

ETRFI NEWSLETTER

Issue 33

April 2003

Dear Friends,

A Happy Easter and *chag sameach!* Having once again escaped the very real threat of war in this country, we have a common reason to celebrate freedom -*cherut*- from our enemies. We not only remain thankful for His protection but we pray also for the true freedom of all those who are oppressed, particularly in this Holy Season.

Christ is risen!

*"Blessed are
those who have
not seen and
yet believe."*

John 20:29

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

—2002/2003 Lecture Series

Fr. Thomas Maier, WF of St. Anne's in Jerusalem spoke on his doctoral research (Ancient Synods in Ancient Antioch) on February 27th: "Time of Crisis: The Example of the Synods of Antioch in the Third and Fourth Centuries." Fr. Maier expanded upon six problem areas addressed at the time: 1. Liturgical questions; 2. Fixing the canon of the Holy Scriptures; 3. Problems of church structure; 4. Personal strife; 5. Apostasy and purity of faith; 6. General questions of human relations and moral life.

Pastor Ermanno Garbi, former head of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Israel lectured on the 27th of April on "Time of Grace: The Sabbath from a Christian Point of View." Pastor Garbi: Its observance has at the same time a material, spiritual and ethical implication: it means the recognition of God's sovereignty as Creator of the world and of the universe." Both lectures are posted on the ETRFI website: www.etrfi.org.

Inside this issue:

Special Lectures	2
Palm Sunday Sermon	3
The Future of Ratisbonne	3
Sinai Excursion	4
Of Blessed Memory	5
Publications	5

Coming up next at the ETRFI:

- May 1 Lecture: Professor Moshe Idel, "Psychomachia in the Three Monotheistic Religions."
- AGM on June 19 at 4 PM

—Special Lectures

On February 6th **Prof. David E. Aune** of the University of Notre Dame, Indiana lectured at Tantur on “Picturing the Apocalypse. Visual Interpretation of the Apocalypse of John from Early Middle Ages to the Reformation.”

The University of Haifa’s Faculty of Humanities School of History’ Program in Modern Greek Studies held a symposium on “The Greek Orthodox Church in the Modern Era” on March 3rd. The keynote speech was delivered by **His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina**. Speakers included **Dr. Sotiris Roussos** of Pantheon University in Athens: “The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Greek-Palestinian-Israeli Triangle, is There a Place?”

The March 13th Tantur Public Lecture featured **Dorothy Jean Weaver**, Professor of New Testament at the Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Virginia. She spoke on the topic, “Resistance and Nonresistance. New Testament Perspectives on Confronting the Powers.” Dr. Weaver’s presentation identified two contrasting and complementary strategies for confronting these ‘powers’: Resistance (James 4:7) and Nonresistance (Matthew 5:39).

On March 26th the International Research Group in Epigraphy of the Holy Land enjoyed a presentation by **Professor Michael Stone** on the oldest Armenian inscriptions in the Holy Land, dating back to the 7th century CE. The lecture focused on three inscriptions:

**The ETRFI website
is updated weekly
with ecumenical
news and articles of
interest. See
www.etrfi.org.**

- A) Pilgrim graffiti in Nazareth and Sinai of the mid-fifth century. They are the oldest Armenian writing in the world.
- B) The new Eustathius mosaic unearthed in 1991-92 of the seventh century.
- C) A small wall graffito near the Jaffa Gate, the oldest documentation of the Armenians living close to the present-day Armenian Quarter.

CHARITABLE SERVICES

—Donations

A generous donation was received in support of the Syrian Orthodox children of Bethlehem in payment of their school fees! “Whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward” (Matthew 10:42).

Studium in Israel in Ratisbonne has continued to kindly deliver clothing and useful items to be distributed by the ETRFI to those in need. We are always happy to be able to pass these on to grateful recipients.

Friends abroad have remembered again the Jerusalem Coptic School. Thank you for your faithfulness!

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

—At the Dormition Abbey

The Benedictine monks on Mount Zion organized and called on all Christians to a prayer for peace on February 10-22. The church bells rang at 3 PM as an exhortation for peace.

