



From the International Council of Christians and Jews at the Martin Buber House, Heppenheim, Germany

Patron: Sir Sigmund Sternberg, OSTJ, KCSG, **President:** Rev. Prof. Dr John T. Pawlikowski, **Vice-Presidents:** Rabbi Ehud Bandel, Gunnel Borgegård
Treasurer: Edwin Green, **Members:** Bishop Luis del Castillo, Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, Rev. Dick Pruiksma, Prof. Dr Stefan Schreiner, Sr Margaret Shepherd

President's Word

► 2005 marked several important anniversaries, not least the 40th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the groundbreaking document on Catholic-Jewish relations which also had a decisive impact on world Protestantism. I personally have been involved in commemorations in such places as Portland, Kansas City, Detroit and at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. International celebrations were held in Rome where an academic conference took place at the Pontifical Gregorian University in which a number of ICCJ-related persons made presentations. This was followed by an official Vatican commemoration in late October which featured presentations by my predecessor as ICCJ President, Rabbi David Rosen, as well as Cardinal Lustiger who has had ties with ICCJ over the years. Other major celebrations took place in Vienna under the sponsorship of our Austrian ICCJ member organisation and at the Catholic University of Leuven where I was a plenary speaker. Hopefully all these celebrations will spark a revival of interest in the work of ICCJ. Earlier in the year we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the transfer of our headquarters from England to the former home of Martin Buber in Heppenheim and the support rendered throughout by the city of Heppenheim, its regional authority as well as the Land Hesse. Several other anniversaries were also commemorated this fall including the 40th anniversary of Martin Buber's death. Buber provided the spirit for the ICCJ and we remain grateful to have our international headquarters at the home where so much of his influential work was written.

As described in more detail in another part of this newsletter, in July the ICCJ returned to

the United States for the first time in 25 years with its annual conference in Chicago. The conference which drew well over 200 participants reconnected the ICCJ to the American scene and provided opportunities for participants to establish new networks. We have received very positive feedback regarding the conference. Two other ICCJ conferences, that of the Young Leadership and that of the Abrahamic Forum Councils referred to in this newsletter also went well. Gratitude is particularly due to Stefan Schreiner who despite a very full schedule expertly put together this highly acclaimed Sarajevo conference, and to the Young Leadership committee whose membership distributed over various countries and continents manages to cooperate imaginatively and creatively.

Thanks to Rev Dr Hans Ucko we will also participate in the World Council of Churches General Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Vice-President Gunnel Borgegård will be our officially designated representative and we will sponsor an afternoon workshop on contemporary Christian-Jewish relations.

Hans Ucko has also provided some funding for a further session of the theological dialogue consultation which the ICCJ launched in London in December 2004. Details of the continuation must still be worked out. Hans Ucko, who is crucial to this consultation, is at the moment heavily absorbed with details for the WCC Assembly.

The ICCJ faces continuing challenges, particularly on the fiscal level. Traditional streams of income are disappearing. But the ICCJ leadership plans an aggressive response to this situation at the annual Executive Board meeting in Heppenheim early in the year ■

Healing the World – Working Together – Religion in Global Society

► At this year's conference, the ICCJ brought together in the USA people from Europe, the Middle East, North and South America, Australia and New Zealand.

25 years ago the topic dealt with the battle for human rights in the aftermath of the Shoah and the near destruction of European Jewry. In the intervening quarter century the ICCJ, the only international body dealing with Christian-Jewish and more lately also with the Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue, has been in the forefront of uniting likeminded groups in 32 countries world-wide in cementing the foundations of encounter and dialogue, and in enabling this work to move from theological and academic considerations to education at all levels and to all spheres of public life.

In responding to the invitation of its USA members, the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) and the Council of Centers for Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR) the ICCJ, co-hosted by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and the Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Center at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago this time laid the emphasis on *the position of religion in global society*. It was also a logical follow-up of the 2004 Aachen conference which addressed the matter of Changing Borders, (ICCJ NEWS 29). As always, the ICCJ offered a uniquely wide platform where leading scholars and

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Sr Dr Mary Boys, USA, (left) recipient of the 2005 ICCJ Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award, with Dr Zdzislaw Bielecki, Poland, and Mrs Judith Banki, USA.
Photo: Sr Marianne Dacy

theologians meet and engage in discussions with the growing number of committed people from all walks of life and age groups. In addition to the old wounds of prejudice, historical separation and racial discord there are also the new wounds of our age that require healing: changing demography, population mass migration, changing boundaries, physical as well as in attitudes, of mindless violence, of a world searching for values. There were some 220 participants, mainly from the 32 ICCJ member countries, including Australia, Israel, New Zealand, Tunisia and Turkey.

The **opening keynote address** was presented by Rev Dr Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, who touched upon certain tensions in relation to the situation in Israel. In particular to the WCC's recent call for divestment from companies that profit from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which he saw in the context of working for reconciliation between the two sides.

To this, Rabbi David Rosen, now ICCJ honorary president, gave a spirited response saying that the divestment call, far from furthering reconciliation regrettably only increased a climate of delegitimization of Israel. He did not believe that the argument was from the right to use economic leverage in pursuit and promotion of peace and justice. The conflict, he said, was territorial, each party seeing itself as having just claims. Placing exclusive blame on one side while ignoring assault and violence against it could only compound the conflict and set back the possibility of reconciliation. He also referred to the resurgence of antisemitism in Europe. While it was good to hear the WCC General Secretary refer to its 1948 First Assembly Amsterdam statement in the wake of the Shoah recognizing the State of Israel, he would have wished to hear in Chicago fifty years on a condemnation of those who are continuing propagation of antisemitic myths. Yet he hoped that Dr Kobia's presence was also a sign of a new spirit of engagement and consultation with the Jewish community. If we wish to remain true to our most sublime value we have the duty to work together recognizing that failure to do so would betray our call as children of Abraham to be a blessing to humankind and the prerequisite to be a blessing to one another. The ICCJ then issued the following statement.

Investment in Israel/Palestine Peace

These are very difficult and sensitive times for Israelis and Palestinians, both of whom need support from the international community to try to ensure peace and justice for all may prevail.

Whenever possible, there should be international investment in projects which alleviate suffering, lower tension and promote economic cooperation.

