moussa Cardinal Daoud, prefect for the Congregation for the Eastern Churches; then the apostolic nuncio to Israel, Archbishop Pietro Sambì; and, naturally, the government of Ariel Sharon, which is interested in harming the Palestinian Christians and Patriarch Sabbah.

To this list of kingpins Christiansen adds the spokesman for the Franciscans of the Holy Land, David-Maria Jaeger, another converted Jew, a canonist, and one of the negotiators of the 1994 agreement between Israel and the Holy [See]. But in his case, Christiansen acknowledges attenuating circumstances. Jaeger had always supported an ecclesiastical jurisdiction, not for Jewish converts, but rather for the non-Arab Christians who have emigrated to Israel from Russia, Poland, the Philippines, etc. – somewhere in the tens of thousands, all told. Gourion and his friends – Christiansen writes – “hijacked” Jaeger’s idea and turned it to the advantage of the Hebrew Catholics, “who number fewer than 250 and are not even united by the Hebrew language,” concentrated in the cities of Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa, and Ber Sheva.

The problem with all of this would seem to be that of wanting to divide the Church in Palestine into two parts, denying its Arab character and delegitimizing Patriarch Sabbah, who has always been against the idea of naming a bishop ‘ad Judaeos.’

An Arab himself, Sabbah is a fiery champion of the Palestinian cause, and for biblical and dogmatic reasons as well as political ones. The book “Paix sur Jérusalem,” which he published two years ago, is a condensed example of his theological Arab-Christian ‘patriotism.’

One of Sabbah’s central theses is that “just as anti-Semitism and the Holocaust set the context for Jewish-Catholic relations in the West, in the Holy Land the agenda ought to be set by a century of Zionist nationalism, the displace-

ment of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.” Sabbah says of the Israelis: “In the end, we will send them away just as we did to the crusaders.” The idea is widely held in the patriarchate that the Islamic conquest of Jerusalem in 683 was a “second Pentecost.” One distinguished Israeli leader, Ambassador Gadi Golan, the head of the department of interreligious affairs for the foreign ministry, has called Sabbah “the Islamic patriarch.”

Jesuit Father Francesco Rossi de Gasperis of the Pontifical Biblical Institute of Jerusalem – a friend, contemporary, and teaching colleague of Carlo Maria Cardinal Martini – has written acute analyses on this Arab-Christian theology. He has shown that it leads to a “theological negation of the people of Israel, a kind of cultural and spiritual Shoah, not dissimilar to what was seen in the churches of Europe during the age of ‘Christendom’.”

On the current situation he comments: “The opposition to creating within Israel a Church ‘for Israel’ finds its deepest reason in the denial of the very existence of the state of Israel. But such a Church is the original figure of the Christian identity; it is the Church of the Apostle Peter, a community made of Jews faithful to the Torah and also believers in Jesus, the Son of God. Gourion’s nomination as a bishop ‘ad Judaeos’ signifies an historic turning point.”

But it is a shift that will be accepted with great difficulty within a patriarchate of an intentionally overwhelming Palestinian character. Last November, Abbot Gourion was the object of a smear campaign after he received an honorary award in one of the halls of the Knesset, the Israeli parliament.

Strong criticisms were also launched against the Melkite pastor of Nazareth, Émile Shoufani, an Arab but not anti-Israeli, who was guilty of leading a pilgrimage of Jews and Palestinians together to Auschwitz.

The absence of a Catholic library in Jerusalem is another indication of the patriarchate’s lack of interest in approaching the Hebrew people.

Another such sign was the closing of the Pontifical Institute “Ratisbonne” in Jerusalem, a place of dialogue between Jews and Christians, in 2001. The building is now for sale, and is being sought by the Salesians, the Neocatechumenal Way, and Opus Dei.

With Gourion’s nomination as a bishop ‘ad Judaeos,’ the pope has established the conditions for an about-face. Beginning with the enfranchisement of the Hebrew Catholic community from the bullying Palestinian stance of the patriarchate.

As for the Jews, Rossi de Gasperis hopes they are not afraid of “taking seriously” the revival of Hebrew Christianity. Because there is fear among them, as he has written: “They see the conversion of Jews to Jesus as a threat to the survival of Judaism.”

It Only Hurts When I Stop Laughing

A View of Jewish-Catholic Relations from Both Sides At Once

Marilyn Prever

Ed. This article first appeared in New Oxford Review, Oct. 2003, pgs 24-29, and is reprinted with permission. Marilyn is a housewife and free-lance writer, mother of eight, and grandmother of many (she says the grandchildren appear so fast she can't keep track). She lives with her husband Phil in Claremont, New Hampshire.

Jews and Catholics of good will have been twisting themselves into pretzels these days trying not to offend each other. Some Catholics are bending over backwards so far they're in danger of going into spiritual hyperspace and undoing their Baptisms, if such a thing were possible. "No, no," they exclaim. "It's just that we no longer believe there were any Jewish people involved with you-know-Who getting killed. It's all been a terrible misunderstanding. Modern scholarship has shown that those Pharisees were actually Southern Baptists."

I do believe we all need a good laugh — but who dares to laugh? I can only think of one group of people who are in a position to inject a little humor into the situation, albeit strictly Jewish humor, which is the only appropriate kind for those times when you laugh to keep from crying. I happen to belong to that group, namely, Hebrew Catholics — or Jewish Catholics, or Jewish converts, or Completed Jews, or Messianic Catholics, or Catholics of Jewish origin, or *oy vey*, you see what I mean: Even finding a name for ourselves is a problem.

We are an embarrassment to everybody. There are Catholics who are trying to assure Jews that Catholics are not even trying to convert them anymore, not even praying for them to convert — God forbid that Catholics should even *hope* for such a thing. What are such Catholics supposed to do with us, we who are not only already converted but usually pretty excited about it? Let's face it, most baptized Jews are not good at keeping quiet about their new faith. We tend to write books, we go on TV, we tell all our friends, we wear tasteful Jesus Made Me Kosher T-shirts, we even sometimes get up enough nerve to tell our families, who then become horrified and either resign themselves and hope it will blow over, or else sit *shiva* for us, which is what you do when somebody dies.

What can such Catholics say to us other than: "Would you mind apostatizing, please? You're messing up our plans. We've been trying so hard to re-build that wall of separation St. Paul told us about, the one between the Jews and the gentiles. We understand it was taken down so the gentiles could come in, but now we would just like to put it back up, only this time to keep the Jews out. Not that we want to make you feel unwelcome — it's not that Jesus

doesn't love you, or doesn't want you, it's just that you Jews have a perfectly good religion already and, as Our Blessed Lord Himself said, He 'came for the lost sheep of the House of O'Shaughnessy.'"

This is called, by some, development of doctrine. Cardinal Newman, pray for us!

Such people need to be reminded that it's important to have Jews in the Church — one reason being that *only Jews get the jokes in the Bible*. Without Jews, we would miss out on all the Jewish humor in the Old and New Testaments. Let me give you an example: Every year when the cycle of readings at Mass comes around to the passage where Our Lord cures the man born blind, I find myself giggling helplessly in my pew, surrounded (in my New Hampshire parish) by Poles and French Canadians and Finns who don't see anything to laugh at. The reason I'm giggling is that all the people in the story sound exactly like my relatives. Even the multiple translations from spoken Aramaic to Greek to St. Jerome's Latin to modern English can't hide the fact that Jews still talk the way they have always talked: They answer questions with questions, they are ironic and even sarcastic, they love to argue, nobody agrees with anybody ("nine Jews, ten opinions"), and they wave their hands around when they talk (I know the hand-waving is not specifically described in the Gospel, but take my word for it, these people are waving their hands around).

For me the high point of humor in the story is when the Pharisees interrogate the parents of the man who gained his sight: "*Is this your son, of whom you say that he was born blind? How then does he now see?*" And they answer, "*We know that this is our son [they don't want to go so far as disowning him], and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we ourselves do not know. [We don't know anything, we didn't see anything, we didn't hear anything, we were in the kitchen eating chicken soup]. Ask him, he is of age, let him speak for himself.*"

In case you still don't get it — that the parents are lying through their teeth and passing the buck — St. John gives us a little aside: "*These things his parents said because ...if anyone were to confess him to be the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue...*" So the Pharisees run and get the son again and start yelling at him. But he's so thrilled at being able to see that he doesn't care what they do to him. He's carried away with joy, he forgets his precarious situation — he's the fiddler on the roof. They try to get him to say that the man who cured him is a sinner.

He answers, “*Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.*” (He’s on the edge of disrespect here, and sarcasm is right around the corner.) They ask him the same questions he answered before, and he loses patience altogether: “*I have told you already and you have heard. Why would you hear again? Would you also become his disciples?*” (Bingo.) At this point they “*heaped abuse on him*” (a good Yiddish chewing out is an art form and can last ten full minutes without repeating a word, and these men were probably just as creative in Aramaic), whereupon he loses all control and starts lecturing them on theology. That finally does it: he gets thrown out of the synagogue, but Jesus takes him in — a situation Hebrew Catholics can identify with.

I use the phrase “Hebrew Catholic” because it’s the one I finally settled on, on the grounds that “Jewish” refers to a religion but “Hebrew” to a people. But I’m not quite comfortable with it, because I’m from the generation who were just getting back to calling ourselves Jews, for whom the word Hebrew had taken on a rather snooty connotation, as a sort of euphemism: “Are you of the, ah, Hebrew persuasion?” We were the generation who *didn’t* change our names; some of us even changed them *back*: “How do you do, I’m Moishe Lefkowitz, and this is my father, Maurice Lewis.” Ironically, my last name is now French, though I married a Jewish man of Eastern European roots (we both came into the Church later on). His family came to the U.S. from Russia on a French boat and the immigration officials thoughtfully Frenchified their name so that they, the officials, could pronounce it. So when people hear our name and see us in a Catholic Church not far from the Canadian border, they assume we’re French Canadians. My maiden name is Oguss, which was probably shortened from something barely pronounceable when my Grandfather came here from Poland — or maybe it was Lithuania. Once when I was a little girl traveling with my family in Georgia, a motel clerk said, “Oguss — what an interesting name. What kind of name is that?” My mother, catching the implication, said, “It was shortened from Goldberg!” and stalked out. It was a very educational trip for my sister and me.

