

News from the

ECUMENICAL FRATERNITY

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Dear Friends,

This summer Rev William Broughton takes over from Rev Prof Marcel Dubois as our new President. We are all most grateful to Prof Dubois for having provided an unshakable foundation for our work during the last two years. All who know our new President are sure he will do the same.

It is not an abrupt "change of guard", since "Bill" Broughton was in Jerusalem in the mid-1960s just when Prof Dubois was among those who created our Fraternity. He was a personal friend of his fellow-Anglican, Rev Peter Schneider, who is revered by us as the Fraternity's founding spirit. After long service as a U. S. Navy chaplain, he returned to Jerusalem some years ago and immediately reimmersed himself in Fraternity activities.

As a "former naval person", Rev Broughton is famed for inviting visitors to "come aboard" and climb up to enjoy generous hospitality in his modest quarters at the cathedral

gate. He has also renewed old contacts with Israeli archaeologists at the Hebrew Union College and elsewhere, participating in digs at sites that have cast an exciting new light on many biblical texts. We are happy to have his promise to guide members and friends of the Fraternity around those sites.

Besides receiving this new stimulus to its research, the Fraternity will benefit from Rev Broughton's friendships in the ancient oriental churches. For some years already, the Fraternity has been enriched by members from the Ethiopian and Armenian Orthodox Churches and the Church of the East. This year (see inside) we were also honoured with a lecture from the new Archbishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Jerusalem.

The witness of these churches in the Holy Land dates from the first Christian centuries. We look forward to sharing their contribution to our research theme for 1993-94: "(Jewish) Tradition and (Christian) Traditions".

Study Programme

Our year of studies on "Jewish and Christian Principles of Religious Pluralism" began with a thus-titled lecture by **Prof Irving Greenberg** on October 29, 1992. Judaism sees Christians in terms of the seven commandments given to Noah's children; Christianity sees Jews in an eschatological scheme (Romans 9-11). When we admit that we thereby underestimate each other, we recognise that the divine purpose is greater than our human theological categories can express.

On November 19, **Prof Justin Taylor** of the Ecole Biblique asked "Why Did Paul Persecute the Church?" and argued that the Pharisaic party included some Zealots. On December 17, **Prof Aviezer Ravitzky** of the Hebrew University asked "Is There a Kulturkampf in Israel Today?" He recalled Rabbi Kook, who anticipated that secular Zionists would underestimate the ability of Jewish religion to revive — and that religious Jews would underestimate the healthy impact of Zionism on Jewish religion.

The subject of **Dr David Satran** of the Hebrew University on January 28, 1993, was "Sacred Text, Preacher and Audience: Dynamics and Pluralism in the Early Christian Centuries". He suggested that the polemics between early Christians and Jews imply more mutual appreciation than at first meets the eye. On February 15, **Rev Dr Laurentius Klein** of the Dormition Abbey discussed "Unity and Pluralism of the Monotheistic Religions in Nicholas of Cusa". Nicholas sought to reduce religious antagonisms by arguing that all revealed religions are just "a few expressions of God's word or of eternal reason".

Our outgoing President, **Rev Prof Marcel Dubois**, offered "Philosophical Principles of Pluralism in the Thought of Jacques Maritain" on March 25. Maritain held that

knowledge is only possible because both the human intellect and the intellectual contact with things are created by the divine intellect.

On April 29, **Most Rev Anwar Abraham** surveyed "Ecumenical Activities and Relationship of the Coptic Orthodox Church through the Ages until Today", recalling the worldwide mission of the early Egyptian Christians and describing the revival of his church's witness during the last century. A contributor to the famous *Coptic Encyclopedia*, he recently began his service as Archbishop in Jerusalem with a study day open to all comers.

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Fraternity took place on May 17. Rev William Broughton was elected President, Rev Petra Heldt was reelected Executive Secretary, and Rev Ermanno Garbi and Br Pierre Lenhardt were reelected to the Steering Committee for the next two years.

Interreligious Activity

In the last year there has been a great increase in interreligious activities in Jerusalem. One factor was the creation of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI) on January 16, 1991. This roof organisation promotes the interreligious activities of its fifty member organisations, as well as bringing them together for joint activities. During December 4-5, the ICCI held a seminar on "The Impact of the Arab-Israeli Conflict on Interreligious Relations in Israel"; our Executive Secretary spoke about the impact on Christian-Jewish dialogue.

The Franciscan teaching institution in Jerusalem, the Studium Biblicum, organised a seminar during March 24-25 on "The Divine Promises to the Patriarchs". Following an idea of Prof Enzo Cortese, the understanding of the divine promises was examined in the Hebrew Bible (Prof

Alexander Rofé), the rabbinic literature (Dr Alon Goshen-Gottstein), the New Testament (Fr Robert J. Karris) and the Islamic Tradition (Dr Yasir Al-Mallah). Of the eight invited responses, four were given by Fraternity members: Rev Dr Frans Bouwen (White Fathers), Prof Maurice Gilbert (Pontifical Biblical Institute), Malcolm Lowe (Ratisbonne Christian Centre of Jewish Studies) and Rev Prof Thomas Stransky (Tantur Ecumenical Institute). The proceedings will be published by the Franciscan Printing Press.

The Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies of Brigham Young University, in cooperation with Prof James Charlesworth of Princeton Theological Seminar, held a seminar on "The Search for Human Nature" during April 20–22. Nine speakers examined how as many religions and denominations perceive the human being. They included Archimandrite Dionyssos (Holy Cross Monastery), Msgr Dr Richard Matthes (Charge of the Holy See of Notre Dame) and Prof David Flusser (Hebrew University).