Israel is currently preparing for disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. It is of singular importance for Israel to feel that it has the understanding of the wider world and in particular from religious institutions, whose raison d'être is the peaceful resolution of violent conflicts, as it prepares for withdrawal. It is also important for Palestinians to feel that they have a viable economic future in the area.

Negative or hostile gesture can confirm extremists, on all sides, in their intransigence and make it more difficult for people to play an effective role in mediation.

A greater international understanding needs to be built concerning the complex political, theological, social and cultural elements of the Israeli/Palestinian situation.

The International Council of Christians and Jews calls for support for all those working for peace in Israel/Palestine and encourages those endeavouring to make a positive difference on the ground.

Another issue engaging the thoughts at the outset of the conference was the omission in Pope Benedict XVI's speech of Israel from a list of countries suffering from terrorist attacks. Reactions and sensitivities to this politicization of the Jewish-Christian dialogue resulted in creative tension and debates throughout the conference and were central to many discussions over shared meals.

A workshop – **Reconciliation Efforts in Israel/Palestine** – presented by Rabbi Dr Ron Kronish and Ambassador Shmuel Hadas, two of Israel's most experienced leaders in the field of these efforts in Israel and Palestine gave proof also of the concerns of the ICCJ and its membership to contribute without bias to a solution in a region that has outreaches far beyond the Middle East.

The conference started with an in-depth analysis of **the role of religion in the three monotheist faith communities in American society**, by Dr David Elcott, New York, Attorney Azam Nizamuddin, Elmhurst, III., who entitled his talk *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, and Tom Roberts, Kansas City Missouri. It was followed by an equally frank analysis of the **role of religion in European society** by Clifford Longley, England and Rev Katja Kriener, Germany.

Comparative workshops on the role of religion in the public life of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South America gave proof of the ICCJ's long-standing concern with this interrelationship, including antisemitism and racism in the diverse regions with specific regard for the respective geographical, historical and cultural background and experiences. There was unanimity that with regard to Jews and Christians a stage had been reached where rather than stress that which they hold in common, both can and in our day and age must in coalition address from their different traditions the burning contemporary issues such as the war in Iraq, the Israel/Palestinian conflict, ecology, scientific development, poverty and hunger. There was need for engagement in the political scene. A Muslim speaker pointed out that in the USA more than in Europe, Muslims in particular from Asia no longer were an isolated minority. But like the European speakers he regretted the lack of qualified experts as well as the lack of a more contemporary interpretation of Qu'ran. Ways of improving the situation, of better teaching both in the host communities and the immigration or minority communities were explored. Guidelines were taken from the experience in numerous ICCJ member countries of teaching Jewish-Christian relations at all levels of education.

The **global society** aspect was highlighted in one lecture entitled *Liberation theology and multiculturalism: the globalization of anti-*

semitism by Prof. Amy Jill Levine, Nashville, USA.

The continuing challenge of antisemitism and its growth also beyond Europe was examined using France as a paradigm of what was happening where vanishing social taboos and anti-establishment left-leaning ideologies tended to demonize America and Israel as stereotypical originators of injustice and resulting terrorism. Speakers: Prof. Jerome Chanes, New York, Madeleine Cohen, France, Dr Michael Kotzin, Chicago.

Interesting comparison of the situation in the diverse countries and regions was enabled in a workshop that dealt with **religion in the work place**, newly emerging issues as well as responses presented by Dr Georgette Bennett, New York.

Similarly, a workshop on **biomedical issues**, presenters: Dr Tom Nairn and Rabbi Byron Sherwin, both of Chicago, gave proof of a new joint ethical concern with the inescapable progress in modern science and technology.

In this year of the 40th anniversary of **the Vatican Declaration Nostra Aetate** in which so many founder members of the ICCJ had been involved at the time, Rabbi Irvin (Yitz) Greenberg, New York, and Prof. John T. Pawlikowski looked **towards its future** not least in light of the growing complexity of the dialogue because of newly emergent conservative trends. Overall and on the background of almost two millennia of negative theology and relationship we are still at a comparatively early stage in the process of rethinking the theology of the Christian-Jewish relationship. There remains much to be done, particularly as in our globalized world in which interreligious understanding is not merely confined to the realm of theological ideas but directly impacts our life together in community.

Other workshops covered **Latino-Jewish Relations** – Fred Siegman and Patricia Mendoza, USA; **the Black Church – its history and theology** – Dr Homer Ashby, Rev Dr Herbert Martin, Dr Julia Speller, all of Chicago;

Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations from Historical Attitudes to Present-day Realities – Dr John Borelli, Washington, Rev Malcolm Weisman, England, and Prof M'hammed Fantar, Tunis, who formulated seven guideline points for dialogue:

- *There shall be no proselytism*
- *There shall be no anathema*
- *No one shall claim that one religion is better than another*
- *Everyone shall have the right to worship their own god*
- *No one can have access to absolute truth*
- *The profane cannot contain the sacred*
- *Everyone can choose their own way of approaching, recognizing in invoking the sacred.*

Theology of the Land in Judaism – Dr Edward Kessler, England, and Rabbi Eugene Korn, New York;

Judaism and Religious Pluralism – Rabbi Gilbert Rosenthal, New York;

Theological Issues in Jewish-Christian Relations – Dr Phillip A Cunningham, Boston, Dr Martin Forward, USA, Dr Edward Kessler; **Tensions in Jewish-Christian Relations** – Dr David Elcott, Dr Eugene Fisher, Washington, Rev Dr Hans Ucko, Geneva;

Teaching Jewish-Christian Relations – Sr Mary Ellen Coombe, Chicago, Hyma Levin, Evanston, Ill., Rabbi Rachel Montagu, England;

The new Union of Reform Judaism Programme on Inter-Religious Relations – Judith Hertz, New York, Rabbi David Sandmel, Chicago;

Dialogue – where next? an ICCJ Young Leadership exploration – Debbie Young, London, Suendam Birinci, Turkey, Lori Eisenberg, Boston.

The working sessions concluded with a plenary exploration of the **Future of Jewish-Christian Relations**.