Jews are liable to have any kind of name, especially in America. I had a cousin who was always called Mary Kelly, because that was what American ears heard when she pronounced her Yiddish name. She didn’t even speak English.

On the other hand, I know a Catholic priest named Fr. Cohen, and he’s not Jewish. I wrote to ask him, and he replied with one of the most gracious demurrers I’ve ever heard: No, he said, I’m sorry to say I don’t have that privilege. (God bless you, Father, you’ll get time off in Purgatory for that.)

You may be surprised to learn that I’ve run into very little anti-Semitism in the Church, rather the opposite. In my experience the philo-Semites (people who have a spe-

cial affection for Jews) out-number the anti-Semites about ten to one. I realize that some of them may be hiding their true feelings. That’s fine with me; that’s what is known as civilization, and I’m all for it. My earliest experience of anti-Semitism was when I was four or five years old, and a Catholic friend told me I had “killed Christ,” and she hit me. I don’t remember whether I hit her back, but I do remember answering, strangely enough, “It wasn’t me, it was my Grandfather!” I had some vague idea that there was trouble over this Christ fellow a long time ago in the past, “Grandfather” being the closest I could come to the idea of ancestor. We were one of only two Jewish families in an Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn, and there was never any trouble except from that one family, who were the black sheep of the neighborhood in any case — the father was a drunk (we didn’t say “alcoholic” in those days) and beat his wife and children.

I believe the anti-Semites still exist mainly on the fringes of the Church — today they seem to belong mostly to the ultra-“Traditionalists.” My husband and I have a book business with a specialty in Catholic books, and only once did we have an anti-Semitic customer. He was a priest, sad to say, who put out a little Traditionalist newsletter teaching among other things, that the Holocaust never happened, which he sent us, not knowing our background. We sent him the book he ordered along with a note explaining why we were not happy with his newsletter, and assuring him of our prayers through the intercession of St. Edith Stein, who was martyred in that non-event. (“I know, let’s sic Edith Stein on him! Serves him right.”)

He wrote back, very humbly apologizing for the offense, thanking us for the prayers, and explaining why his views were not, in his mind, anti-Semitic. I still feel more affectionate toward him than otherwise — he was a true “character,” shall we say, and ended by declaring himself Pope, reigning from somewhere in the Midwest with a handful of followers.

When I was growing up, this man Jesus hardly came into our lives at all — He was the God of the gentiles, and they were welcome to him. If they wanted to decorate their walls with little statues of a half-naked man being tortured to death, well, there was no accounting for taste. While studying for his *bar mitzvah* my husband once asked his Hebrew teacher who Jesus Christ was, and the teacher replied, “A man who made a lot of trouble for the Jews.” (You have to realize, Jews tend to see everything in terms of how it affects the Jews: Global warming? The Red Sox win the pennant? A cure for cancer is found? A giant asteroid is heading toward Earth? We only want to know one thing: Is it, or is it not, good for the Jews?) My mother said she remembered her own mother mentioning Him only once, and that was to say that He was a man who had a machine that caused Him to fly up into the air, to impress people with his supernatural powers. I wonder, was that connected with some memory of the Ascension? You

wouldn't believe the strange things that used to float around in the *stetls* of Eastern Europe.

When I went to elementary school in Brooklyn, there were two kinds of students: Jewish and Catholic (or Italian — same thing). You could tell which was which by the holidays they stayed home on. My family was not religious but we always stayed home on the High Holy Days “so the *goyim* [gentiles] would respect us,” because they stayed home on their holy days (probably so the Jews would respect them). Once there was a boy in my class who stayed home on neither, poor thing. I thought he must be one of those Protestants I had heard about — an exotic minority group who were neither Jewish nor Italian. They lived somewhere beyond the pale in Indiana or Georgia and they didn't celebrate holy days, they didn't yell at each other, and they didn't like to eat. You could learn about them on TV.

Then, suddenly, culture shock. After this pleasant up-bringing in Brooklyn, I found myself, along with my husband and children, living in a totally foreign country. (We had lived in Israel for a year, but that was not foreign, being full of Jews, who yelled, ate, and celebrated in ways we were familiar with.) The foreign country was a town in Vermont, where we settled after a sudden and dramatic conversion to evangelical Protestantism (we didn't become Catholics till eight years later). The church we went to was called the Community Bible Chapel and the people were sincere Christians, full of charity and good will, with a culture that was pure — you should excuse the expression — WASP. It took me a good three years to realize that they were taking my joking remarks literally, with disastrous effects on my reputation. It took me five years to catch on to the fact that among them, disagreeing with someone was bad manners, not lively conversation. It took me forever (that is, I never got there) to stop feeling loud, vulgar and fat in their company. They shocked me with their bizarre ideas about Jews, such as their belief that the revelers at the wedding at Cana were drinking grape juice — they had obviously never been to a Jewish wedding — or that the *mezuzah* on our doorpost contained a tiny vial of lamb's blood. Thank goodness it was only lamb's blood — that one could have been a lot worse. (In case you're wondering, it contains a Hebrew scroll with a passage from Deuteronomy, the one Our Lord quoted when someone asked him which was the greatest commandment.)

I think what Catholics would really like to know is, “How do I talk to Jews? Can I talk to them about religion at all? How can I avoid offending them?” I am happy to tell you the answer is simple. If you have ever played Pickup Sticks you will know how to proceed. Pickup Sticks is a game where you throw a bunch of sticks on the floor and then you have to pick them all up one by one, very carefully, lifting each stick in such a way that it doesn't make the others move. In this case, each stick represents something you can talk to a Jew about — very carefully. You cannot

stir up ancient memories, or use a word that may make him uncomfortable, or imply something that might cause bad feelings, or allude to one of about six dozen topics that are off-limits. You can easily find out what these topics are if you read the accounts of the various Jewish-Catholic dialogs that have been going on for the past forty years or so, the ones that end in separate press conferences giving two entirely different accounts of what everybody said.

Another important rule to remember is not to ask certain questions. I don't mean questions like, “Is it true Jews have horns?” or “Is there an international Zionist conspiracy?” I'm assuming we're beyond that point. The kinds of questions I mean are ones like, “Is it true what they say, that most Jews in America live like Episcopalians and vote like Puerto Ricans?” The fact is, this is perfectly true, but you're not allowed to say so.

In the midst of all the misunderstanding, hostility, and general looniness, Hebrew Catholics are in a perfect position to mediate the dialog. When I say mediate, I don't mean in the sense of being umpire. (In fact, nobody really wants us there at all.) What I mean is that since we are both Jewish and Catholic, we identify — and suffer — with both sides at once. We can even be ashamed of each side on behalf of the other. When some self-righteous pornographer goes on TV to wrap himself in the mantle of the First Amendment and his name is Rabinowitz, we want to remind him of the old saying, “Never be ashamed you're Jewish; it's enough that *I'm* ashamed you're Jewish.” And we also cringe when we meet Catholics who believe that the Church was cravenly giving in to Jewish pressure when she reminded us in *Nostra Aetate* of her constant teaching that people are responsible for their own sins, and so you can't blame the Jews of today, or even the majority of the Jews in Our Lord's time, for the sins of those who called for his death.

We once attended the Divine Liturgy at a Carpatho-Ruthenian parish in New Jersey where many of the parishioners were the children of immigrants. Afterwards, a woman asked me if my parents ever came to their church. “No,” I said, “they're Jewish.” She was a little taken aback, and then said, with simplicity and sincerity, “Well, that's all right, we're all people.” Her attitude was lacking in modern sophistication and political correctness, but it got to the heart of the matter, and I wish there were more Catholics like her in the U.S. Maybe she was a little prejudiced — who isn't? Let him who is without prejudice cast the first stone. Maybe she didn't especially like Jews as an ethnic group — do we really all have to like one another's culture? That's asking a bit much of human nature. I don't like everything about Jewish culture myself. If I can't stand some of my own relatives, why should I expect other people to approve of them?

Some people get so nervous about all the taboos that they decide extravagant compliments are in order. Some-

one once asked me to pray for him because he thought that as a Jew and a Christian both, I had some special “in” with God. Please don’t do this sort of thing. Jews are very uneasy about this chosen people business. Our experience has taught us that if on Monday they’re giving us such compliments, on Tuesday they’re going to want the place *Judenrein*. Give me the Carpatho-Ruthenian attitude any day.

There are things in Catholic culture that look unbelievably weird from the outside. Recently, my son came back from the Stations of the Cross to say that the parish was using a new book of prayers. It was by St. Alphonsus Liguori and included the earnest request that Christ should “nail my heart to the Cross, that it may always remain there.” I don’t like to speak disrespectfully of a saint, but I can’t help wondering if he wasn’t a little lacking in normal visual imagination. We all have our limitations, and even sanctity doesn’t sand down all the odd bumps and ridges of our personalities.

Let’s not expect too much of human nature, even human nature aided by grace. If Jews and Catholics can sit around a table for an hour and talk about religion and history without actually coming to blows, we’re making real progress. And if we can stop and remember occasionally that we’re all people – which is to say, we’re all potential saints and potential Nazis – I’m sure there will be rejoicing in Heaven.

A Hebrew Catholic Sabra ... Continued from page 8

devil disturbs by making terror, anti-Semitism, etc., and when these things happen, the Israelis (and Jews in the Diaspora), become busy defending themselves and their heart closes to our Lord and the message of Salvation.

However it is not for me to judge others and their religion. But because the Good News of our Lord has been a real blessing for me, I’m always open to share it with others.

My faith brought me lots of happiness but also I have to admit it is not easy. Even today, not everyone understands it. My family and close friends know about it, but my family is not very supporting.

