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1. THE YEAR 2000 IN REVIEW

Dead Sea Scrolls Seminars

The three seminars held on 29 March, 5 April and 12 April led by Professor Bill Loader from Murdoch University attracted an average audience of around 40 people. Bill took the participants on a fascinating journey through a community that existed in Palestine some two millennia ago and readily responded to a series of questions at each seminar.

In the first seminar he spoke of the origins of the Dead Sea Scrolls and introduced the audience to some translations of the documents. The second seminar allowed the audience to have a longer look at some of the major documents. Finally Bill took the participants on a guided tour of the Qumran ruins with the aid of slide transparencies. He concluded by saying that the scrolls have created an awareness of the considerable diversity of Jewish communities around the period of 2 BCE to 1 CE.

Film Evening - *The Last Days*

Our first film evening held at the Jewish Centre on 27 July was a great success. Around 50 members and friends came along. Co-produced by Steven Spielberg's *Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation*, this documentary speaks with five Hungarian survivors of the Holocaust. The producer, James Moll, reviews those last days of the war with newsreel footage, German camp footage, and newly discovered colour footage shot by American GIs after the

liberation of the camps. Moll briefly interviews three of these soldiers but it's the five survivors who are his main focus. They recount their stories: lost parents, brothers, sisters, things, and they recall events.

Many people remained behind and informally reviewed the film over refreshments.

Workshop - The Two Bibles

The workshop on "The Two Bibles" was held on Thursday, 21 September on the Mt Lawley campus of Edith Cowan University. The lead speakers were Dr James Trotter, Lecturer in Hebrew Scriptures at Murdoch University and Rabbi Dovid Freilich, spiritual leader and rabbi of the Perth Hebrew Congregation. Both spoke on the topic of "Dietary Laws: Keeping Kosher".

In his introduction Rowan Strong invited participants to explore and learn from each other.



Rabbi Freilich explains Jewish dietary laws

Rabbi Freilich spoke of the importance of the Sabbath and emphasised that keeping Kosher laws is an expression of love for God and creation. 'Love your neighbour as yourself' is the essence of the Jewish faith. Rituals are important but they must be infused with love. In the dietary laws detailed

within the book of Deuteronomy the faithful are told, 'you shall not eat any abomination'.

Jews, the rabbi said, are a holy nation and are differentiated because of this and the dietary laws are part of this.

The laws specify only certain types of animals, birds, fish may be eaten. Certain other foods may not be eaten and certain combinations of foods may not be eaten. Less intelligent animals may be eaten. Milk and meat may not be eaten together and blood may not be consumed.

In conclusion, Rabbi Freilich stated that, to the

Jews, the dietary laws are as valid today as they ever were.

The Revd Jim Trotter explained that Leviticus Ch. 11 and Deuteronomy Ch. 14 contained a number of dietary laws. He posed the question, if the Hebrew Scriptures are part of the Christian Bible then why don't Christians observe the dietary laws today? The early Christians were Jews and they would have practised the dietary laws, he said.



Revd Jim Trotter making his presentation

The Book of Acts of the Apostles deals with dietary laws in chapters 10 and 11. Peter's vision in chapter 10 talks about including non-Jews in the early Christian church. Chapter 11 indicates that God has led the people to change. Chapter 10 shows the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Jim Trotter said that critical scholarship makes the case for growth and adaptation in the Scriptures across the ages.

In conclusion he said that "tradition is a living thing - adaptable for life". New needs are met by adaptation.

In the discussion that followed participants were asked to talk about one thing that supported the position they had taken and one thing that challenged them. They were also asked to write down what they had learned as a result of the process. Rowan Strong closed the evening by telling the participants, "we have not learned to solve anything tonight but perhaps we have learned to face our differences. The CCJ stands for dialogue and something always comes back to us from this".

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on Sunday 19 November, once again at the Redemptorist Monastery Retreat Centre in North Perth.