Rev. Dr Philip A. Cunningham ended with the plea that both Christians and Jews try to think 'outside the box' of our inherited reflexes of opposition and denigration as an exercise of the divine freedom God always intended for our two covenanting communities, to walk through historical time together; Rabbi Mark Winer sought to find a way of incorporating our respective sense of otherness into our ethics by affirming that diversity is not an obstacle to be eliminated, but to ensure that it becomes the very basis upon which authentic relationship and ethics can be guaranteed;

Debbie Young, Young Leadership representative on the ICCJ Executive Board, pointed at the importance of drawing younger people into dialogue, bringing them together in affirmation of moral values, encouraging them to feel that they personally are making a difference, and to teach children and teens to learn that being different can be a good thing.

Women's issues: As the majority of ICCJ member organisations is placed in Europe it was decided to postpone the originally envisaged Women's Conference, but instead to include in the programme already on its first working day a specific plenary women's panel session entitled **Moving Towards Wholeness – Women and Religion in the Global World** chaired by ICCJ Vice-President Mrs Gunnell Borgegård, chair of the ICCJ Women's Council. The presenters were Dr Mazher Ahmed of the Batavia Islamic Centre, Chicago, Dr Mary Boys, a leading US theologian, and Dr Judith Narrowe, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Dalarna University, Sweden. There also was a very well attended and much acclaimed Women's issues workshop **Embracing the Whole – Two Biblical Women's Testimonies – Hannah's Song and Mary's Magnificat** led by Dr Mary Boys and Emily Soloff, Chicago.

Introduced by Sr Margaret Shepherd, Director of the British CCJ, Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago, at the **concluding luncheon** urged that as believers and representatives of our respective faiths communities we must remain visible in the case of growing secularism and the freedom of desire. We must ensure that religion will not be privatized but rather see the multi-religious society as the framework for freedom.

Pre-breakfast denominational prayers were held on Monday and Wednesday. On Tuesday morning these were replaced by **joint Bible Text Study** taken from the four readings for the 17th Sunday in ordinary time: 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12; Psalm 119:57-72,127-128; Romans 8:28-30; Matthew 13:44-46 pre-



Dr. Victor Goldbloom, gratefully accepting the Gold Medallion 'Peace Through Dialogue' at the ICCJ 2005 International Conference, Chicago.
Photo: Sr Marianne Dacy

sented by Rev. Philip Cunningham, Rabbi Andrew Goldstein and Rabbi Rachel Montagu.

The full text of all lectures and of many workshops as well as speakers' biographies will in due course be published on our website. Meanwhile, as far as already available, texts can be obtained from ICCJ head office at the Martin Buber House.

(Further information: ICCJ, Martin Buber House, P.O. Box 11 29, 64629 Heppenheim, Germany, Tel. +49.6252.93120, Fax +49.6252.68331, e-mail: info@iccj-buberhouse.de) ■

Encounter with History – Learning for the Future

► is theme of the **2006 Annual ICCJ Conference** to be held in Vienna, 2-5 July.

Vienna's many sites of historic and contemporary Jewish life give witness to a once vital community, the third largest in Europe. They are symbolic also of what was destroyed over the centuries, at times of virulent antisemitism in the Middle Ages and the Shoah. Although not such conspicuous memorials as former Nazi concentration camps, these sites and works of art have significance for future Christian-Jewish relations. The history of Austria, not least the unsuccessful siege of Vienna in the 16th century by the Turks, has also intrinsically meant involvement in relations between the three Abrahamic faiths, where since 1912 Jewish and Muslim communities have the same legal status as the Churches.

(Further information: Dr Markus Himmelbauer, Coordinating Council for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, e-mail: markus.himmelbauer@christenundjuden.org) ■

The ICCJ Abrahamic Forum

Visions of a Just Society: Fears, Hopes and Chances for living together in a globalized world

► Expertly organised by the Forum's chair, Prof. Dr Stefan Schreiner, a consultation was held at the Sarajevo Art Gallery (Umjetnicka galerija) in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation 13-16 November, co-sponsored by the Federal German Ministry of Interior and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Its main focus was on South-East Europe from Jewish, Christian and Muslim perspectives. The forty ad personam invited Jewish, Christian and Muslim participants including representatives from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Egypt, Hungary, Iran, Poland and the UK frankly discussed *The Image of Man* in the three traditions; the respective concepts of *Individual and Community*; *Common ethical values and moral obligations derived from their 'Divine Commandments'*; *Human rights – pertaining to individuals and/or the community*; *The impact of religious traditions on national and international politics for good or evil*; *Separation of church and state*; *the meaning of religion in secular societies*, *the Islamic state as an alternative to Western democracy*; *Legal implications for and everyday experiences of Muslims in the Western diaspora*; *Legal implications for and everyday experiences of non-Muslims in Islamic societies*. An excursion to the Franciscan Monastery of Fojnica, high in the hills above Sarajevo also provided opportunity for a more private exchange of experiences, concerns and hopes between the participants most of whom had never met before. Sessions in Fojnica allowed for presentation of particular experience by some representatives of dialogue groups, including Sidney Shipton of the UK Three Faiths Forum, Mrs Bibifatmeh Mousavi Nezhad of the Teheran Institute for Interreligious Dialogue, and Prof Dr Hasan Dzilo involved in the Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue in Macedonia.

The fact that greetings were delivered in person by HE Vinko Cardinal Puljic (Roman Catholic), Bishop Dr Maksim Vasiljevic (Serbian Orthodox) and the Chairman of the Jewish Community, Jacob Finci followed by a lecture given by Reis-ul-Ulema Dr Mustapha Ceric, Grand Mufti of the Muslim Community bodes well for all who live, work in the field of interreligious encounters and pray in Sarajevo.

The concentration on a region with its specific history provided a unique opportunity to centre attention on topics to be creatively examined in follow-up conferences also on other geographical and political backgrounds. It was therefore at the conclusion of this most successful event resolved to hold a first such follow-up in 2006 dealing with:

– *Non-Muslims in Islamic societies: theory and practice of dhimma in its modern interpretation*;



Discussion group at work during the Abrahamic Forum Conference in Sarajevo.