And I’m still alone, because I always looked for a “Man of the World” and not a “Worldly Man”, and it seems that in Israel they all disappeared.

Also the Church in Israel is extremely small and also they are not always very supportive. So, in Israel, to be a real Catholic - you really have to rely ONLY on God! And God does help those who believe in Him and act!

About my studies, I did some in the Hebrew University (a General BA), mainly in Literature, Bible and Art - fields that I love very much. I believe God is also in Art, Beauty and Literature. Maybe some day, I’ll go again to the university. That is my dream. I love to read - and now I’m

finishing a beautiful and very inspiring book “*The Letters and Diaries of Ety Hillesum 1941-1943*”, that speaks about a young intellectual Jewish woman of Holland and her soul’s journey to faith, which occurs in the Second War World.

About my work, I work mainly from home doing layout and proofreading and also editing and correcting Hebrew texts - working for all kind of associations and private clients. I also worked a very short time as a Tour Guide for pilgrimages and worked in tourism as well. However now I’m in the process of changing jobs. One field is going to be in Import-Export. Another field is going to be working for the Department of Public Relations in Hadassah Hospital. Maybe I’ll be able to combine both of them together. However lots of prayer and faith is needed, and lots of support from friends, etc. is needed too. But also we have to remember that everything is in the hands of our Lord and with Him, everything is possible.

Christ is The King.
Shlomit R.

A Light Touch

Ed. No wonder we have liturgical confusion in the Church! The Church is Jewish! From the internet at:

http://billcork.blogspot.com/2003_09_21_billcork_archive.html:

Tradition

When the new young rabbi came to Temple Beth Israel, he was shocked by what he experienced at his first service. Half the congregation sat while they prayed, and the other half stood. Those standing shouted to those sitting, “*This is our tradition! We stand when we pray!*” Those sitting shouted back, “*No! It’s our tradition to sit when we pray!*”

The young rabbi sought out the founding rabbi of the synagogue, a beloved old man now retired in another city. “*You were there at the beginning. Tell me, is it the tradition of this congregation to sit when praying?*”

The old man thought and said, “*No, I don’t remember that. That’s not our tradition.*”

“*Ah,*” said the young rabbi, “*Then the tradition is to pray standing.*”

The old man got a puzzled look on his face and said, “*No, that doesn’t sound right either. That’s not our tradition.*”

The young rabbi appeared crestfallen and confused. “*But that’s what I’m hearing. Those who sit say, ‘This is our tradition!’ and those who stand say, ‘This is our tradition!’ and their shouts at each other drown out the sound of the prayers!*”

The old rabbi suddenly smiled and started laughing. “*Ah, now that IS our tradition!*”

Fr. Augustine-Marie of The Blessed Sacrament OCD

Fr. James of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, OCD

The world does not know enough about the Hebrew Catholic Carmelite priest, Fr. Augustine-Marie of The Blessed Sacrament, OCD., whose birth name was Hermann Cohen. A slim body of popular literature did emerge from the presses, and some pockets of people around the world caught a glimpse of the gift of God for our time that this man's life was destined to be.

I write to thank you, Mr. Moss, for the faithful support that the Association of Hebrew Catholics has consistently given to promoting the works of Fr. Antonine Newman, OCD and Fr. Tadgh Tierney, OCD who, themselves, worked tirelessly in their time to further educate a generation concerning the meaning and implications of the life, work and prayerful example of Fr. Augustine-Marie of The Blessed Sacrament, OCD. I represent another generation of Carmelites who have been touched by the fact that long before the current *Catechism of the Catholic Church* put the articles on the Eucharist before us, Fr. Cohen's life and ministry was a perfect model of the centrality of the Eucharist.

The institution of the Eucharist:

"Jesus chose the time of Passover to fulfill what he had announced at Capernaum: giving his disciples his Body and his Blood:

"Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the passover meal for us, that we may eat it...." They went ... and prepared the passover. And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.".... And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood." (Catechism, par. 1339)

"Do this in memory of me"

"The three synoptic Gospels and St. Paul have handed on to us the account of the institution of the Eucharist; St. John, for his part, reports the words of Jesus in the synagogue of Capernaum that prepare for the institution of the Eucharist: Christ calls himself the bread of life, come down from heaven." (Catechism, par. 1338)



Fr. Tierney's book, *The Story of Hermann Cohen From Franz Liszt To John of The Cross*, begins with a poem by Fr. Cohen one verse of which says:

*I know a dew which God sheds from heaven
And which must sustain us for the remainder
Of the road we have to travel;*

*I know a tree whose wood can sweeten
The bitter waters which are our portion*

To drink here below,

*And make them give us a foretaste
Of the heavenly Canaan.*

*I know a victim whose sacrifice ascends
In an odor of sweetness to the
God of Abraham.*

The life that Fr. Hermann Cohen so beautifully modeled for us is, once again, most timely and, as was printed in a French Catholic periodical in 1982, these wishes and sentiments need to be embraced today:

"Let us endorse the wish to see Fr. Hermann's beatification introduced. For us his holiness is beyond doubt and his canonization highly desirable at the present time."

[Fr. Joseph of St. Marie, OCD.]

I am working for the republication of Fr. Tierney's book and to renew the work begun by Fr. Antonine Newman, OCD. I would be very pleased to see the existing strong links between the Association of Hebrew Catholics, "The Friends of Hermann Cohen" and the Carmelite family renewed and strengthened around our common concern for the spreading of the Eucharistic message that was so fully articulated by Fr. Hermann, and is so necessary to our generations of today.

Yours sincerely,

Fr. James of St. Teresa Benedicta of The Cross, OCD.

Ed. We are enthusiastic about Fr. James' desire to republish Fr. Tierney's book and to renew the work of Fr. Newman in promoting the cause of Fr. Hermann Cohen. We would like to join with Fr. James in these efforts as our Lord enables us to do so. If you would like to participate, please write and let us know.



AHC Havurah of Moncton, New Brunswick

Fr. Donald Arsenault

Ed. We spoke with Fr. Arsenault in November about the activities of the Moncton Havurah. Here is Father's report.

Every nation cherishes one of their own: England – Shakespeare, Germany – J. S. Bach, France – Joan of Arc etc. Which nation other than Israel can claim to have the most perfect human creature the world has ever known, the Virgin Mary, but more so, to have the glory and the honor to say that God himself became one of them, a Jew.

How can I not love Israel when the Lord God loves them, cherishes them and chose them from among all other nations as His first-born son. How can I not bless them when God said to Abraham:

“ Go ... to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you ... ” Gen. 12:1-3

With that in mind and upon reading and praying the Old Testament, I had the inspiration to start a prayer and study group on Israel. To my great surprise, in [*The Hebrew Catholic*, #75], Summer–Fall issue 2001, there was a detailed programme, how to commence a Havurah. The Lord is good!

We held our first monthly meeting on July 9, 2002, with 11 persons present at the beginning. Our members are all French speaking Gentile Catholics. One extra person has been added to our group since its inception. All meetings are very well attended.

As suggested in the A.H.C. newsletter, our format is as follows:

First part of the meeting is dedicated to prayer:

- *prayer to the Holy Spirit*
- *prayer by Rabbi Paul Drach, convert*
- *blessing for Israel*
- *one decade of the Rosary with a meditation referring to the mystery of Israel*

The second part of the meeting is dedicated to the study of our Jewish roots. Up to this point, the teachings were delivered on the following topics

- *Abraham – father of our faith*
- *Divine election of Israel*
- *Mystery of Israel*
- *Israel, first born son of God*
- *This Jew by Rev. Arthur Klyber, past 8 meetings.*
- *Various articles taken from The Hebrew Catholic.*

We conclude with a second decade, followed by the prayer of Fr. Klyber and a final blessing by the priest (myself). Each member is given photocopied handouts of each teaching, as well as any additional material available. There

is a very good rapport and discussion among our group.

In March, 2003, a one day seminar: JEWS, JESUS and YOU, was held with 30 people participating.

Included were:

- prayers • teachings • video on the “Lost Tribes of Israel” (Discussion groups with questions related to the video followed by general exchange on the topic.)

- Display set-up of some 160 items, photos, maps and related material. (Discussion groups with questions on the display set-up, also followed by a general discussion exchange.)

- Closing Mass

The general feeling among the participants was very positive about the whole project.

One group suggested that the experience be repeated next year. The Havurah group even proposed that we come back on the same display set-up to deepen its study of the rich material.

A few members of our group and myself visited our local Synagogue and participated in the Chanukah.

I trust that this information will be of use to you and that you will be able to let other groups know of our existence by means of your publication.

Fr. Donald Arsenault

COMMENTS

Here are a few of the comments from our members regarding their experience since starting the meetings;

Now that we are studying the many links between the Judaic faith and our own Catholic faith, I can accept even more the fact, that salvation comes from the Jews as Jesus said, and that we Catholics are truly Jewish, at least spiritually.

Denis Laplante

Through the teachings on Havurah, I have learned to better understand my faith in God and this understanding has brought me closer to Him and to His chosen people Israel.

Diane Vautour

Thanks to Havurah, I have understood that the mystery of Israel is not out-dated It is always on the way to accomplishment. It is important not to dilute it in any way, but to pray it and to live it according to the Heart of God and the Holy Spirit who cries out “ MARANATHA ”.

Gilles Nadeau

This study confirms my faith in the God of Israel manifested in His Son Jesus as Messiah for both the Jews and the Gentiles as our only hope

Yvette Maillet

I have been struck by the depth of our relationship and closeness as brothers and sisters of the same God, that we share with our Jewish brothers and sisters, our ancestors.

Paul LeBlanc

The Havurah helps me to deepen the link between the Jews and Catholics: it also increases my knowledge of Israel, people of the First Covenant and the Church; people of the New Covenant.

Linda Letourneau

For me, the Havurah brings the Gospel alive. The Jews and Catholics are rooted in Jesus Christ and that gives me a greater joy in the Salvation promised to His Chosen people, Israel, and through them to us Gentiles.

