



# Koenig, Cardinal Franz

## Pioneer in Christian-Jewish relations dies at age 98

**Cardinal Franz Koenig**, who was instrumental in the adoption of the historic declaration "Nostra Aetate" at the Second Vatican Council, died in Vienna on March 13, 2004, at age 98. Appointed Archbishop of Vienna in 1956, he was elevated to the rank of Cardinal by Pope John XXIII in 1958. Cardinal Koenig encouraged the formation of the Austrian Coordinating Council for Christian-Jewish Cooperation and was active in its work for many years. A dialogue between Cardinal Koenig and the Jewish scholar Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich was published in 1988 under the title *Juden und Christen haben eine Zukunft*, and in 2003, the journal DAVID published an exchange between Cardinal Koenig and Professor Kurt Schubert, also of Vienna, about their life and thought during the Hitler period. Cardinal Koenig was a lifelong opponent of antisemitism, and stated in a 1987 declaration on this subject: "The Christian faith requires us rather to understand ever more deeply the value of Judaism, to be aware of our common roots in faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to struggle with all our might for a fraternal relationship between Christians and Jews."