Photo: Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Office Sarajevo

- *Muslims in the Western Diaspora – legal status and everyday experiences;*
- *Exploring meaning and role of religion in modern societies;*
- *Ideas and concepts of an Islamic state as alternative to Western democracies;*
- *Religion and politics – the impact of religious traditions on national and international politics;*
- *Repentance, forgiveness and peace as a religious and political concept.*

(Further information, documentation and lectures: Prof Dr Stefan Schreiner, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Institutum Judaicum, e-mail: stefan.schreiner@uni-tuebingen.de) ■

Confronting Prejudice

► ICCJ Young Leadership Conference in Sweden 8–15 August 2005

Stockholm, the city with the most complex geographical layout of any European capital whose bridges and waterfronts spread over a dozen of islands, was the right backdrop for the 38 participants from Egypt, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Jordan, Northern Ireland and Spain to confront with candour, honesty and – particularly the participants from the Middle East – with courage and soul-searching their dreams of lack of prejudice as well as the realities often buried deep below their idealism. For some it was the first time they met a Jew, an Israeli, a Jordanian, a Shiite. They played role reversals, assuming the part of another's religion and nationality. They studied together Jewish, Christian or Muslim texts, attending also services in a church, a mosque and a synagogue followed by a debriefing of how it felt for them. There were tears as well as laughter. Other parts of the programme included a seminar by Judith Narowe about *Making sense of stereotypes* as well as a session led by One Voice, a joint Israeli-Palestinian organisation determined to prove that there are partners for peace even on 'the other side'. Training sessions enabled the young people to go back to their own communities and establish dialogue groups.

The local Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities in Stockholm were involved in the project through genuine interaction; they were visibly affected by this experience.

There was no escaping the hot issue of the Middle East conflict. They therefore purposely did not focus on that issue except during the presentation of One Voice, but it was

always lurking in the background. As one participant commented "I can discuss religion with them, that is no problem, but I cannot discuss politics". The 'them' despite all commonly held intention were of course the other part in the conflict. Through focusing on other aspects than politics they managed to avoid big conflicts. But it just proves how important the build-up of friendship and trust is when the borderline between faiths and politics growth gets narrower everywhere. And it also proves the importance of this international platform for the younger generation which throughout has been one of the cornerstones of the ICCJ's tasks.

Main conference sponsor was Euromed, a EU programme sponsoring youth contacts between Europe and the Mediterranean region, who afterwards wrote to the organisers that "The quality has deeply impressed us. The financial report was exemplary and it seems to us that you have accomplished a very good youth exchange indeed".

The 2006 YLC conference delving into the taxing question of **Identities in a Changing World** will take place in Austria, 28 June – 3 July.

(Further information: Lena Ohlsson, S. Esplanaden 3A, 22354 Lund, Sweden, Oh2lena@yahoo.se)

On Tuesday 21st February, 15–16.30 hrs at the **9th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Porto Alegre, Brazil** (14-23 February 2006), *God in your Grace, transform the world* a special workshop examining

Christian-Jewish Relations: Positive Developments and Continuing Tensions will be led by the ICCJ. Chaired by Rev Dr Hans Ucko, Programme Executive, Office on Interreligious Relations and Dialogue of the WCC, the speakers will be ICCJ President Prof John Pawlikowski, ICCJ Vice-President Gunnel Borgegård, Sweden, Bishop Luis del Castillo, Uruguay, member of the ICCJ Executive Board, and Rabbi Henry Sobel, Brazil.

(Further information: Juan Michel, media@wcc-coe.org) ■

People

► We mourn the death of a dear friend and supporter, **Karl Konrad Graf von der Groeben-Ponarien** who was deeply committed to the encounter between Jews, Christians and Muslims, particularly in Germany.

In all his humanitarian activities he was supported by his wife Ria. Our condolences go out to her and the family.

We report with sadness the death of our friend and long-time ICCJ Vatican Observer, **Rev. Dr Remi Hoeckman, O.P** whose dedication to Catholic-Jewish relations had also led to his involvement in the preparation of the 1998 document *We Remember – A Reflection on the Shoah*.

We learn with sorrow but also with gratitude for her active life of the death at the ripe old age of 91 of **Marcelle Raber**, who for a number of years also represented our member, the Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France on the ICCJ's Executive.

We share with the Confraternidad Judeo-Cristiana del Uruguay in their sadness at the death of their co-founder and life-time honorary member **Dr Jacobo Hazán**.

Our good wishes will accompany ICCJ Vice-President **Rabbi Ehud Bandel** as he and his family move from Jerusalem to Melbourne to take up a three-year appointment as Rabbi of Kehilat Nitzan, Melbourne's first Conservative (Masorti) congregation.

(<http://www.kehilatnitzan.org.au>) ■

Honours and Awards

► **The ICCJ Annual Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award** for sustained intellectual contribution to the furtherance of interreligious understanding, particularly but not exclusively in the field of Jewish-Christian relations which had impact and influence beyond the borders of the recipient's country was presented to **Dr Mary Boys**, Skinner and McAlin Professor of Practical Theology, Union Theological Seminary, New York, in recognition of her courageous and outstanding contribution to the Jewish-Christian Dialogue, for her pioneering work in educating teachers in Christian-Jewish understanding, for her groundbreaking volume 'Has God Only One Blessing', and for her dedicated work on the statement 'A Sacred Obligation' and its accompanying book.

The Interfaith Gold Medallion – Peace Through Dialogue was awarded to

Dr Victor C. Goldbloom, C.C., O.Q., Honorary President ICCJ, Canada, in recognition of his generously offered wise counsel in guiding the affairs and outreach of the ICCJ over many years always alert to the need that the lessons and insights gained be applied to the problems of a global society eager to retain separate identities at a time of expanding borders;

Father Patrick Desbois, France, consultant to the Holy See's Commission for religious Relations with the Jews, in recognition of his long and dedicated commitment to the Christian-Jewish dialogue, the wisdom with which he has guided the work at a variety of levels in France, and his work with children in Eastern European countries;

Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman, Chicago, in recognition of his long and dedicated pioneering work in the field of interreligious activities, and bringing the bitter experience of persecution and exclusion to preach and teach a deep comprehension of universally shared human obligations;

Mr Clifford Longley, Great Britain, renowned journalist and broadcaster for his continuously expressed deep commitment

to interfaith encounter and respect for the belief of others.

The ICCJ Distinguished Service Award to Sir Sigmund and Lady Hazel Sternberg in grateful appreciation of many years of tireless activity on behalf of the ICCJ, for wise counsel borne from experience and sensitivity in a wide range of public affairs, for foresight and vision particularly in the field of Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations, and for Lady Hazel's support of all new initiatives and her exceptional gift of communication.

Sir Sigmund is the first Jew to be promoted to the rank of **Knight Grand Cross of the Italian Royal Order of Francis I**. It was presented to him by HRH The Duke of Calabria at Westminster Cathedral, London.