Roland LeBlanc

I have just read on the web, Roy Schoeman's interview by ZENIT news service about his new book, Salvation is From the Jews. (Jn: 4,22) I am learning much in our Havurah. We appreciate our Spiritual guide, Fr. Donald very much. His great love for our "elder brothers", an expression dear to our beloved John Paul II is contagious. I always look forward to our monthly Havurah.

Sr. Cecile LeBlanc

Havurah is about the only avenue available for exploring our Jewish-Hebrew heritage as adopted children of God and inheritors of the promise to Israel. It can be seen as the start of a very large scale family reunion.

Stuart Halpine

Ed. We are grateful to Father Arsenault for establishing and leading the Havurah of Moncton, N.B. We are also grateful for Father's prayers and for the Masses he offers for our work.

Those who wish to contact Father can write to:

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Moncton, NB E1C 4W2
Canada

Israel Explained to the Nuns of a Contemplative Order

By Daniel Rondineau*
Translated by Dr. Arnold Linker

(Article concerning Fr. Lustiger's book, The Promise, published in the magazine Express 11/21/2002)

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In the late 1970s, Fr. Jean-Marie Lustiger, a parish priest in Paris at the time, used to preach to a group of nuns of a contemplative order. Some of them were former colleagues when they were students at the Sorbonne. They had asked Fr. Lustiger to help them to meditate about the mystery of Israel. Fr. Lustiger lectured in a free and improvised way, a confidential tone of voice conveying a feeling of friendship and shared faith, stimulated by a new approach to Saint Matthew and Father de Lubac. One week after he had left the monastery, the nuns typed out the text of his lectures, which they had recorded with his permission.

The book, *The Promise*, is the text of those lectures, a

book everybody considered buried and forgotten and which came to life again, thirty years later, more burning and stimulating than ever before. Jean-Marie Lustiger develops a topic unique of its kind that is impossible to sum up in a few lines since what is at stake is, no more no less, the salvation of your souls, the relation between Christians and Israel (the name "Israel" in its biblical sense, meaning "the Jewish people according to the blessing of the Lord"). A broken relation, hurt and often roughly handled by crimes born of ignorance since a remote past when only a minority of Jews accepted Jesus as their Messiah. Since then, there has been a hush in Jewry as to the problem of Christianity and the Christians have often completely repressed their Jewish roots for centuries. The connection between the two religions has become discordant or tragic: the continuity of the Testaments was denied. In Jean-Marie Lustiger's opinion, the whole historical development stems from the disappearance of the Church of Jerusalem in the IVth Century under the pressure of Byzantium.

This first Church (named "of circumcision") symbolized in the Catholic Church the continuity of the promise made to Israel and the confirmation of the favor granted to the pagan nations, through its intermediary.

Since the destruction of this Church, all the Christians have lacked an essential element of the mystery of Israel, and human history has been filled with darkness. Fr. Lustiger considers that this conjuring away is "one of the tragedies of Christian civilization", that has become atheistic, false right Christian in fact, reduced to the adoration of a Son without Father. Lustiger calls those Christians without memory "pagan Christians" who try to find only in Jesus the image of the ideal man, "a mythical or purely pagan image of the divinity on which the Western views imposed their triumph". The pagan-Christians, whether Nazi or Soviet, are to blame for deportation and extermination of Jews.

It is they, descendants from highly Christian nations, who committed deicide.

The lecturer's words retrospectively throw light on certain aspects of the Cardinal's views on the Age of Enlightenment, its deification of Reason and State and later comparisons (in "Le Choix de Dieu" – The Lord's Choice) between Voltaire's and Hitler's antisemitism. They continue the writings of Jacques Maritain ("When the Jews are persecuted, Christianity is threatened in its body") and sometimes he agrees with George Steiner's remarks, who in his "Dans le Chateau de Barbe-Bleu" (Bluebeard's Castle) speaks about "a theological crime" and a Western civilization governed by an instinct of death. But to Kafka, quoted by Steiner, who said: "The one who hurts a Jew, hurts the whole mankind", Lustiger replies, "No, hurting a Jew is hurting God Himself." In the crematorium fur-

Continued on page 27

AHC E-mail Discussion Group

This group was formed to discuss the various themes and issues of Fr. Friedman's thesis, the various pastoral needs of Hebrew Catholics and any other matters of related interest. Dissent from the Magisterium, political discussions or attempts to challenge the faith of Catholics are not permitted.

Two ways to participate

1. Send a blank email message to:
AssocHebrewCatholics-help@yahoo.com
2. (a) Go to the group's site at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AssocHebrewCatholics>
(b) There you must first join Yahoo (no cost or obligation) and then join the discussion group.

This option enables access to all past discussions.

To respect everyone's privacy, we include only the initial letter(s) of each writer's name.

Legend: < italics > indicates a quote from a previous message.

Is Jesus Descended from David?

Ed. Some members of this group regularly engage anti-missionaries in discussions. Some of the issues raised in those discussions are aired in our group. This is one example. For those not familiar with anti-missionaries, they are individual Jews or groups such as "Jews for Judaism" that argue against Christian apologetics. Their purpose is to win back Jews who have come to faith in Jesus.

I'm opening this question to everyone (originally it was for **S.**). For the sake of the discussion, let's set aside any apologetic background or interpretation of hidden meanings of Scriptures. Let's focus only on the Torah and the Halacha.

I'm told that a step or adopted son doesn't inherit anything from the foster father. (reference for this is appreciated.) The question is whether Jesus should be considered an adopted Son. Any thoughts? **M.**

Dear **M.**, If you are looking at Jewish law alone then firstly the Gospels are not to be believed and it is to be assumed Jesus was Joseph's natural son as no other man was involved, as in "Is this not Joseph's son", and secondly there is no halachic category for a child born of just the mother. So He stands completely outside of Jewish law.

In a natural case an adopted son does not inherit the step-father's lineage. For instance, if the step-father is a Kohen and the adopted son's natural father was not a Kohen then the adopted son is not a Kohen.

The anti-missionary approach is to focus in on the fact that the Gospels say Joseph was not Jesus' natural father but that they also show Jesus of Joseph's lineage, which would not be correct halachically. **S.**

Hi all, I thought I would put this in this discussion. It is not my writing and research. The following is a response from Tom Nash, Senior Information Specialist and his assistants of Catholics United for the Faith regarding this same question (the title of this thread):

Quote: <<Dear Mr. M.,

Greetings in Christ. Thank you for calling us at Catholics United for the Faith (CUF) with your question. You noted that you had been in contact with Jewish apologists and now have a question regarding Jesus' ancestry and His claim to be the Davidic Messiah.

The Jewish apologists correctly noted that an Israelite's tribal rights come from his father's side, not his mother. However, they also said that one must be a biological descendant to be considered a member of a particular Israelite tribe. Thus, while Joseph is of the house of David, Jesus cannot be considered a member of the house of David because Joseph is his foster father. Are they correct regarding ancestral rights, heirship, and inheritance in ancient Israel?

Regarding this question, Matthew 1:1 lists Jesus as "son of David, son of Abraham" (Mt. 1:1). While biological descent is certainly the norm, such ancestry does not preclude the exceptional possibility of legal fatherhood through a variation on adoption. In addition, nowhere does the Old Testament Bible provide as ironclad rule that ancestral rights and heirship must be established on biological grounds. In fact, Scripture provides examples to the contrary. In Genesis 48, there takes place an Old Testament equivalent of adoption. Ephraim and Manasseh are Joseph's biological sons. Joseph is the biological son of Jacob. Yet, Jacob takes his ailing son's sons and elevates them to the status of his own biological sons, i.e., makes them tribes of Israel: "And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine: Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are" (Gen. 48:5). Jacob's paternal action is remarkable. Ephraim and Manasseh, unlike Reuben, Simeon, et al., have no biological right to be considered one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They are not Jacob's biological sons. They are the biological sons of his son Joseph, but that status in and of itself does not grant them the rights and privileges of being considered one of Jacob's sons.

In other words, Jacob, in effect, adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, thus elevating them to a "sonship" status that they did not deserve on the basis of their own biological paternity. In addition, no other grandsons of Jacob-and there were many-were favored with such adoptive elevation. Genesis 48 provides a biblical precedent that one's

status as a son in Israel can be affected by the gracious act of a father.

Consider also the earlier case of Abraham, the patriarch of Israel. Had Abraham had no son, Eliezer of Damascus, “a slave born in my house” would be his heir (Gen. 15:2-3). In other words, the house of Abraham would have been carried on by a non-biological descendant of Abraham. Abraham’s taking Eliezer into his house is another variation on Old Testament adoption. Furthermore, there is no subsequent Mosaic legislation to Abraham and Jacob that explicitly rules out a non-biological descendant being, in effect, adopted into one of the tribes of Israel. Rather, there is the interesting case of levirate marriages noted in Deuteronomy 25. In such marriages, a man would marry his deceased brother’s wife in the event that his brother had not fathered a son prior to his death: “And the first son whom she bears will succeed to the name of his brother who is dead, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel” (Deut. 25:6). This is yet another variation on Old Testament adoption. The deceased brother never biologically fathered a son, yet he is provided a son-via his sibling’s marriage to his widow-who carries on his name. In addition, his descendants thereafter will carry on his name, even though they too are all non-biological descendants of the same deceased brother.

If provision could be made for others in salvation history to have their houses and names carried via the equivalent of adoption or legal fatherhood, could not God have done so with Jesus too, especially given the unique, virginal status of his mother Mary? While God blessed Abraham so that he did not need Eliezer as an heir, the Bible is clear that custom dictated that Eliezer would have served as an heir had God not provided otherwise.

In addition, the example of the levirate marriages further shows that non-biological descendants enjoyed the benefit of being called sons of their non-biological father and therefore carried on the name of that same non-biological father. Consequently, given the biblical precedents, it stands to reason that Jesus is a son of his non-biological, legal father Joseph and thus carries on Joseph’s name. Further, because Joseph is of the tribe of David, part of being a son of Joseph-of carrying on his name-is that Jesus is also a son of David.