The Fraternity recently honored Prof Flusser with issue 24/25 of our series *Immanuel*, entitled *The New Testament and Christian-Jewish Dialogue*. Copies are available for \$23 or £16 (\$21 and £14 to subscribers) from our office: P. O. Box 249, 91002 Jerusalem, Israel. Some copies of Issue 22/23, on *People, Land and State of Israel: Jewish and Christian Perspectives*, are still available at the same price.

During April 30–May 2, led by Rev Prof Thomas Stransky, the Tantur Ecumenical Institute held a seminar on "Religious and Cultural Components in Israeli-Arab Relations". Topics included "Religion in Democracy", "Images of One Another in Literature and the Media", the ways in which the Land of Israel is seen in Judaism and Islam, and "Crises of Christians in the Holy Land". The wise hand of Fraternity member Rev Peter du Brul (Bethlehem University) steered the sometimes excited discussion of

the last topic; he persuaded the participants to conclude with a pause to think in silence about one another's concerns.

During May 17–20, the Centre de Recherche Français de Jérusalem and Bar-Ilan University held an international conference on "Le Politique et le Religieux". A score of lecturers studied the issue's ancient roots and modern expressions in both Europe and the Middle East.

At its Annual General Meeting, the Fraternity noted how the expansion of interreligious activities in Israel, of which the above are only some principal examples, has brought a double benefit. On the one hand, Fraternity members play a large part in these activities and can inject the insights gained in our own shared research. On the other, the Fraternity itself can concentrate all the more on its own particular aim: the renewal of Christian theological understanding of Judaism and the Jewish people, helped by the unique perspectives offered to Christians in the State of Israel.

Visitors

Once again we mention a selection from many visitors who benefitted from the Fraternity's facilities. In October 1992 we received Rt Rev Frank Griswold, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, as well as groups led by Pastor Amelung from Chemnitz and Rev Hans Schwegler from Switzerland.

In October we could also help Mr Gellman from New York, who is preparing a book on his experiences of presenting Judaism to Christian audiences. In November we saw delegations from the German Federation of Women Jurists, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, and an impressive group of "Christian knights" led by Graf zu Castell.

January's visitors included Prof Anne-

Marie Aagard, a Co-President of the World Council of Churches, Justice William Kaye, Chairman of the newly formed Australian Council of Christians and Jews, Rabbi A. James Rudin, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, and a dialogue group of American Jews and Christians led by Prof Henry Noah. We were also able to arrange meetings with relevant scholars for Murray Watts from Britain, who is planning a television film of the life of St Paul. One idea is for it to start with the betrothal or the marriage of Paul's sister in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 23:16).

An old friend, Rev Peter Jennings, came to refresh acquaintances in Jerusalem in February. Formerly Secretary of the British Council of Christians and Jews, he spent several years superintending the Methodist Whitechapel Mission, in part of London's East End where Bangladeshis have replaced the communities of poor Jewish immigrants. He recently became a superintendent in Ilford, Essex, where he found great enthusiasm for dialogue between the local Methodists and Jews.

In March we could admire the courage of Dr Klaus Sensche, who accompanied his colleagues of the "Figtree Press" to Israel. We also greeted Rabbi Matt Friedman of Little Rock, Arkansas and thanked him for his invaluable assistance in promoting the Fraternity in the U. S.

During March 18-21, our Executive Secretary both spoke at the Second Noah Interreligious Conference, organised in Berlin at the Haus der Kirche by Rev Manfred Richter, and conducted the service that concluded the conference. She also gave lectures in Berlin parishes, including the Fraternity's friends in Neuwestend and Trinitatis, and paid a return visit to Chemnitz in the former East Germany, where an eager interest in Christian-Jewish dialogue can now express itself freely.

April brought us several American visitors: radio host Rabbi Abba Leïter, Rev Dr James

Lyons, Director of the Ecumenical Institute for Christian-Jewish Understanding, and Mr Harvey Waisberg from this institute's Board of Directors. Pastor Dr Fenneberg came from Germany.

A delegation of women from the Northelbian Church under the leadership of Rev Ingrid Homann also came in April. We could help them in their wish to become acquainted with the country and especially with the situation of Christian women.

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Besides providing assistance to visitors from abroad, we were also able to satisfy requests for information, lectures or other forms of cooperation from numerous bodies and individuals in Israel. Examples include the Ratisbonne Christian Centre of Jewish Studies, Haifa University, the Society for the Protection of Nature, the Beit Berl Institute, the Study Centre of the Holocaust Memorial Centre Yad Vashem, the American Institute of Holy Land Studies, Aktion Sühnezeichen-Friedensdienst, the Leo Baeck Institute, the Melitz Centre, Bridges for Peace and the Ecce Home Centre of the Sisters of Zion.

All of our work, however, is possible only because of help from many directions. We think of our "landlord", Msgr Dr Richard Matthes, our office staff (Mrs Jill Groves, Mrs Annette Nolting and Mrs Julia), Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem and those who support our work from abroad, including the Vier Moderamina of the Dutch Reformed Churches, the Northelbian Church, the Evangelisches Missionswerk Hamburg and parishes and individuals. Many thanks to all of you!

Yours Fraternally,

Rev Petra Heldt (Executive Secretary)