The Federal German Cross of the Order of Merit Award to Mrs Winifred Hörst – Winnie to all her friends – the ICCJ's first full time volunteer in the Martin Buber House where she formed the library and initiated local outreach, exhibitions and lectures, in recognition of her outstanding services to the cultural life of the region.

The Federal German Cross of the Order of Merit Award to Rev Dr Petra Heldt, Jerusalem, for her long-time commitment to German-Israeli relations and her engagement in dialogue between all religious communities in Israel.

The Muhammad-Nafi-Tschelebi-Prize was awarded to **Rabbi Dr Henry Brandt**, Jewish co-President of the DKR for his engagement as dialogue partner in the Muslim community in Germany.

In addition to his recent Knighthood, **Sheikh Dr Zaki Badawi**, member of the ICCJ Abrahamic Forum and co-founder of the UK Three Faiths Forum was awarded an Honorary Doctor degree from Glasgow Caledonian University. ■

News from ICCJ Member Countries

► **The 40th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* and its declaration played a central role in many ICCJ member countries' activities:**

Central Europe

Under the sensitive leadership of Markus Himmelbauer and his colleagues in the **Austrian Coordinating Committee for Christian Jewish Cooperation** regional cooperation continues to be developed particularly with the **Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia**.

Early in the summer for the second time representatives of ICCJ members in the region met to discuss matters of common concern.

Jozsef Szécsi and Bála Varga from the **Hungarian CCJ** introduced their university programme "the Abrahamic Religions" as well as the latest edition of their Christian-Jewish Yearbook. This autumn the Christian-Jewish Society in Hungary started the second of its very popular Free University lecture series in Jewish-Christian-Islamic Religious Sciences. The Society regularly organises Christian-Jewish Theological Days hosted by the different denominations present in Hungary. We also draw attention to the society's vice-president Dr Judit Herman-Priestley's recent paper of a seminar held at the Cambridge Centre for the Study of Jewish Christian Relations "Developing Public Awareness in Christian-Jewish Relations – a Hungarian Experience" and to her Hungarian translation of the History of the ICCJ. (Judit_Hermann@yahoo.com)

Petr Frys, the new president of the **Czech Spolecnost Krestanu a Zidu** and Stanislav Tumis, its secretary, presented the latest issue of their quarterly *Zpravodaj* with numerous contributions of Jewish and Christian authors. Though due to the country's complex religious history and 20th century occupation by the Nazis and Communists, it is considered the most agnostic in Europe, the organisation not only promotes Jewish-Christian dialogue as well as acquaintance with the country's rich Jewish legacy, but also religious awareness in the general society. Due to the Czech CCJ's strong academic background it is also actively involved in the preparation of a new educational programme for secondary schools. The Council supports annual events such as 'Silent Voice for Holy Land' or 'Concert against antisemitism'.

In addition to Stefania Salisova, the president of the **Slovakian CCJ**, there also attended a representative of the Jaffa-Gate-Forum from Banska Bystrica whose major aim is acquainting the city's population with Judaism and the State of Israel through language courses and school projects.

This **Central European group** is in the process of preparing a joint religious-pedagogical conference of Vienna University and the Budapest Goldziher Institute.

On 29/30 October the **Austrian** Committee held an international conference entitled: **The Catholic Church and Judaism – 40 years since the Declaration *Nostra Aetate***. More than one hundred Christian and Jewish

participants engaged in a rich programme covering actual political issues in relation to antisemitism; Christian solidarity with the State of Israel; Mission to the Jews and new theological perspectives. The conference opened with a service led by Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger and Cardinal Christoph Schönborn. In his opening address Pastor Prof. Helmut Nausner, president of the Austrian CCJ reminded participants that after the 1948 statement of the newly established World Council of Churches calling on the churches to renounce antisemitism as a sin against humanity, nothing much of similar importance had occurred in the Catholic Church prior to *Nostra Aetate*, which prompted Cardinal Franz König to state in 1967 that the tradition-breaking importance of the Vatican II Declaration by far outshone its brevity. The 1947 Ten Points of Seelisberg, which led to the formation of the ICCJ had played a vital part in this development. Interior Minister Liese Prokop as well as Beate Winkler, head of the European Body Observing Racism and Xenophobia, remained concerned with revival of antisemitism urging steps to stress its unacceptability. From a purely theological point of view John Pawlikowski lauded the Declaration's absolute new departure in its reference to Romans 9–11. Though he did regret that while ignoring all the usual earlier references in Letters to the Hebrews regarding Covenant, *Nostra Aetate* did not deny them sufficiently in relation to new theological approaches for Christian-Jewish relations.

An international conference on the subject was held in Jerusalem 30 October to 1 November by the Center for the study of Christianity at the Hebrew University in conjunction with the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies in Bologna, to be followed by a conference in Rome in October 2006 on the topic *Nostra Aetate: an Unfinished Agenda*.

Argentina

The Confraternidad Argentina Judeo-Cristiana addressed in particular the relevance of Judaism in contemporary Christian thought. Early next year the Confraternidad is organizing a symposium related to the meaning of the Shoah in Christian theology in which participation of representatives of ICCJ members in Brazil, Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela is being invited.

(Further details: Martha de A. de Vergara Vaccarezza, cajudeocristiana@yahoo.com.ar)

Australia

Cardinal Edward Cassidy, retired president of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, was one of the main speakers in Sidney celebrating the Declaration's 40th anniversary, other speakers were his successor Cardinal Karl Kasper as well as Rabbi David Rosen by video-link and Rabbi Raymond Apple, founding member of the Australian CCJ. The event was organized by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and St Thomas More Society, a group of Catholic lawyers dedicated to interfaith activity.

Canada

The Canadian Council of Christians and Jews Programme Development Director, Carla Wittes, reports that CCCJ is continuing to proactively develop and expand its educational programming through its new pro-



Sir Sigmund and Lady Hazel Sternberg receiving the ICCJ Distinguished Service Award from President Prof. Dr. John Pawlikowski. Photo: Sr Marianne Dacy



Winifred Hörst and Ruth Weyl – a toast to celebrate Winnie's well deserved honour. Photo: Tom Martin

gramming division, the Centre for Diversity Education and Training (C-DET) mainly focused on youth with more than ten-thousand participating students. The increase in antisemitism in Europe and the recent serious incidents in France may take place far from Canada's borders, and they may reassure themselves that the Canadian brand of multiculturalism is very different from that of other countries, but they are also aware that it can all happen there as well. CCCJ has an important role to play in bringing together Canadians from different communities ensuring that they will function as a truly diverse society.