In his report CCJWA chairperson, Rowan Strong reminded members that councils such as ours exist for a number of purposes, including the dialogue between Christians and Jews which enables us to see that each is a creation beloved of God. But they also exist to keep faith with that accurate remembering of our common past - to make it harder for Christian Churches and Christians to become allies of the murderers, and to never again permit Jews to be victims because they are Jews. Each one of us, by our continuing

membership of the Council of Christians and Jews in Western Australia makes a conscious contribution to that end. He congratulated all members for keeping faith for another year. It is not a popular task, reminding people of something they would often rather forget or which they feel is remote from their lives. But Australian history towards the Aborigines, or events in Rwanda and Bosnia in recent years remind us that human depravity of the Shoah is never far away or irrelevant. He concluded by wishing blessings on members for Hanukkah, Christmas and the holiday season, and said he looked forward to seeing as many of as possible at our events in the next year.

(The full text of Rowan's report will be available from the CCJWA web site)

The following members were elected to the executive for 2001:

Chairperson:	Rowan Strong
Vice-Chairperson:	Norm Hoffman
Secretary:	Valerie Scott
Treasurer:	Edward Scott
Members:	Ken Arkwright Robert McWilliam (co-opted) Graham Nielsen Marie Wilson

The guest speaker at the AGM was Prof Alex Cohen AO, Chancellor of the University of Western Australia. He is a past President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and over the years has been actively involved in a range of areas within the university as well as being a prominent member of Perth's Jewish community.

Professor Cohen commenced by stating that the attainment of faith is a long and laborious process. In terms of our destiny, we are all, unlike John Donne, 'each and every one of us, is an island ... lonely and alone'. Faith is unique to each of us through conviction and acknowledgement. Mystery is a vital ingredient and trust is another, says Professor Cohen. In concluding his address Alex Cohen told the audience "faith is not belief but a distillation of all we experience and take into ourselves as we live and evolve".

2. PROGRAM FOR 2001

Jews Re-visit Jesus

An interdenominational group of Jewish scholars in the USA has drafted a statement titled *Dabru Emet - A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity* in which they are urging deep reflection on how Jews and Christians may relate to one another. The CCJWA executive feels that our membership should study this document. Two evening sessions are planned: for 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm on 15 and 22 May at the Jewish Centre. Further details will be advised.

Re-Reading Paul with Dr John Dunnill

Dr Dunnill is a lecturer at Murdoch University and will be speaking in September about this new booklet from the the CCJ in Victoria.

Kristalnacht Service

This commemorative service, under the auspices of the CCJWA, is to be held at Christ Church, Claremont on Thursday, 8 November. It is hoped it will become an annual event.

Annual General Meeting - Planning has commenced for this final event in our program to take place on 18 November. Once more it will be at the Redemptorist Monastery Retreat Centre in North Perth.

3. LOCAL NEWS

Visit of Cardinal Lustiger to Perth

A major figure in Christian-Jewish dialogue, Cardinal Jean Marie Lustiger of Paris, will speak at Notre Dame University in Fremantle on 14 August this year. The cardinal will make only one public appearance during his three-day visit to Perth. The Notre Dame lecture, is expected to be delivered on the subject of 'The Church and the City' will be free and open to the public.

As Archbishop of Paris Cardinal Lustiger is the head of an archdiocese which covers a major scientific, political, cultural and artistic centre in European and world life. He is also the author of approximately 20 books.

Cardinal Lustiger was born in Paris in 1926, the son of Polish Jewish migrants. During the Second World War his mother was murdered by the Nazis in Auschwitz. He converted to the Catholic faith in



Cardinal Lustiger

1940 but has never ceased to identify with his Jewish background or experience.

He became Archbishop of Paris in 1981 and was made a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 1989 and has played a major role in many key Vatican commissions.

Governor to be CCJWA Patron

The newly-appointed Governor of WA, His Excellency Lieutenant-General John Sanderson, AO, has graciously agreed to be CCJWA patron.

4. NATIONAL NEWS

Council plans ambitious program for 2001

The New South Wales Council of Christians and Jews confirmed the components of an ambitious program for the 2001 year at its recent first Executive meeting for the year.

