



News Release in answer to Pope John Paul II

12.03.2000 | Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue U.S.A.

News Release in answer to Pope John Paul II Universal Prayer and other Roman Catholic Statements. March 13, 2000

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Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue

March 14, 2000

The Rabbinic Committee for Interreligious Dialogue is concerned that the Catholic community in the United States and throughout the world should not gain a false impression from some of the Jewish responses to the revolutionary and epic-making confession of the Pope, which asks forgiveness for past sins on the part of the sons and daughters of the Church for failure to act consistent with Catholic teaching during the past millennium, and most specifically relating to the Jewish people.

We believe that this statement is part of a long process that the Church has undertaken since Vatican II, the *Guidelines*, the *Notes*, the Papal Statements, the *We Remember* document, the formal agreement with Israel, the numerous bishops' statements asking forgiveness for the sins committed during the Holocaust, and now this most astonishing and gratifying gesture on the part of the Church confronting its past.

The vast majority of the Jewish community and certainly the great number of rabbis in all of our respective movements feel grateful for what the Church has done. Through proper dialogue, we are convinced a genuine sense of reconciliation will emerge. We are looking forward to the Pope's statements on his forthcoming trip to Israel.

We believe that the best way to deal with any differences or difficulties that may exist between the Catholic Church and the Jewish community should be resolved in a spirit of mutual appreciation, genuine camaraderie, and the realization that people of good will will do their best to bring about a resolution of whatever differences may exist with respect to our perceptions of our past histories. We believe that now is the time for dialogue, not diatribes, speaking to the people we respect and not through the media.

The Executive Committee:

Rabbi Jack Bemporad

Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz

Rabbi Emanuel Goldsmith

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Rabbi Ronald B. Sobel