An example of a recent such programme was a Young Leaders Forum held in conjunction with a highly successful 58th Anniversary and Awards dinner. Attended by 200 senior high school students from the Greater Toronto Area and beyond, participants from a wide variety of faith and ethno cultural backgrounds including Aboriginal Canadians in plenary sessions and workshops explored the theme *A World without Stigma*. After a thorough and informative discussion of online hate, they delved into one another's personal experiences with stereotyping and discrimination. Similar programmes will follow next year.

Secretary-Treasurer Monique Matza of **Christian-Jewish Relations Canada (CJRC)** represented the Jewish community and CJRC at a commemorative mass for Pope John-Paul II, held in Montreal's Mary Queen of the World Cathedral. A broad spectrum of religions was represented; in the homily, their presence was acknowledged, and special mention was made of Catholic-Jewish and Catholic-Muslim relations.

Director Father John Walsh has a weekly radio programme in which he dialogues with the public and deals with important social issues. Among his interviewees was ICCJ President John Pawlikowski, who had come to Montreal to give a major address at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom.

President Dr. Victor C. Goldbloom, jointly with Monique Matza, has founded **Amitié judéo-musulmane du Québec**, a dialogue which is carried on in French and is based on the sharing of Canadian values. On Yom Kippur, October 13th, the Archbishop of Montreal, Cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte, came to Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom to speak during that synagogue's traditional discussion hour.

The Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, in which CJRC leaders are consistently active, sponsors an annual Christian service in commemoration of the Shoah. This year's service was at Saint Joseph's Oratory on Mount Royal, which was founded in 1904 and devoted 2004–2005 to celebrating its centenary. Some 2,000 people were in attendance.

Victor Goldbloom and Monique Matza participated, with two Muslim colleagues, Rachid Raffa and Salah Basalamah, in a presentation on Jewish-Muslim dialogue at a conference entitled *Présence musulmane*. Jointly also with Sheila Goldbloom, they were involved in a group tour to Grosse Île, an island in the Saint Lawrence River below Quebec City which was a quarantine station for immigrants, many from Ireland after the great famines and many afflicted with cholera among other diseases. The tour concluded at the Musée des Religions in Nicolet, Quebec. Victor Goldbloom provided historical, geographic, political and scenic commentary throughout.

France

Early in the year a well-attended second seminar hosted by the British Ambassador in Paris explored various ways of combining the different experiences in France and Great Britain to find new ways *from dialogue to action* on the ground. **The Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France** contributes to the debate about the present situation in France to the extent that religion has a part to play in what essentially however has political and sociological root causes.

Germany

During the 2005 festive opening of the annual German National Brotherhood Week on March 6th in Erfurt, the German Coordinating Council (DKR) awarded its **annual Buber-Rosenzweig medal** for his lifelong engagement as a theologian and teacher in the pursuit of Jewish-Christian Dialogue to **Prof. Dr Peter von der Osten Sacken**, Director of the Institute The Church and Judaism at Humboldt University, Berlin, and founder of the International Summer School where young Christians and Jews meet to study together.

In June the DKR held a conference in Bonn for its 83 member organisations. The topic was *Future needs Remembrance – 60 years later*. Sixty years after the liberation of Auschwitz and the end of the war we need to ask what has changed, what has been accomplished, and what has continued in spite of all efforts, such as antisemitism, xenophobia, intolerance and injustice.

Also in June the three presidents of the DKR, Rabbi Dr. Henry Brandt, Prof. Dr Berndt Schaller and Dr Eva Schulz-Jander met with the organisation's Patron, Federal German President Horst Köhler in his Berlin office for an informal talk and an exchange of information. The President promised the organisation all possible support.

In August the five members of the board of the DKR met with representatives of the EKD (Evangelische Kirche Deutschland). The meeting was attended by four bishops and chaired by Bishop Huber, the highest Protestant representative in Germany.

In November the DKR held a conference, attended by 110 participants, in Berlin on *Civil Courage*. The Motto under which the 20,000 members of the organisation shall work in 2006 is: *Raise your voice in public* ('Gesicht zeigen').

Throughout the year the DKR organised several youth workshops under the title: *Schule ohne Rassismus – My School is free of Racism*. During the course of the year several public statements have been issued by the DKR:

- on the 8th of May: 60 years after the liberation of Auschwitz and the end of the war what is new – what is old?

- a protest against the film "Paradise Now" by the Palestinian film maker Hany Abu-Assad. The film received a number of awards at the Berlinale film festival. It shows the old antisemitic stereotypes, glorifies suicide bombers etc. and has been very well received in Germany. The protest was directed especially against the positive anti-Israel reception of the film in Germany.

- a statement condemning the invectives against Israel of the Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinedschad.

- the DKR co-signed the document issued by the AJC urging the new German Government to include the battle against antisemitism in its governmental policy.

Great Britain

Twelve members of the **British Council of Christians and Jews** went to Israel in November for a two week study tour entitled *The Good Land* and focused on issues of flora and fauna, ecology and water management. Given the fragility of the resources in the region, as well as the place which the Land itself plays in Jewish and Christian spirituality, the tour was both challenging and moving. As with all CCJ tours, there was also an emphasis on meeting the people and 'hearing the voices'.

A ground-breaking event took place at the recent Church of England Synod. A fringe meeting, hosted by CCJ to discuss the current state of relations between the Jewish community and the Anglican Church was the first time that such dialogue had taken place at Synod. At the meeting the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Henry Grunwald QC, spoke about the history of the Jewish community in Britain and its role in contemporary British society and the impact on relationship between the faiths.

This year's CCJ Summer School week took the theme of *King David*, exploring the texts, the history, the iconography and the archaeology, as well as discussion of issues such as leadership and warfare. Staff and members of CCJ have also been marking the anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, by teaching and events in different parts of the UK. An important contribution to this has been Jonathan Gorsky's work on *The Old People of God*.

(Further information: Jane Clements, 5th.Floor, Camelford House, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP; Tel. +44.20.78300090, Fax +44.20.78005040, e-mail: jane@ccj.org.uk.)

