

ECUMENICAL Theological Research FRATERNITY in Israel

POB 249 | 91002 Jerusalem | Tel: 625 4941 | Fax 672 4237 | Email: ecu_frat@netvision.net.il

President: Dr. Kirsten Stoffregen Pedersen | Executive Secretary: Rev. Petra Heldt

CHARITABLE SERVICES

The Syrian Orthodox Community

This year, instead of the now-traditional summer camp for the Syrian Orthodox youth held at *Tabgha*, Tiberias, the community has been provided a chance to hold a mini-version of the camp in Bethlehem, thanks to our donors. The joy of these children at the Catholic Centre swimming pool and at the barbecues in the Church backyard is most touching, in spite of the tensions from which they are unfortunately not exempt.

Our dear **Despina** who had an operation for *scoliosis* this past autumn is in need of follow-up treatment due to complications. The support of UK-constituents has been overwhelming, *thank you!*

The Mar Efrem School preparations continue, now with a new architect, also from the Syrian Orthodox community. He, as did the late **Ghassan**, desires to contribute from his expertise for the good of his people.

Help for the Ethiopians

Many thanks to the donors of quality clothing and useful goods, for the needy among the local Ethiopian Christian community: **Studium in Israel; Lifegate; Yvonne Groger & volunteers at Beit Aviv**. May your generosity be rewarded!

We thank the Lord for each and every *perfect gift from above* given to the needy Christians in the Holy Land.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

An Ecumenical Gathering

On Saturday July 28, **The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Rev. & Rt. Hon. Dr. George Carey & The Primate of All Ireland, The Most Revd. Robert Eames** were hosted in St. George's Guest House Garden, followed by

NEWSLETTER NO. 24 July 2001

Dear Friends,

The message of the Sermon on the Mount continues to ring true for all of us, afflicted and affected by discord: *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God (Matthew 5:4,5,7,9).* We are comforted by the kindness of our friends worldwide, glad to share with those around us *the comfort which we have received.*

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The Fraternity Series 2001/2002

This coming academic year our topic will be: *Communal Identity and Diversity in Judaism and Christianity. Faces of Religious Communities in Jerusalem.*

We look forward to studying together and welcome you to join us again this year!

Special Lectures

*The *Sir Sigmund Sternberg Prizes for Interfaith Understanding* Lecture on the Study of Religion held at the Hebrew University on June 7: *From Jesus to Paul: Reflections on the Achievements of David Flusser*, by **Prof. John G. Gager** of Princeton University. Gager's literary portrait of Flusser was enthusiastically received. It is meant to encourage the young generation to continue with innovative studies on the New Testament.

*The *Dr. Louis Katzoff Memorial Lecture* held on July 15 was presented by **Walter Zanger**, on *Violence and Holiness in Biblical Dan*.

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Evensong in the Cathedral at which the Archbishop of Canterbury preached. He encouraged the peoples of this country to refrain from violence and stressed the fact that as Christians, we need to be an example of peaceful and friendly behaviour, to both Jew and Muslim.

In Loving Memory

Also on July 28, a Memorial Service was held in memory of the late **Mother Basilea Schlink**, at the headquarters of the *Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary* in Darmstadt, Germany. The service was led by **Bishops Wilkens and Zippert** and Mother Superior, **Sister Pista**.

In Auschwitz

A prayer and liturgy of repentance was conducted on May 27 by the Polish Episcopate, for the murdered in Jedwabne. Led by the Primas of Poland and joined by the Cardinals Franciszek Macharski and Henryk Gulbinowicz, the service was supported by nearly 50 Catholic bishops. Available at the Fraternity: A translation of the proceedings from Polish to German by the Director of the *Auschwitz Centre for Dialogue and Prayer*, **Rev. Dr. Manfred Deselaers**, a close friend of the Fraternity.

FRATERNITY COMMUNITY NEWS

Ratisbonne Pontifical Institute

Ratisbonne has a President, **Fr. Charles H. Miller**, S.M., S. Th.D., former Dean of *St. Mary's University*, San Antonio Texas. He has the formidable task to put the romantic French Christian centre for Jewish Studies on a sound financial basis and bring the English program in line with American Graduate school standards. Ratisbonne is scheduled to be opened again for the academic public in two years time. Fr. Miller is happy to host the Fraternity in Ratisbonne and has become a Member.

New Ethiopian Orthodox Archbishop

We are sad to say good-bye to **Archbishop Abba Gabriel!** *Your kindness in accepting visitors on so many occasions is much appreciated.* In his stead, we warmly welcome **Abuna Qawstos** - a scholar of Bible exegesis and liturgy.

Our Condolences

The Fraternity expresses sincere condolences to the Greek Orthodox community on the death of **Father Gerasimos**, abbot of the Monastery of St. George in Wadi Kelt. On the night of June 12 Abbot Gerasimos was the victim of a shooting incident on his way home. For the last six years, he devoted himself to restoring the 1500-year-old monastery, on his own.

Visitors

We had the joy of welcoming three very active Corresponding Members of the Fraternity: **Msgr. Dr. Richard Mathes**, Rector of *Anima Pontifical Institute* in Rome; **Sr. Ibolya Glancz**, nds from London; **Prof. Sr. Eileen Schuller**, Head of *McMaster University's* Religious Studies Department.

Student Christian Forum

The summer excursions this summer have been most popular! So far, there have been tours to: The Christian Sanctuaries on the Mt. of Olives; The Holy Sepulchre and Oriental Churches in the Old City; The Ethiopian Churches and Monasteries in Jerusalem. **Sr. Abraham's** expertise and friendly manner has been appreciated by both English and French speakers on her tours, as she has kindly catered to both.

New Members

Due to popular demand, the Fraternity has established "Corresponding Membership" for former members abroad who wish to remain connected to Jerusalem, via the Fraternity. Among the most recent additions: **Rev. Patrick**

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Gray (USA) & Fr. Dr. Matthew Kizhake Aranjaney (India).

Us". Included: A selection of recently-released documents related to the topics discussed this year.

PUBLICATIONS

With warm Jerusalem greetings,

From Sweden

Rev. Petra Heldt

Our former local Member & now Corresponding Member **Prof. Dr. Bengt Holmberg** has recently published a book in Swedish entitled *Jesus: The Man and More* (Engl.transl.of title). Based on lectures given at *Tantur*, this book is sure to be as popular as his previous publications.

Centro Pro Unione

The Spring 2001/n. 59 issue of *Centro Pro Unione* includes two articles of particular interest. "The Necessity for Theological Dialogue between Christians and Jews", by **Jack Bemporad**, Director of the *Center for Interreligious Understanding USA* recommends asking, "How can our respective traditions deal with the ultimate questions we face as human beings - suffering, salvation, the nature of what it means to be a human being, the nature of God and creation, the nature of the good?" And he adds, "From our own faith perspective, in trying to answer these questions, we will find that we will learn from one another, what we believe and why we believe it".

In the same publication is a Homily given by **Bishop Walter Kasper**, Secretary of the *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*. Entitled, "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2001: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life'" the Homily reminds us that "the Head and Lord of the Church has Himself initiated the ecumenical movement by the Holy Spirit, and because He is trustworthy He will lead it to its final goal".

Soon Available

The David Flusser Symposium May 23 & 24 proceedings are currently prepared in our offices, together with a compilation of the 2000/2001 Lecture Series "To Heal the Wounds that Divide