On Friday March 21st the Feast of St. Benedict and the Saint's Day of **Abbot Benedikt Lindemann OSB** was celebrated at the Church of the Hagia Maria Sion.

—Palm Sunday Sermon

The newly-appointed **Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams** preached at the Cathedral of St. George the Martyr on Palm Sunday, April 13, concluding with: "We look to One who is more than a prophet, who has cleared the way for us not just back to Eden but forward to the new city, new Jerusalem, in which the nations are healed and strangers live gratefully together."

—Remembering the *Shoah*

Present at the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto on *Yom haShoah* on April 28th and 29th was the representative of the EKD (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland) in Jerusalem **Propst Martin Reyer** and a delegation of the **Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary** who came to Israel on an extended visit.

—Remembering the Armenian Genocide

On the 24th of April the Armenian Orthodox Church remembers the 1915 genocide of their people by the Ottoman Turks in which 1.5 million died. For further information: www.armenian-genocide.org.

On April 30th the Armenian Studies Institute of African and Asian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem hosted an evening in commemoration of the Armenian genocide. Lectures were held by **Dr. Yair Auron**, author of *The Armenian Genocide and the State of Israel* and **Dr. Sergio La Porta**, known for "*Towards the Light*" *Daniel Varujan 1884-1915*. The audience was greeted by **H.B. Torkom II Manoogian**, Patriarch of the Armenians in Jerusalem.

FRATERNITY COMMUNITY NEWS

—The Future of Ratisbonne

It was decided to relocate the Jewish-Christian studies from the Pontifical Institute of Ratisbonne to the Gregorian University in Rome. Presently, new resident-keepers are wanted. The ETRFI received more than seventy letters from its constituents worldwide requesting to continue operating from the basement of Ratisbonne.

—*Un écho d'Israel*

In this month's edition of *Un écho d'Israel* there is a report on a tour being organized by **Fr. Emile Shoufani** for May 2003 to Auschwitz. To view the full article: www.afiq.net/echo/index2.htm.

—Christian Leaders Meeting

The **UCCI** (United Council of Christians in Israel) arranged a meeting at the Ramle Immigration Police Headquarters on February 10th to discuss the confusion between illegal foreign workers and legal Christian personnel in the country. **Major General Yaakov Ganot**, Head of Immigration Police informed the delegation that the goal of his office is to deport 50 000 foreign workers by the end of the year 2003 and that with this goal in mind, his officers are not always able to distinguish between a foreign worker and a foreign volunteer. He underlined: "You in this group do not represent the group of people we are after" and he immediately appointed an officer with whom the Christians could be in direct contact with regard to this issue. The general confirmed as well the fact that as of February 1, the duties of the Ministry of Labour in regard to work visas had been transferred to the Ministry of Interior.

—Bridges for Peace Anniversary

A reception was held at the Mount Zion Hotel on March 16 celebrating Bridges for Peace' 25 years of service in Israel. BFP greatly contributes not only to tourism but also provides basic necessities to the thousands of needy families in the Holy Land.

—"Iconography" Seminar

Bishop John Bayton of Melbourne Australia, an internationally known artist and iconographer, will be holding a special seminar on iconography at St. George's College on May 3-4. Lectures include "Spirituality of iconography," "How to write an icon," "Discerning the God-Image in Self." For further information: Call Rana at 02 626 4704 or fax 02 626 4703 or email bursar@stgeorgees.org.il.

—Sinai Excursion

From May 19-23, St. George's College is offering a Sinai Excursion Program for members of the international community, teachers, aid workers, NGO and diplomatic personnel, clergy and anyone else resident in the country. The organizers promise that: "It will be an exciting and relaxing venture into the Sinai Desert, with jeep safaris to fascinating sights, moderate hikes in gorgeous desert terrain, time for silent reflection among the canyons, a thrilling camel ride (or climb) up Gebel Musa, and a swim in the Red Sea!" \$390 per person. Call **Henry Carse** at 626-4704 or email him at carse@stgeorges.org.il if you are interested!