In summary, while ancestry is usually biologically based, the Old Testament provides various exceptions that are basically variations on adoptions. Furthermore, Matthew realizes the importance of paternal ancestry in establishing one’s tribal affiliation as an Israelite. That is why Matthew goes to great detail to provide Jesus’ ancestry through his paternal line. Remember that Matthew was a Jew, as were most of the early Christians, including the erudite St. Paul. If there were no basis in ancient Israel for legal fatherhood to provide tribal affiliation, as opposed to only biologically fatherhood doing so, Matthew would not have opened his Gospel the way he did. He would have either

known that his audience would have known better or, had he nonetheless persisted, he would have been denounced by Jewish leaders and the rank-and-file for attempting to perpetrate a fraud, specifically characterizing Jesus as a son of David despite his lack of biological descent. But such was not the historical case.

Finally, some might counter that only Aaron and his sons could be Levitical priests in the Old Covenant (Num. 3:10). We’re not aware of a biblical case in which a non-biological son was brought into the Aaron priestly line, but that does not mean such didn’t occur in Israelite history. In any event, regarding the case of Jesus’ tribal affiliation, there are other biblical precedents that substantiate that one can be an heir to someone’s house or tribe even though he is not a biological son of a father.

End Quote >>

There are three other Old Testament examples that can illustrate how ancient Israelite regarded “adoption” of someone as an heir who isn’t a biological son.

First, in Num. 27 we have the case of the daughters of Zelophehad — he had no sons, only daughters. If I recall correctly, they petitioned Moses to allow them to marry cousins and keep Zelophehad’s inheritance under their father’s name and in their own family, rather than let it pass to another Israelite family. In other words, the clan of Zelophehad were descendants of his daughters, because he had no sons.

Next, we have the case of the Jerahmeelite clan in the Tribe of Judah. In the genealogies of the Tribe of Judah found in the early chapters of I Chronicles, the lineage and succession of the Jerahmeelite chiefs is traced down to Sheshan, whose only surviving child and heir was a daughter. She married her father’s Egyptian slave Jarha, who was “adopted” in such a way that Jarha’s son — i.e. the son of the daughter of Sheshan — became Sheshan’s heir. The lineage is then traced for many more generations after that, showing that the Jerahmeelite chiefs were still regarded as members of the Tribe of Judah and full-fledged members of the clan of Jerahmeel even though their descent passed through the female-line.

(I pointed that out to an Orthodox Jew who brought up the usual objection to Jesus not being a male-line descendant of David. His only comeback was to claim, in spite of the biblical evidence and the example of the daughters of Zelophehad, that this family WEREN’T members of the Tribe of Judah at all, but were just descendants of Judah. In other words, there is no good or valid way to counter this evidence.)

In addition, in Ezra 2 we find reference to the priestly family of Barzillai. This family got its name from its ancestor Barzillai the Gileadite, a prominent man in the reign of King David (cf. II Samuel’s story of Absalom’s rebellion). However, the priestly family of Barzillai was de-

scended from a man who had married Barzillai the Gileadite's daughter. In other words, the clan took its name not from the priest who was son-in-law of Barzillai, but from Barzillai himself. Barzillai the Gileadite's heirs and lawfully descendants — the very tribe or clan that came from him — were not descended from any of his sons, but from his daughter.

Granted, these two examples are exceptions to the general rule or custom. But they show that it wasn't unheard of for an inheritance and a clan's very name to pass through a daughter rather than through a son. Jesus can indeed be the son and heir of King David, even though His descent from David was through His mother Mary and grandfather Joiakim rather than through his adoptive father Joseph ben Jacob. **P.**

The problem is not solved by citing cases where adoptive children have been given the status of natural children. The issue brought from Jewish law is that a child cannot adopt the father's previous lineage, it has the same logic as the impossibility of a child having its adoptive father's genes. In cases of grandchildren given the status of immediate children or in a levirate marriage the children are of the same previous lineage naturally.

The anti-missionary argument, which is very destructive to the faith of people who come to Christianity from Judaism, is that according to Jewish law Jesus cannot be the awaited Messiah because, if He was conceived as the Gospels say, He is not connected to David by patrilineal descent. To Jewish law this is a valid argument as kingship is only passed on through a continuous male line. They also cite the genealogy's mention of Jehoakim whose line is cut off from kingship. There is also the Nathan/Solomon problem where Nathan's line is cut off from kingship. All of this is supported by the verse in Jeremiah, "There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne of Israel."

I believe the wisest response to this is to concede. There is no halachic category for the Incarnation, and as the Incarnation is a concept beyond Judaism and Jewish law, no ruling can be made on how the Incarnation would relate genealogically or in any other way, whether in history in general, or to history, in matters of adoption or inheritance, nor in anything else. Jewish law by definition of itself simply does not apply in this case.

It depends on what we are trying to do. Are we trying to come up with arguments that would prove Jewish law wrong?

It is futile to refer to the OT texts as though the authority on Judaism is to be found there. To Judaism the authority is where the understanding is, within the system of halachic decision-making and the vast body of legal exegesis in the oral tradition.

Looking at it from that tradition, who can explain the

implications of the relationship between God and St. Joseph? How knitted together between God and man is fatherhood in that context? What is Divine Kingship? Would it redeem natural lineage? Did the lineage have any meaning before that point?

When the halacha can address these questions, Jesus' status can become a halachic matter. Until then it isn't, in my opinion. **S.**

On the subject of halachic requirements for membership in the house of David and thus eligibility for the Messiahship: are there people alive today in the modern world who would qualify, according to halacha, as descendants of David for that purpose? It seems that, if one disqualifies Jesus from the Messiahship based on these points of halacha, then consistency would demand that any future claimant would have to come from among some halachically identifiable and verifiable stock of modern Davidic descendants. For example, was Rebbe Shneerson able to pass halachic muster in this way? I'm somewhat aware that careful attention is paid to identifying Cohens (and Levites, too?). I've never heard, though, that there is any awareness of modern identity within the Davidic line. Have I missed something there? My thought, of course, is that, unless there's an modern Davidic line with impeccable credentials, there can NEVER be a Messiah capable of meeting halachic approval. If that's true, then what **S.** says is correct and the Messiahship is indeed beyond the scope of halacha.

What am I missing? **Fr.**

< The problem is not solved by citing cases where adoptive children have been given the status of natural children. >

I would agree that the examples cited, like Eliezer and Ephraim and Manasseh, don't really solve the problem. They show that adoption lawfully exists in Jewish tradition and law, but don't really explain how Jesus could be "Son of David" and rightful King of Israel without having a patrilineal descent from David (indeed, without having a patrilineal descent from anyone!).

But I think the three examples I mentioned yesterday — the daughters of Zelophehad, the Jerahmeelites, and the priestly family of Barzillai — do address the problem, since they show that sometimes a tribal or dynastic descent could pass through the female line.

< The anti-missionary argument, which is very destructive to the faith of people who come to Christianity from Judaism, is that according to Jewish law Jesus cannot be the awaited Messiah because, if He was conceived as the Gospels say, He is not connected to David by patrilineal descent. To Jewish law this is a valid argument as kingship is only passed on through a continuous male line. >

Historically, of course, that wasn't true — the Hasmonaean Dynasty had no patrilineal descent from David, but were instead priests of the division of Jehoiarib,

descended in the male line from Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron. There is precedent in Judaism for Jewish kings not descended in the male line from David.

< They also cite the genealogy's mention of Jehoiakim whose line is cut off from kingship.>

Actually the genealogy skips over Jehoiakim, instead referring more vaguely to "Jechonias as his brothers" — Jeconiah or Jehoiachin was the son of Jehoiakim. Yes, God did pronounce a curse on Jeconiah and his lineage, indicating that their descendants would never again sit on the throne of David. But then genealogy goes on to show that Jeconiah's male-line descendant St. Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus, but only the husband of Mary, mother of Jesus.

< There is also the Nathan/Solomon problem where Nathan's line is cut off from kingship. All of this is supported by the verse in Jeremiah, 'There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne of Israel.'>

Actually that is a promise that there would always exist a male heir to the throne of Israel of David's line, not that male heirs who did not sit on throne somehow would lose their succession rights and not be able to pass those rights on their descendants — so that part of the anti-missionary polemic is pure bunkum. Nathan was a son of David, so his descendants were just as much members of the House of David as the descendants of Solomon.

< I believe the wisest response to this is to concede. There is no halachic category for the Incarnation, and as the Incarnation is a concept beyond Judaism and Jewish law, no ruling can be made on how the Incarnation would relate genealogically or in any other way, whether in history in general, or to history, in matters of adoption or inheritance, nor in anything else. Jewish law by definition of itself simply does not apply in this case.>

I would agree that Jewish halachah as it was later defined doesn't apply to the Incarnation — but then halachah on this point as it was later defined in Judaism contradicts the biblical and historical witness of what it was defined as back in the time of Jesus.

< When the halacha can address these questions, Jesus' status can become a halachic matter. Until then it isn't, in my opinion. >

Yes, we'd need to shift the terms of debate from halachah onto other matters. God said to Israel, "Behold, I am doing a new thing," and "My ways are not your ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts." What they expected Messiah to be wasn't what God had been telling Him He would be. **P.**

The oral torah has a tradition that the curse of Jeconiah was revoked in Babylon-solves our problem and theirs. So particular points can be argued. Also, the question of resolving Davidic descent for any future messiah is a good one...I believe **P.** is right that the response given is usually rather vague and they aren't in much better position. I still think, in the big picture, **S.** has the right approach. I also

generally think that Jewish-Christian apologetics/debate tends to bear bad fruit (in my experience). Just my opinion. **T.**

< My thought, of course, is that, unless there's an modern Davidic line with impeccable credentials, there can NEVER be a Messiah capable of meeting halachic approval. If that's true, then what S. says is correct and the Messiahship is indeed beyond the scope of halacha.>

Very good point. There are several old Jewish families with longstanding traditions of descent from David, but their genealogies are not preserved in any sort of detail straight back to David.

