

Teacher's Guide  
Including Pre- and Post-Visit Activities

**A BLESSING  
TO ONE ANOTHER**

POPE JOHN PAUL II &  
THE JEWISH PEOPLE



*This educator's guide is based on the program developed by the Education Department at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, CA, which was revised by Holocaust Museum Houston's Education Department.*

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## Note to Teachers:

Holocaust Museum Houston is honored to present the special exhibition “A Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People” from August 2009 through March 2010.

This exhibition was organized by Xavier University and the Hillel Jewish Center, both in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the Shtetl Foundation, which is dedicated to celebrating the rich, vibrant life of the Jewish community in Eastern Europe before World War II. The exhibition explores the pope’s childhood in Poland through his papacy and his appeal to the Catholic Church to look toward a more meaningful understanding of Judaism and the Jewish people.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the April 1993 message by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising — a time when a small group of heroic fighters, poorly armed and supplied, struggled against all odds for nearly a month, from April 19 to May 16, 1943, to resist the Germans who were liquidating the ghetto. At the anniversary, the pope’s message was both universal and singular. Taking his cue from the words of the Bible in Genesis 12:2, where God tells Abraham that he should “go forth” and “be a blessing,” Pope John Paul II said that “we must be a blessing to the world” — “but, first and foremost, we should be a blessing to one another.”

His words reveal the essence of the man once known as Karol Jozef Wojtyla as a profoundly compassionate individual. He spoke of that time — the terrible days of World War II — as “days of contempt” for the human person. Each human life was precious to him, and he shared that message with millions in scores of countries across the globe. Never shunning issues of controversy, he strove to find a way toward understanding.

It is in this spirit of friendship and reconciliation that Holocaust Museum Houston decided to bring this exhibit to our community. The exhibition imparts important lessons about history, man’s inhumanity to man and the moral strength required in a world where good must often confront evil. These are also the themes of our school tours of this exhibit.

We look forward to your visit and hope that the materials contained in this pre-visit packet will enhance your students’ knowledge and understanding of Pope John Paul II and his times, broaden their knowledge of Judaism and the Jewish people and encourage them to reach out and help others.

Education Department  
Holocaust Museum Houston

## Social Studies TEKS Being Addressed

### §113.22, Social Studies Grade 6

History. The student understands that historical events influence contemporary events. The student is expected to:

- (A) Describe characteristics of selected contemporary societies such as Bosnia and Northern Ireland that resulted from historical events or factors such as invasion, conquests, colonization, immigration and trade; and
- (B) Analyze the historical background of selected contemporary societies to evaluate relationships between past conflicts and current conditions.

Culture. The student understands the similarities and differences within and among cultures in different societies. The student is expected to:

- (A) Define the concepts of culture and culture region;
- (B) Describe some traits that define cultures;
- (C) Analyze the similarities and differences among selected world societies; and
- (D) Identify and explain examples of conflict and cooperation between and among cultures within selected societies such as Belgium, Canada and Rwanda.

Culture. The student understands that certain institutions are basic to all societies, but characteristics of these institutions may vary from one society to another. The student is expected to:

- (A) Identify institutions basic to all societies, including government, economic, educational and religious institutions; and
- (B) Compare characteristics of institutions in selected contemporary societies.

Culture. The student understands the relationships among religion, philosophy and culture. The student is expected to:

- (A) Explain the relationship among religious ideas, philosophical ideas and cultures; and
- (B) Explain the significance of religious holidays and observances such as Christmas and Easter, Ramadan and Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah in selected contemporary societies.

### §113.32. United States History Studies Since Reconstruction (One Credit)

History. The student understands the impact of significant national and international decisions and conflicts from World War II and the Cold War to the present on the United States. The student is expected to:

- (A) Identify reasons for U.S. involvement in World War II, including the growth of dictatorships and the attack on Pearl Harbor; and
- (B) Analyze major issues and events of World War II, such as fighting the war on multiple fronts, the internment of Japanese-Americans, the Holocaust, the battle of Midway, the invasion of Normandy and the development of and Harry Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb.

### §113.33. World History Studies (One Credit)

History. The student understands the influence of significant individuals of the 20th century. The student is expected to:

- (A) Analyze the influence of significant individuals, such as Winston Churchill, Adolf Hitler, Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong and Woodrow Wilson, on political events of the 20th century; and
- (B) Analyze the influence of significant social and/or religious leaders such as Mohandas Gandhi, Pope John Paul II, Mother Theresa and Desmond Tutu on events of the 20th century.