In addition to maintaining its bi-monthly Luncheon Club, which in 2001 will hear bi-monthly presentations on the topic of "A Century of Australian Religious Leadership" at the Great Synagogue, the Council will conduct a major Passover demonstration for non-Jewish audiences in Sydney's Western Suburbs and undertake a major seminar series dealing with issues related to interfaith understanding.

In addition, a follow-up to last year's highly successful Jewish/Muslim poetry presentation is planned for May, this year to be accompanied by musical components.

On topics dealing with the Holocaust, the Council will continue its informational program which includes its annual Shoah Commemoration in the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral and a special Holocaust theatrical presentation for non-Jewish students. In addition, the Holocaust seminar for non-Jewish teaching personnel will be revived this year under the direction of Rabbis Apple, Lampert and Freedman.

The Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) commemoration will also again be held at the Martin Place Cenotaph as will a public debate on the issue of religious intolerance later in the year.

Meanwhile it has also been confirmed that the new Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AO, has agreed to continue the Council's vice regal patronage, which was inaugurated last year by the outgoing Governor, the Hon. Gordon Samuels.

President NSW Council of Christians and Jews, Henry Mendelson said the Council's programming plans for 2001 indicated a growing acceptance within the community of the need to pursue initiatives designed to engender inter-faith understanding and to encourage dialogue in all its forms between the denominations.

"We saw this to a greater degree than ever before last year so that we are encouraged the community will support this work in a broader measure in the years to come", Mendelson said.

In particular he acknowledged the encouragement and support received from such bodies as the Board of Deputies, The Sydney Jewish Museum and the National Council of Jewish Women.

"There is a genuine desire on behalf of such organisations and of their non-Jewish counterparts throughout NSW to come to grips with mutual problems related to lack of understanding and intolerance. Moreover there is a greater acceptance for the Council often to be the catalyst to bring about solutions to such problems", Mendelson added.

South Australian Branch:

Dr. Evan Zuesse reports

The South Australian CCJ held its main public event late last year in the form of a panel discussion on "The Meaning of the Holy Land in Judaism, and in Christianity."

It was decided this year that the Council would draw on its own members for the public event. Spokesperson for the Christian viewpoint was Father Michael Trainor, former Co-Chair of the Council representing the Christian community, and the for the Jewish viewpoint, Dr. Evan Zuesse, the present Council Co-Chair. (The South Australian Council appoints two Co-Chairs to preside concurrently, with each chairing alternate meetings).

Each of the presenters discussed his own especially significant memories of Israel, based on visits there, and interwove these with more general theological Reflections drawn from his tradition.

Dr. Vicki Balabanski, of the Adelaide College of Divinity, chaired the panel.

Council members have also participated in a variety of other activities, such as acting as volunteer guides at the Anne Frank Exhibit in Adelaide, participating in Multi-Faith Association meetings and public events, inviting Jewish members to address Christian schools and adult education groups, among others. Plans are under way to present informal seminars or addresses to staff and students at the Adelaide College of Divinity, in addition to the normal public lectures in the coming year.

5. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Religious leaders at Davos face up to globalization challenge

ICCJ Heppenheim - 31 January 2001.

World religious and spiritual leaders, including senior representatives of the Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths, meeting here at the invitation of the World Economic Forum, have agreed to seek the creation of a framework integrating leaders of religion, business, politics and civil society to help tackle "both opportunities and perils" offered by globalisation.

In a statement at the end of their two-day session, the religious leaders said that, on the one hand, globalisation could help millions of people around the world overcome poverty, improve health and education, participate in economic and political decisions and improve their lives.

On the other hand, "partly because spiritual values have not been given due consideration, globalisation has produced environmental degradation, sharpened disparities between 'haves' and 'have nots' and thereby diverted national priorities away from basic services and threatened to homogenise local traditions into a global consumerist culture."

All Sheikhs and Rabbis blessed this historical meeting and agreed to establish a permanent forum for actual discussions.

6. YOUR INPUT INVITED

The CCJWA Newsletter is produced by the executive committee and is distributed quarterly by 'snail mail', e-mail and fax. It is principally distributed to CCJWA members but copies are also made available to congregations of the five faith communities directly supporting our work.

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