Also, their descent would go back to David by way of the medieval Babylonian exilarchs, who traced their genealogy back to Zerubbabel ben Shealtiel ben Jeconiah. In other words, the descent would go back to the same stock as St. Joseph. So if the argument about Jeconiah's descendants being disqualified from the throne applies to Jesus, then it also applies to all the known (purported) descendants of David in Judaism today.

I think I read somewhere that Orthodox Jews believe the Messiah will indirectly prove his Davidic descent by fulfilling the Messianic prophecies. But that strikes me as just a cop-out due to the fact that the exact genealogies of David's descendants have all been lost. No one can be really sure anymore who is really descended from David and who is not — but that problem didn't exist 2,000 years ago. **P.**

OK, I am not knowledgeable by any means in the genealogical aspect of the types that you are speaking. However, I thought that one was not considered "a Jew" unless one's mother was Jewish. Now, there seems to be a discrepancy of the paternal line of descent. So, if the messiah is to born of a virgin, then, there will never be a line of descent from the father. And, if one is only conferred a Jew thru one's mother, then the paternalistic aspect, it would seem, is a moot point. Be that as it may, how does one have it "both ways?" I will go back to my listening place now. **L.**

This is a very good thread, and as **S.** said - I wouldn't argue with the Halachah - some things have to be taken on faith alone. As to genealogy - Biblical genealogy is going through the father, going back to the tribes of Israel and to Abraham. Modern Judaism, that has nothing to do with Biblical genealogies had to make a decision regarding children who were born into a family as a result of rape. It is well known that the brides in small towns of eastern Europe had to submit to the local prince should he so desire. This of course has happened to the Christian brides too, but the Christian population didn't worry about whether they are Christian or not. It was a given... For religious reasons and documentation such as the marriage

license and the Ketuba, the rabbis needed to make sure that the young couple come from a Jewish line. Or if necessary one of them would need to convert. Also, **M.** welcome to the group. We would love to hear more about your journey. **A.**

I can not pretend to be a halachic expert, but I think that some important issues have been misinterpreted. Jesus was NOT adopted. He was born as legal issue to his mother while she was the wife of St. Joseph. It was up to St. Joseph to question the paternity of the child and no one else. Since he did not challenge it, Jesus was his son according to the law and heir to the Davidic lineage. Even if the Blessed Virgin Miriam were herself of Davidic descent, it could not contribute to Jesus' claim to the throne. **Ar.**

Hey **S.**, I basically take your approach. however, an Orthodox Jewish friend argued that Jesus' case can be comparable to the case of a woman who converted while pregnant, and her son would be a Jew, but not a heir of the husband of the woman. I can see the logic in this: that as far as heirship goes, the two types of cases might be comparable. kind of hard to make a conclusion, though, since the Virgin Birth is still essentially different from the conversion of a pregnant woman. **M.**

Hey **P.**, I consider your argument regarding Jeconiah rather weak. I've read that from Evangelicals, but the problem is that if Jesus bypassed the curse by not being a biological Son of Jeconiah, wouldn't He also bypass the promise to David since He wasn't a biological Son of David?

A much better argument is that the curse was in fact reversed. the curse included that Jeconiah would have no sons, but he did have sons. that his sons would not sit on the throne, yet his son did (though not in Judea.) some Jewish scholars agree that the curse has been lifted, just like the curse on Ninevah was lifted. **M.**

< Jesus was NOT adopted. He was born as legal issue to his mother while she was the wife of St. Joseph. It was up to St. Joseph to question the paternity of the child and no one else. Since he did not challenge it, Jesus was his son according to the law and heir to the Davidic lineage.>

Before the Beth Din (Jewish law court) it would be taken for granted that the two parents are mother and father as normal because there is no third party involved. In fact, if the parents were wanting to prove that the father was NOT the legal father, if you can imagine a case where a father was wanting to be relinquished of his paternal responsibility by insisting the child was conceived supernaturally, the claim would have no meaning and he would walk out of court as the legal father of the child, whether he liked it or not.

In court, the Divine is imperceptible as legal Father in

the case. That is why I say the Incarnation is beyond the halacha.

But anti-missionaries sincerely believe they are doing what God wants them to do by bringing Jews back to Judaism from Christianity so they use whatever means are available. By taking the Gospels at face value, completely unlike the Beth Din who would not take the father's claim at face value, they can make the case of discontinuity in the Davidic line between father and son, which is also valid in theory. **S.**

Precisely. That is why the anti-missionary arguments are spurious. Jewish Law assumes the legitimacy of Jesus. In order to question it, the anti-missionaries have to admit the virgin birth. And even so, if St. Joseph accepted Jesus as his son, there was no LEGAL reason why Jesus would not have been his dynastic heir. As you point out, the "Angel Story" about Jesus' conception would not have held up in court. **Ar.**

Thus let us sum the case.

1) Jesus is the Legal Son of Joseph. 2) Mary had no relations with ANY MAN voluntary or involuntary prior to her marriage to Joseph. 3) If a man went to Rabbinic Court & tried to get it to declare him not the Father of his wife's Child because the Child was conceived through supernatural means, he would be laughed out of Court. 4) Thus for the Anti-missionary argument to work they have to admit the Virgin Birth. 5) Jesus is the biological descendant of David through Mary. **Y.**

Perhaps as a footnote to the discussion, it could be said that it is evident from the Gospels themselves that the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was a 'son of David' was very common during the time of His public ministry, e.g. Bartimaeus addresses Him as 'son of David.' This is the title that even the blind give Him. I think Eusebius mentions that the Roman authorities kept a special eye on all Jews of Davidic descent, seeing them as a potential focus for those longing for revolt against Rome. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that they would have had a vested interest in establishing His non-Davidic origin if they had been able. The argument from silence is not always a strong one but it is at least significant that we have no record of the Roman authorities challenging the Davidic descent of Jesus, even though it would have been in their interest so to do if it had been possible. So to **Y.**'s summary of points established so far, perhaps we could add that the evidence is that the Davidic descent of Jesus was accepted at the time by a significant number of Jews. We could also argue that many of the followers of Jesus did so in part at least because of His Davidic descent, a descent that would make Him a suitable candidate for the role of Messiah. **Canon M.**

The Sacred Bridge

Rev. Samuel F. Weber, O.S.B

Ed. On Saturday, November 22, 2003, Ave Maria College in Ypsilanti, MI sponsored a Focus Day On Gregorian Chant taught by Fr. Samuel F. Weber, O.S.B. of Wake Forest University in Winston Salem, NC. The Focus Day was in celebration of the 100th anniversary of St. Pius X's moto proprio on Church Music, TRA LE SOLLECITUDINI ("Among the Concerns"), on the Feast of St. Cecilia, Patron Saint of Music.

Kathleen Moss was able to attend this symposium and at her request, Father graciously offered the following article.

The former hardware store had been turned into our local neighborhood library, replacing the 'book-bus' that used to drive up each Tuesday from downtown Chicago. I spent a lot of time there as a kid. It was a real treasure cove for my budding curiosity that knew no bounds. It was the 1950's in the "Windy City's" Hegewisch district of steel mills and ethnic neighborhoods, mostly Polish and Irish.

Our local parish school was conducted by Benedictine Sisters who centered our education on liturgical prayer and the study of the Scriptures. Each day we shared with them in the celebration of the 'Little Hours' of the Divine Office: Terce, Sext and None. They taught us to sing the Gregorian Chants that were such an important part of our worship experiences. At a young age I became deeply interested in the Psalms, and in the Gregorian Chants that 'heightened' their meaning for us, providing the beautiful melodic patterns that allowed us to chant together in one great act of communal prayer.

I can still remember the day when I was browsing at our little local library between homework sessions and discovered on its shelves two volumes by Professor Eric Werner entitled *The Sacred Bridge*. Everything else that concerned sixth grade got pushed aside for the rest of the day as I poured over its contents.

It did not surprise me to learn from Professor Werner's investigations that many of the Gregorian patterns for chanting the Psalms and other sacred texts familiar to me from first grade on had their origins in the sacred music of the Hebrew people. The haunting *Tonus Peregrinus* with its changing reciting tone and rich, minor-sounding cadence, as well as the cantillation patterns of the *Pater noster* and the Prefaces, the lessons from the Prophets, the Lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah, the tones for the New Testament readings and for proclaiming the Gospels—these, and many more, were shared by us all, Jews and Catholics alike. One common heritage of sacred formulas—both texts and chants. In all likelihood, our Lord Jesus

knew and made use of many of the same patterns of sacred chanting in his prayer at Nazareth, both with his family and in the local synagogue, not to mention his experience of worship at the temple in Jerusalem.

I say I was not surprised. Being a lover of music even at the tender age of 12, I knew in my heart that words just are not enough when it comes to this matter of prayer. What God wants from us is desire—that unceasing desire to be with Him, to remain in His presence, to please Him, to do His Will. There is a time, as life experience teaches us again and again, when the words fall away, or at least, retreat to the background, and the soul begins to sing. One folk hymn would put it this way:

*"Since Love is Lord of heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?"*

It made sense to me that these wonderful sacred melodies should have been inspired by the Holy Spirit, even as the sacred words were so inspired. The chant helps us to lodge the holy words we sing deep in our hearts where, like Mary, the Mother of Jesus, we may "treasure them up" in order the better to "keep them." Many holy souls over century upon century carefully guarded both melody and text, and handed them on to subsequent generations. It was an act of love and has become today "a gift that keeps giving" to all of us who are "spiritually Semites" (Pope Pius XI, *Mit Brenender Zorge*).

Eric Werner's study will lead the reader to appreciate the present arrangement of the liturgical books of the Roman Rite, especially the Lectionary for Mass and Divine Office, the order of the Psalms and OT Canticles as they are prayed each day, the style of prayers and intercessions and, of course, the musical patterns we treasure as our Gregorian Chant. The two volumes (paperback) that I use are now out of print, but appeared with the title *The Sacred Bridge: Liturgical Parallels in Synagogue and Early Church*, New York Schocken Books, New York, 1970, these being a reprint of the original one volume 1959 printing by Columbia University Press. Check your used book store or local library.

