



International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee Meets in Buenos Aires

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Meeting in Latin America for the first time since its formation almost 40 years ago, the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee met in Buenos Aires July 5-8, 2004, under the theme “*Tzedeq and Tzedequa* – Justice and Charity.” The meeting opened with brief addresses by Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Holy See’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews; Rabbi Israel Singer, Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress; Jack Leon Terpins, President of the Latin American Jewish Congress; and Cardinal Jorge M. Bergoglio, SJ, Archbishop of Buenos Aires. Other speakers during the meeting included Rabbi Henry Sobel and Msgr. Joao Oneres Marchiori discussing the future of dialogue in Latin America; Rabbi Lawrence Shiffman and Fr. Luis H. Rivas on biblical perspectives on justice and charity; and Rabbi Abraham Skorka, Msgr. Roland Minnerat, Rabbi Sergio Bergman, Fr. John Pawlikowski, and Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen on other aspects of the theme.

Conference attendees visited the AMIA (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina), the Jewish center that suffered a devastating bombing in 1994, as well as the Centro Solidario San José, a Catholic social center in Buenos Aires. The Joint Declaration issued at the conclusion of the meeting asserts that a commitment to justice as well as charity is mandated by both faiths. “Jesus, deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition of his day, made a commitment to the poor a priority of his ministry,” the Declaration notes, adding that “the Talmud affirms that the Holy One, Blessed be God, always cares for the needy.” The Declaration lists as special challenges today the growing economic disparity among people, increasing ecological devastation, the negative aspects of globalization, and the urgent need for international peace-making and reconciliation. It expresses a “total rejection of antisemitism in all its forms, including anti-Zionism as a more recent manifestation of antisemitism,” and notes also that “the Jewish community has become aware of, and deplores, the phenomenon of anti-Catholicism in all its forms.”

From news reports and conference documents