The biggest growth area in the work of CCJ recently has been in the Youth section – known as 'YES!' (to dialogue). CCJ's Youth Officer, Louise Mitchell has been forging links and promoting action at national and

campus level with chaplains and other faith-based organisations, and leading workshops and seminars at a variety of events. Louise's Orthodox Jewish background has equipped her to promote a *chavruta*-style approach where people discuss a text in pairs, and once again this will come to the fore in the forthcoming season of 'Tête-a-tête' sessions in London. The theme for this year is *Language* and topics will include different ways in which the term 'Zionism' is used today.

Especially popular were events she organised and led in August, – at an annual Christian arts and music festival attended by thousands of people. Louise led a workshop which demonstrated how the Talmud is set out, involving the discussion and production of *midrash* around a moral principle. A celebration of *Havdalah* on the Saturday evening also drew a large group, with Louise and Jane Clements, CCJ's Education Officer, engaging in explanations afterwards.

(Further information: Jane Clements, 5th Floor, Camelford House, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP. Tel. +44.20.78300090, Fax +44.20.78005040, e-mail: jane@ccj.org.uk).

The Three Faiths Forum under the guidance of its co-founders, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, Sheikh Dr Zaki Badawi and Rev Dr Marcus Braybrooke and the coordinator, Sidney Shipton, continues its outreach also to other faith communities, but in particular to visitors or representatives of other countries interested in widening their own interfaith relations, such as the President of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, who together with the Director Corporate Development and Education were guests of the UK Foreign Office who referred them to the Three Faiths Forum. Throughout Britain branches of the Three Faiths Forum are opened, including at Universities. In addition to the Forum's medical section, a new development is a Lawyer's group, both concentrating on the specific concerns of their professions in the multi-cultural and multi-religious fabric of the country. Seventy ambassadors, diplomats and religious advisers attended this year's annual meeting chaired by Lord George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury held in St James's Palace, London. The Ambassador of Qatar invited the TFF to an upcoming Abrahamic conference in Qatar following a recent Muslim-Christian one. A further trilateral seminar is being planned under the auspices of the Cultural Bureau of the Egyptian Embassy in London.

The Cambridge Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations is organizing two major events in July 2006. Its annual summer school will be accompanied by an international conference. Both are entitled *The Religious Roots of Contemporary European Identity* exploring both in theory and in practice the relationship between these two complex issues, which are only rarely addressed in public because international and inter-communal discourse is often fuelled by religio-cultural sensitivities to the detriment of critical assessment. The events are jointly organized by CJCR and the Centre for Research in Arts, Science and Humanities of Cambridge University.

(Further details: l.faltin@cjcr.cam.ac.uk)

The UK Inter Faith Network founded in 1987 to promote good relations between people of different faiths in Britain has 112 mem-

bers including representative bodies of the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jains, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian faiths and educational and academic bodies specialising in interfaith relations. It publishes resource material, holds meetings and conferences where social and religious questions of concern to the different faith communities can be jointly examined, and it works with the media to ensure good coverage of interfaith issues. Their latest report on the 2005 national meeting *Connecting for the future: young people and interfaith relations in Britain* may be of interest to similar groups elsewhere. More recent publications include guides for *Faith Community Cooperation in Action* and *Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs* which could also be of use in other countries.

(Further information: www.interfaith.org.uk, ifnet@interfaith.org.uk)

Ireland

The Irish CCJ held an event in the Terenure Synagogue, Dublin addressed by Chief Rabbi Jacob Pearlman and Dr Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin as well as by Rabbi David Rosen.

The Irish CCJ also launched the Holocaust Educational Trust, which is working closely with government agencies and various national organisations, promotes Holocaust awareness as a contribution to educational and cultural programmes suitable also for all ages and walks of life.

Israel

The Israel Interfaith Association (IIA) has once again produced a small beautifully illustrated interfaith calendar giving all Jewish, Christian and Muslim dates. Price \$10.

(Orders: POB 7739, Jerusalem 91077, Israel, sharonu@mot.gov.il or urisharon23@hotmail.com).

Earlier in the year jointly with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation they held a conference entitled *Religion and Violence* to explore the role religion should play in the peace process, which Shimon Peres once qualified with the words "ideally none". The Greek-Orthodox Archbishop Aristarchos and Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen were among the participants.

The monthly reports from the **Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI)** give witness of the continuously growing work of this network organisation. To cite just a few events from a very full programme over the past three months: a film workshop about the use of films for education about the complexities of Jewish-Arab relations; the first annual International Day of Peace Vigil sponsored by ICCI was held at the Nazareth Sufi Center; Kedem (Voices of Religious Reconciliation) visited Shfar'am to console grieving families following murder by a Jewish terrorist; on 11 September jointly with the World Union for Progressive Judaism an Interreligious Convocation of Remembrance and Hope was held for the victims of violence in the USA, the Middle East and around the world. Participants included the Latin Patriarch Msgr Michel Sabbah and Sheikh Abdulsalaam Menasreh of Nazareth. During the month of Ramadan and the Jewish Fast of Gedaliah as part of the ICCI monthly library seminar series, a Jewish and a Muslim presenter focused on fasting in Jewish and Muslim traditions the similarities and differences between the theology and practice in the two. Youth participants of Face to Face/Faith to Faith focused their activities on the complexities of living in Jerusalem. ICCI also provided two days of programming on religious themes for a delegation of church leaders from Taiwan.

(Further information about programmes and events: Rabbi Dr Ron Kronish, iccijeru@icci.org.il)

New Zealand

The NZCCJ will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2006. There are Councils of Christians and Jews in both Auckland and Wellington but their origins were interestingly different and they work along slightly different lines.

In **Auckland** the initiative came from the Christians: Ray Watchman, a senior reporter on the Catholic newspaper *Zealandia*, organised in June 1986 an informal consultation between Catholics and Jews with Rabbi Dr John Levi who was visiting from Melbourne. Other Christian denominations were then included, and in October 1986 the Auckland CCJ was inaugurated in the Synagogue of the Auckland Hebrew Congregation. The first Co-Presidents were Mrs Ann Gluckman (Jewish) and the Rev. Selwyn



There is more than study in a YLC interfaith encounter.