A CD has appeared with the same title: *The Sacred Bridge*. It contains beautiful musical examples of chant in Hebrew and Latin, including the *Tonus Peregrinus* I referred to above, and is available from Amazon.com (used). Consider also pertinent articles in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* as well as the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*. The following also contain much helpful information:

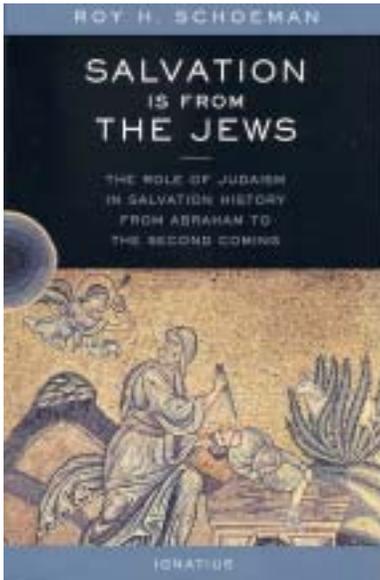
Continued on page 27

From our book shelves

In this column, we bring to your attention items that have recently been published or that have recently come to our attention. Most likely, we have not reviewed the items presented. We quickly examine each item to assess whether it is related to the themes of our work.

As always, your comments are welcome. We are always looking for people to review books that are related to our work. If you are willing to write a review, please let us know.

All items are available from us for the price indicated plus shipping.



Salvation is From the Jews

The Role of Judaism in Salvation History from Abraham to the Second Coming

Roy Schoeman

Ignatius Press

Soft cover, ©2003

395 pages, \$16.95

A Review by Ronda Chervin, Ph.D.

Ed. Ronda Chervin, Ph.D., is a professor of philosophy, and writer of numerous books on Catholic living. With Msgr. Eugene Kevane, David Moss, and others, she helped found the AHC in the U.S.

Can anything good for Catholics come from M.I.T. and Harvard Business School? This is only one of the many surprises for readers of a fresh synthesis of salvation history in relation to Jews and Catholics just out from Ignatius Press.

Written by a former Jewish Harvard Business professor with a spectacular conversion story to the Catholic faith, *Salvation is From the Jews* explores God's Providence for the Jewish people in ways that enlighten, inspire and thrill the soul of the Hebrew Catholic.

Sceptical? Have you read more than enough and can't absorb anything more? That's the way I, a Hebrew Catholic for more than 40 years and editor of conversion story books (*The Ingrafting* and *Bread from Heaven*), felt when Roy Schoeman's manuscript arrived for an endorsement.

About 30 pages into it, I stopped reading in a desultory manner, and, at the edge of my seat, started praying while turning the pages faster and faster.

I liked the popular but thorough and solid style of the

book. To whet your appetite here are some ideas in the book new to me:

- God wanted the Jews of Old Testament times to be totally separate from the Gentiles because the pagan gods (idols) were not superstitions, but were demonic spirits.

- Many Jews claim that events after the time of Christ do not fit the Jewish Scripture's prophecies of what would happen when the Messiah came, thus thinking they can prove Jesus was not the Messiah. Schoeman shows, as other apologists do, that this can be explained by taking into account that some of the prophecies refer to Christ's Second Coming rather than his first, while others refer to spiritual events not visible in the physical world. What was new to me was the application of this principle to the immediate and radical release of the dead from limbo.

- As for Jews claiming that Christian views of the after-life are alien to Judaism, Maimonides, the great Jewish philosopher of the Middle Ages, labeled as atheists and unbelievers unworthy to belong to the Jewish community anyone who failed to believe "*with perfect faith in the resurrection of the dead.*"

- Schoeman masterfully summarizes the evidence of Hitler's involvement with Satanism and how closely allied to Hitler were the mentors of men like Saddam Hussein and Yassar Arafat. The quote that shocked me the most was from a letter "moderate" Anwar Sadat wrote to Hitler after the war, when Sadat mistakenly thought Hitler was still alive:

"I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart. Even if you appear to have been defeated, in reality you are the victor. You succeeded in creating dissensions between Churchill, the old man, and his allies, the Sons of Satan."

In 1953 Sadat wrote that Hitler had been falsely demeaned. On the contrary, Sadat wrote that Hitler had been great in trying "*to save the world from this malignant evil (the Jews).*"

- Schoeman, carefully distinguishing between defined teachings of the Church and speculation, asks the reader to consider the possibility that Satan, knowing that the Second Coming must be preceded by the conversion of the Jewish people, inspired the Holocaust with the intent to either eliminate the Jews entirely or, failing that, to ensure that the survivors would associate Christianity with

Nazism. Might today's attempts by contemporary Arab leaders to eliminate the Jewish state be the next phase in his campaign to avert the Second Coming?

- Orthodox Jews who went to their deaths during the Nazi holocaust retained hope to the end far more often than less religious Jews. One such orthodox Jew proclaimed in the face of despair:

“The Jewish way is to bless and to hope and to bless and to hope, until hope and blessing surmount the pain and even the bitterness, and the living learn how to go on.”

- The train that carried St. Edith Stein to the concentration camp was composed entirely of baptized Jews.

- A key to the meaning of Judaism post the Resurrection of Jesus is the intriguing passage from St. Paul (in Romans 11:16-24) concerning the ingrafting of the Gentiles onto the tree with Jewish roots. After a fascinating analysis of the use of the word *seed* in Scripture, Schoeman concludes that the Jews retain the *blessing by nature* because they are the seed, while the Gentiles receive the *blessing by choice*.

“Therefore, when they (the Jews) do come to the faith (as St. Paul prophesies they certainly will) and thus are grafted back onto ‘their own’ olive tree, how blessed they will be, since they will then receive the blessing by choice originally intended for them which is perfectly matched to their blessing by nature (as seed) from which they were never separated.”

- Since Jews have a horror of assimilation, some contemporary Catholics think that it is right for them to stay separate. Schoeman suggests that those Jews who choose to *disappear* into the Church might be seen as like yeast that is kept separate from the dough until its right time comes when it disappears into the bread.

“Just as the yeast does not lose its importance in disappearing into the dough but rather achieves it, so might the Jewish charism realize its unique importance in ‘disappearing’ into the Church. And God in His providence, and in His timing in providing the grace of conversion, knows that the separate supply of yeast – the unconverted Jews – will last until the right time.”

- Schoeman relates the Holocaust to the Second Coming in this way:

“Grace is always purchased by suffering. Suffering and sacrifice is the coin that we here on earth have to offer up to God and receive grace in return... The first coming of the Messiah was purchased by the prayers and the sufferings of twenty centuries of Jews, climaxing in the particularly odious and offensive ‘slaughter of the innocents’ under Herod. Is it possible, as St. Paul intimates in Romans, that they also have a central role to play in the Second Coming? ...could the extreme suffering in the Holocaust be part of that role?... The Jewish people were called on to bear a disproportionate

share in the suffering which preceded the first coming; perhaps they are also called upon to bear a disproportionate share of the pains of giving birth to the Second Coming.”

A beautiful chapter about famous Jewish converts provides inspiration from the writings of Alphonse Ratisbonne, Rabbi Zolli, Cardinal Lustiger, and Charles Rich. The book also includes the miraculous story of Schoeman's own finding of Christ and His Church already excerpted in *The Hebrew Catholic* (#78).

Why do I think Hebrew Catholic members of the AHC and readers of *The Hebrew Catholic* need to get hold of *Salvation is From the Jews* and read the whole book?

- When you are witnessing to your own conversion to other Jews, you will find that there are many questions they have that you are not sure how to answer. *Salvation is From the Jews* provides a vision that is so appreciative of the Jewish role in religious history, that your relatives and friends may be more open to it than your own direct confrontation of them.

- When you run up against false theories among Catholics such as *“The Jews have the Father, so they don't need to convert,”* you may not have as much background information as Roy Schoeman to answer them.

- How about your own doubts and perplexities about just where to place yourself in the on-going outreach to see our people find Jesus in the Church? *Salvation is From the Jews* leads you down paths that will help you discern.

Jews' Role in Christ's First and Second Coming

Ed. The following Zenit interview of Roy Schoeman is reprinted with permission.

BOSTON, Massachusetts, Nov. 10, 2003 (Zenit.org).- A Catholic convert from Judaism believes that the Jews are not only our “elder brothers” in the faith, but that their prayers and actions prepared the way for Jesus Christ and the salvation of mankind.

Roy Schoeman, who grew up in a Conservative Jewish home and studied extensively with rabbis, realized the full significance of Judaism as revealed in Catholic doctrine after he converted. Since then, the former faculty member of Harvard Business School has studied at several seminaries and has recently written “Salvation is from the Jews” (Ignatius).

Schoeman shared with ZENIT why Judaism and Christianity can only be fully understood in relation to each other, and how the role of the Jews did not necessarily end with the first coming of Christ.

Q: What inspired you to write this book?

Schoeman: It seems obvious to me, as a Jew who has

entered the Catholic Church, that the Church is nothing else but “post Messianic” Judaism – that is, the continuation of Judaism after the coming of the Jewish Messiah, now opened up to all peoples.

Before my conversion I was proud of being a Jew, having a sense of the importance and privilege of being Jewish, of being one of the “chosen people” – chosen to receive God’s genuine revelation in the Old Testament and to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah. But that very sense of privilege and pride in being Jewish exploded a hundredfold when, as a Catholic, I realized the full significance of Judaism as revealed in Catholic doctrine.

For instance, Catholic doctrine teaches that the Jews, in praying for and preparing the way for the Messiah, actually brought about the incarnation of God as man; that the ultimate creature whom God ever created or will create, the absolute perfection of human nature, was a Jew — the Blessed Virgin Mary; and that even God himself, when He became man, became a Jew and a faithful follower of the Jewish religion.