—Israel & Jordan Study Tour

UHL (The University of the Holy Land) offers a study tour entitled "Historical Geography of the Bible" May 11-June 2 in Israel and June 1-14 in Jordan with **Dr. Ginger Barth Caessens** as the instructor (Part 1: \$1990, Part 2: \$1475). For more info call UHL at 972 2 623 6804/5 or email csec@netvision.net.il.

—Visitors

Rev. Ingrid Homann brought a group of twenty-six people from Germany to Israel March 15-24! The group greatly enjoyed themselves in spite of the threat of conflict.

Sr. Lucy Thorson, Director of SIDIC in Rome, was the visiting professor teaching at Ecce Homo in the beginning of April. It was good to see the Fraternity's former president and friend whom we miss in Jerusalem.

—News from the Members

There is a new member in Haifa: **His Grace, The Greek Melkite Catholic Archbishop of Akko, Haifa, Nazareth and All Galilee Boutros Mouallem**. AB Mouallem has been an active participant in the Alexandria Process since its inception in January 2002.

The **Grandchamp Community** based in Switzerland has celebrated their 50th anniversary on the 9th of February! We particularly share the joy of **Sr. Maatje**, a Jerusalem-resident "Soeur de Grandchamp" and a member of the ETRFI. For your information, the community has a website: www.grandchamp.org.

Rev. Coos Schoneveld is co-director of a project entitled "Religious Meanings of the Holy Land for Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims and Christians." An educational unit for use in Palestinian and Israeli schools, the project includes a comprehensive methodology aimed at improving the mutual understanding of the history and presence of the peoples of the Holy Land.

We congratulate those whose birthdays we happen to know: **Rev. Wolfgang Grusnick** has celebrated his 60th birthday on March 28. **Fr. Pierbatista Pizzarello**, a relatively new member of the ETRFI, celebrates his special day on the 21st of April.

—Of Blessed Memory

The funeral for **Sister Dikla** (18.5.1936-11.3.2003) of the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary was held on March 15 at Kanaan in Darmstadt. Sister Dikla entered the sisterhood shortly before her eighteenth birthday. Since 1973 she carried the main responsibility for the Sisterhood's English-language publications. The letter that appeared in three Israeli newspapers on March 7 was thanks to her initiative. One of the Israeli responses: "It is like medicine for our hearts."

—Publications

Rev. Canon Andrew White's book on Iraq is hot off the press! *Iraq: People of Promise, Land of Despair* (Kent: Sovereign World Limited, 2003) is a moving personal account of Canon White's numerous visits to Iraq before the Iraq War. With a forward by **Lord Carey**.

Moshe Aumann's *Conflict & Connection. The Jewish-Christian-Israel Triangle* will soon be available at Steimatzky Books. Mr. Aumann has extensive experience in the field of interreligious affairs as the former consul general in New York of the Israeli Foreign Ministry and as chief writer and editor of the publication *Christians in Israel*.

Faith & Freedom will be re-publishing the book by James Parkes entitled *End of an Exile: Israel and the Gentile World* with updated essays by contemporary theologians

ETRFI Newsletter

The Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel was founded in 1966 by a group of professors, theologians and lay people in Jerusalem. They shared the perspective that recent history demanded a fundamental consideration of Christian attitudes towards the Jewish faith and people, and that the State of Israel offered a unique setting for facing this task together.

Today, the ETRFI is the recognized roof-organization for Christians engaged in Christian-Jewish dialogue in Israel. It is also the ecumenical group containing the widest range of members from all the historic churches.

LEADERSHIP

President:	Dr. Kirsten Stoffregen Pedersen
Vice-President:	Canon William Broughton
Executive Secretary:	Rev. Dr. Petra Heldt
Treasurer:	Br. Elio Passeto NDS

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the ETRFI represent the Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox Churches in approximately equal numbers, totaling more than one hundred, both locally and abroad.

Donations can be made by cheque or via bank transfer addressed to: Ecumenical Fraternity; Union Bank; Main Branch; 34, Jaffa Rd; Jerusalem; Account # 10638/62.

We're on the
web!
www.ctrfi.org

*POB 249
Jerusalem 91002
Israel
Tel: 02 625 4941
Fax: 02 672 4237*

Email: ecu_frat@netvision.net.il