Dawson (Christian). Auckland, with a membership of just over 200, has five public meetings a year, and occasionally a sixth. One of the meetings is an annual joint occasion with the Auckland Council of Christians and Muslims, when the three perspectives are presented on a topic, such as Jesus, food, times and seasons and worship. Recently, the group welcomed two Governors General as speakers: Sir Michael Hardie Boys in a meeting on values in NZ, and Dame Silvia Cartwright in one on law.

In **Wellington** the initiative came from the Jews: the Wellington Regional Jewish Council organised a highly successful seminar in March 1988 'for the purpose of acquainting non-Jews with the Jewish religion'. A representative of each of the two synagogues had been asked to organize the seminar, and one of them, Jim van Praag (Temple Sinai), became the first Chairman of the new Wellington Council. Alongside this, the Council of Wellington Churches wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury seeking information about the work of the UKCCJ, and as a result a constitution was approved in March 1991. Wellington, with a membership of 65 has bi-monthly committee meetings and hosts two public meetings a year: a bible study and a symposium on contemporary community issues. It is also involved in the Wellington Council of Churches and the National Interfaith Forum.

Not long after the formation of the Wellington Council, the two Councils formed the NZCCJ and affiliated with the ICCJ. Following an international conference on *Nostra Aetate* at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome the New Zealand CCJ sponsored a symposium in Wellington on the assessment of progress made in Jewish-Christian relations in New Zealand and explored proposals for future development.

(Further information: Peter Thorp, Wellington Council of Christians and Jews, P.O. Box 6015, Wellington, New Zealand, Tel. +64.4.3897103, Fax +64.4.3859660)

Conscious of being a small country with small Jewish communities, and sited 'at the end of the world', recent visits by ICCJ representatives were highly appreciated. Their hopes for the future? To expand inter-faith understanding in their communities, to engage the interest of more young people, to stimulate our church leaders to have a higher profile in CCJ activities – and looking forward to being involved in the planned ICCJ conference in Sydney in 2007.

A review of past and present activities will be included in the next issue of *Massah* (for orders: harhep@tra.co.nz)

Poland

Poland's Roman Catholic Church plans a centre for interfaith dialogue in honour of the late Pope John Paul II. Named *Be not afraid* after the late Pontiff's favourite motto, the centre will be sited in Southern Poland where the Pope lived during his country's Nazi oc-

cupation. In addition to full conference facilities, the centre will include a museum, a library, exhibition halls, a boarding school, a hospital, and sports facilities.

Russia

Dr Rafail Fainberg of 'Litzom k litzu' attended a major Catholic-Muslim *Nostra Aetate* conference as observer, and throughout the year lectured and held seminars on interreligious dialogue.

Ukraine

Following an earlier initiative of the Ukrainian Interfaith Association 'Step to Unity' for a memorial dedicated to victims of terror, the monument was recently unveiled in the presence of all the country's religious representatives, politicians, members of parliament, President Viktor Yushenko and the Governor of Colorado, Bill Owens. Representatives of 'Step to Unity' recently visited Armenia where they had arranged a first ever meeting between the Catolikos of All Armenians Garegin II and Israel Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger.

USA

The Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR) in collaboration with the Boston College Library and the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College has published the first issue of their new, open-access electronic journal *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*. The editors, Philip Cunningham of Boston College and Edward Kessler of the Cambridge Centre of the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations included a brief introduction to the opening collection of articles, noting that *Nostra Aetate* provided a clarion call for Christians to develop revised theologies. Scholars from Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA already contributed to the first articles. The initial contributions consider the implications of the sea-change brought about by this Declaration for questions of Christology, soteriology and theologies of religious pluralism. This electronic academic journal also provides a vehicle for the exchange of information, cooperation and mutual enrichment in the field of Christian-Jewish studies and relations.

(Further information: <http://scholarship.bc.edu/scjr>).

The Martin Buber House Local Outreach

► Under the expert guidance of Andrea Thiemann the well-attended lecture series addressing issues of special interest to the audience from the region covered a variety of topics. The lectures were throughout presented by renowned personalities including for instance the correspondent of the Jerusalem Post and Israel Broadcasting, and a

member of the Institute for Military History, Potsdam

- The *Menorah* in front of the Jerusalem Knesset – a liberation symbol of the people
- The dispute about the headscarf from theological and socio-cultural points of view
- 60 years after the end of war: myth and reality (held in cooperation with the Heppenheim town archive and the Hesse centre for political education)
- A reading by the author of a German book dealing with return to Germany
- Pictures in Jewish tradition
- German-Jewish Literature since 1945
- New opportunities for peace – the changing scene of the Middle East and its impact on the Arab-Israeli conflict
- Living between walls. A presentation by a Christian Palestinian woman
- 40 years diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel
- Hebrew Humanism – a lecture on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Martin Buber's death.

In addition the House generally receives frequent visitors from all over the world, as well as occasional school classes. ■

The Association of Friends and Sponsors of the Martin Buber House

► was created to give individuals and groups not otherwise affiliated to the international network the unique chance to become involved and give support to the ICCJ's worldwide work. Some insight into this is provided in the pages of this newsletter. The emergence of mindless violence and ugly manifestations of religious hatred, racism and xenophobia as well as the re-emergence of antisemitism in various guises require ever increasing vigilance and action by the ICCJ and its membership. To fulfil this task and to stand by the commitment given some 60 years ago that we shall make this a safer and better world we need your support. Let no one say: "what can you do". Do say: "the least I can do is to support those who fight these ills" and thereby become part of our work through membership of the Association, or renewal of your membership by filling in and returning the enclosed form.

We also draw particular attention to the **website** www.jcrelations.net which contains a wealth of fascinating material reflecting the state of Christian-Jewish relations worldwide. It now also contains David Rosen's 2005 Templeton lecture *Religion, Identity and Peace in the Middle East* reflecting on ways in which religion has contributed to the Middle East conflict and how it can help to resolve it. Readers normally using other languages such as German, French, Spanish, Portuguese and/or Russian may click on their preferred language at the top of any page. ■

As 2005 comes to its close we wish all our readers a good 2006. May it be a year that will bring peace nearer in the Middle East, a year without natural disasters, a year of less violence in our streets, in particular also a year to celebrate difference, a year to affirm again that assault on difference is an assault on humanity. May it also be a year of continuing friendship and happiness in our personal lives.

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