We also know that the fullness of God’s written revelation to the Jews in the Old Testament has been confirmed and adopted in its entirety by Christianity worldwide and the salvation of all of mankind came about through the Jews — Jesus himself said in John 4:22 that “*salvation is from the Jews*,” hence, the title of the book — and the Jews in fact succeeded in their God-given task of bringing that salvation.

Also Christian Scripture also suggests, for instance in Romans 11, that the unique importance of the Jews in the economy of salvation will last through all of this world’s existence, until the Second Coming.

Yet I did not find these topics being actively discussed and explored in the Church today, although there have been periods – such as in the late 19th century – when they were. I felt that Jews were being deprived of an opportunity to see the full glory and nobility and importance of their own identity and religion, and that Catholics were being given an extremely limited and watered-down view of what Judaism really means.

All of this is in the context that our Lord and our Blessed Mother are Jewish. Surely they deserve better than that.

Q: Is it intended mainly for Christians or Jews, or both?

Schoeman: My book was quite consciously written for a dual audience of both Catholics and Jews, although I realize that the majority of readers will probably be Catholic.

To Jews, it reveals the full majesty and importance of being Jewish, how sympathetic a view of Jews and Judaism is given in Catholic doctrine, and that being Catholic does not mean no longer being a Jew.

To Catholics, it teaches not only about Judaism, about the Jewish Scriptures and about the origins of the Catholic faith and Church, but also a great deal about the structure of salvation history itself and how God works through history and peoples to affect his plans.

Q: What is the role of Judaism in salvation history? In the destiny of the world?

Schoeman: Looking backward, the role of Judaism is pretty easy to discern. At the very least, the Jews were chosen to receive the revelation of God contained in the Old Testament; to expect, pray for and prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah; to receive him when he came; to be the first generation of disciples and apostles; and to spread his Gospel throughout the world.

Despite the popular misconception that the Jews failed in their mission, they in fact succeeded – Christianity itself is proof of that success. It is true that only a minority of the Jews followed Jesus, but doesn’t God generally work with humanity through just such “faithful remnants”? It seems that time and time again God relies on the fidelity of the few, not of the many.

Looking forward from the present in salvation history, one naturally enters into a more speculative area. At the time of the Church Fathers, many reasonably concluded that the role of the Jews was fulfilled and exhausted with the first coming of Christ, except perhaps for the minor role of being inadvertent witnesses to the truth of the Gospels.

But we have the past 2,000 years of history as additional evidence – the survival of the Jews against all odds and almost constant persecution; their disproportionate prominence in world affairs; the mysterious character of anti-Semitism itself; the re-establishment of a Jewish national homeland against all odds; and the mysterious tragedy of the Holocaust.

Looking at all of these facts of history, and combining them with the admittedly cryptic and somewhat mysterious suggestions in sacred Scripture, one can paint a picture in which the Jews, as a people, have a major role in bringing about the Second Coming, as well. I’ve tried to flesh out this picture, always in a responsible way and always in full conformity to Church doctrine.

Q: How are Jews involved in the Second Coming?

Schoeman: I have been careful in my book to avoid speculating irresponsibly, but there is the danger, in trying to provide a very concise answer to your question here, of appearing to do so.

Let me just say that we know from St. Paul that there will be Jews until the time of the Second Coming and that the widespread conversion of the Jews at that time will somehow be related to the Second Coming. From the Gospels we know that the Jews had a considerable role in bringing about the First Coming, including a role involv-

ing suffering and sacrifice, as typified in the “slaughter of the innocents,” as recounted in Matthew 2:16-18.

We know that the Holocaust happened and that it was unique in world history – if not in the number of deaths or the extent of the suffering, then in the extent to which it was an expression of a pure racial and religious hatred against a single people and a people uniquely related to Christ, by blood, at that.

And we know that a number of Old Testament prophecies, which many understand to refer to the end times or the Second Coming, require the existence of a powerful Jewish nation-state with its capital in Jerusalem – a nation-state which only recently came back into existence after a hiatus of almost 2,000 years.

Q: What are common misunderstandings Christians have about Jews, and vice versa?

Schoeman: Many such misunderstandings occur on the level of simple fallen human nature. The misunderstandings that particularly interest me, however, are the theological ones.

These include the mistaken beliefs, on the part of Christians, that the Jews failed in their task at the time of Christ and that the meaningfulness of Jewish identity ended with Christ.

Jews, on the other hand, often mistakenly believe that Christianity teaches contempt for Jews – despite the fact that “their” God himself was one – and that when a Jew recognizes Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, he or she ceases to be a Jew.

Q: What can be done to repair the relationship and clear up misunderstandings between Jews and Christians? How have the Second Vatican Council and the papacy of John Paul II aided in this process?

Schoeman: In the long run, any such repair must be based on mutual respect and truth, without a papering over of differences and without infidelity to one's own beliefs. I hope that my book, in presenting to both Jews and Christians an extremely positive view of Judaism, yet one set entirely within the context of Catholic doctrine, has the potential to help in some small way.

Our Holy Father, of course, has helped enormously, in the many gestures of love and respect that he has shown the Jewish community, and in his many statements expressing respect and reverence for the Jewish religion and people, even referring to them as “elder brothers” in the faith.

The beginning of the current epoch of extremely positive Church teaching with respect to Jews and Judaism began, of course, with the Second Vatican Council and its teachings in “*Nostra Aetate*” and “*Lumen Gentium*.”

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Sacred Bridge

Continued from page 23

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And for Gregorian Chant:

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Murrett, John C. *The Message of the Mass Melodies*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1960.

For recordings of Gregorian Chant and for the classical polyphony of the Catholic tradition that grows out of the plainchant melodies, go on line to Paraclete Press in Orleans, MA.

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Ed. Samuel F. Weber, O.S.B. is associate professor of early Christianity and spiritual formation at the Divinity School of Wake Forest University. He also teaches courses in liturgical studies and sacred music, as well as patristic and liturgical Latin. He is currently editing plainchant settings in English for the Mass and Divine Office of the Roman Rite as these are celebrated in many communities today (2003). He is a Benedictine Monk and priest.

Israel Explained to ...

Continued From Page 17

naces, it was God, His intolerable Absolute, that the paganzed Europeans wanted to burn.

Everybody knows the life of the Cardinal from Paris. His Jewish background, his mother who never came home from her place of deportation, died in Auschwitz in 1943, his conversion, his way to always delve down into the past, into his Jewish origin, as far as the liturgy, reminding [us of] the actions and words of a certain Jesus, but also the traditions and rites of the people of Israel. Certain people would perhaps be tempted to find in his novel the origins of this “Promise.”

That would mean to forget that a Polish Catholic followed the same way, at the same moment. This man who came from Eastern Europe was John Paul II. And one beautiful day in March 2000, he was led by his reasoning to the Western Wall where he said his prayers like a Jew, with one hand on the Wall.

FRIENDS 9/11

Ken Gaertner

Ed. This poem won the Editor's Choice Award for The Penwood Review, a poetry publication for writers of faith, Volume 7, Number 2, Fall 2003. Reprinted with the author's permission. Ken is a Catholic playwright, director, producer and poet.

"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

On September 11, 2001, Avremel Zelmanowitz, an Orthodox Jew who worked in the World Trade Center, risked his own chance to escape by staying behind to help his close Christian friend and colleague, Ed Beyea, a quadriplegic confined to a wheelchair. They both died that day.

They fell
as through a vaguely remembered dream,
unconscious of direction,
the structure of space,
incomprehensible in the chaos:
their freed souls,
like the feathers of pigeons
in far flung barns,
floated gingerly in the sub blotting gloom.
Did God, blinded,
search for Himself
in that loud moment?
Did the Christian wheelchair fling
itself upon the commotion,
in a clattering tantrum?
Was its clatter discernible,
Was it necessary that it be discernible?
Or did it disappear as quietly
as a watch discretely dropped
into a shoplifters palm.

As their mingled dust
drifted over the sun-dappled city,
were their souls confused,
seeking an avenue of light?
The Jewish star had wheeled and spun,
hard as concrete one moment,
glowing with grey luminosity,
then was flung in distorted, dusty elongation.
Had silence been penetrated,
or had silence always hidden a brawl
within its shell?

In that moment
when oxygen was fueling nothingness
going separate ways
was found to be impossible.
Gravity had imploded,
direction had flowed together like soup.
Somewhere
this Jew who was last seen
with his hand draped,
like a prayer shawl,
on the Christian shoulder,
floated with his comrade
in their aimless disintegration,
while in that unseen sky,
in whose lucid horizon
is displayed our universe,
their names were being written
upon the endless leaves of eternity.
Star imbedded in Cross,
Cross imbedded in Star,
both being pulled into orbit
towards a destination
in which boundaries were now
defined by the reaches
of this new gravity.

Fr. Anton Morgenroth, C.S.Sp., R.I.P.

Ed. The following appeared in the Sunday bulletin (2/8/04) of Our Lady of the Valley parish, Hemet, California. Fr. Morgenroth had lived at the retirement home of the Holy Ghost Fathers in Hemet. The obituary was sent to us by Don Bauer.

Also deceased is Fr. Anton Morgenroth, C.S.Sp, a Holy Ghost Father who resided at Casa Laval. Fr. Morgenroth was born on July 2, 1912 in Berlin, Germany. His father, a physician and medical researcher, was noted for his findings in the chemical treatment of infectious diseases. His mother was an accomplished pianist and most surely influenced Father's own life-long love of both composing and performing on his Steinway piano.

As with many Jews, the rise of Nazism forced the family to flee Germany in 1934. He emigrated to the United States in 1936. He was baptized a Catholic in 1938.

Fr. Morgenroth's first assignment as religious-missionary was to East Africa, 1946-1952. On returning to the U.S. in 1953, Fr. Morgenroth began a fourteen-year assignment as chaplain and professor in the Theology Department at Duquesne University. He spoke German, English, Latin, Greek, French and Swahili. Over the next two decades, Fr. Morgenroth would author four books on religion and spirituality.