Culture. The student understands the history and relevance of major religious and philosophical traditions. The student is expected to:

- (A) Compare the historical origins, central ideas and the spread of major religious and philosophical traditions including Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism; and
- (B) Identify examples of religious influence in historic and contemporary world events.

### §113.34. World Geography Studies (One Credit)

Culture. The student understands the distribution, patterns and characteristics of different cultures. The student is expected to:

- (A) Describe and compare patterns of culture such as language, religion, land use, systems of education and customs that make specific regions of the world distinctive; and
- (B) Compare economic opportunities in different cultures for women and religious minorities in selected regions of the world.

## Introduction to the School Tour

If you have booked a special tour of the exhibit “A Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People,” your tour at Holocaust Museum Houston most likely will consist of two parts. Depending on the number of groups using the Museum at the time of your tour, the first part of the tour may not occur in the permanent exhibit space, but may begin with the tour of the “Blessing” exhibit. We appreciate your understanding if this needs to occur.

I. An introduction to Jewish history and tradition in the form of an abbreviated tour of Holocaust Museum Houston's introduction in the permanent exhibit “Bearing Witness: A Community Remembers” (15 minutes).

II. Tour of the exhibition “A Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People” (60 minutes).

## Goals and Objectives

Students will:

- Optional: Gain an understanding of the origins of Judaism and the history, teachings and traditions of the Jewish people;
- Explore the development of Jewish-Catholic relations through Museum artifacts and text and look for elements shared by the two religious communities;
- Examine historical and religious attitudes and policies that led to antisemitism and, eventually, to the Holocaust;
- Explore the life and times of Pope John Paul II to better understand his moral character, compassion and strength; and
- Discuss the meaning of the term “moral compass” as it relates to people and events depicted in the exhibition and to the students themselves.

## Background Materials

To ensure that students get the most of their tour experience, we have included background information about the life of Pope John Paul II and an overview of Jewish history and religion. You may not have time to review all of the materials, but we strongly suggest reading the short biography of Pope John Paul II and the short lesson pertaining to Genesis 12:1-3. These materials may be presented as in-class or take-home activities.

1. Map of Poland
2. “His Holiness John Paul II: A Short Biography” from the Vatican’s Web Site
3. Timeline of the Life of Karol Jozef Wojtyla
4. Genesis 12:1-3: The Basis for a Jewish-Catholic Dialogue and Partnership
5. Holocaust Museum Houston Triangle Lesson
6. View the short film that is an overview of the exhibition online: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I61Kh9uls\\_k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I61Kh9uls_k)

## Map of Poland

1. Using a globe or flat world map, find Poland.
2. Note where Poland is located (in the eastern half of Europe), sandwiched between Germany and the countries of the former Soviet Union.
3. Find the city of Kraków and point out that the Pope's childhood home of Wadowice (which does not appear on this map) is located just a short distance southwest of Kraków.



<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pl.html>

## “His Holiness John Paul II: A Short Biography” from the Vatican’s Web Site

**Karol Jozef Wojtyła**, known as John Paul II since his October 1978 election to the papacy, was born in the Polish town of Wadowice, a small city 50 kilometers from Krakow, on May 18, 1920. He was the youngest of three children born to Karol Wojtyła and Emilia Kaczorowska. His mother died in 1929. His eldest brother Edmund, a doctor, died in 1932, and his father, a non-commissioned army officer, died in 1941. A sister, Olga, died before he was born.

He was baptized on June 20, 1920, in the parish church of Wadowice by Fr. Franciszek Zak. He made his first Holy Communion at age nine and was confirmed at 18. Upon graduation from Marcin Wadowita high school in Wadowice, he enrolled in Krakow’s Jagiellonian University in 1938 and in a school for drama. The Nazi occupation forces closed the university in 1939, and young Wojtyła had to work in a quarry (1940-1944) and then in the Solvay chemical factory to earn his living and to avoid being deported to Germany. In 1942, aware of his call to the priesthood, he began courses in the clandestine seminary of Krakow, run by Cardinal Adam Stefan Sapieha, archbishop of Krakow. At the same time, Wojtyła was one of the pioneers of the “Rhapsodic Theatre,” also clandestine. After the Second World War, he continued his studies in the major seminary of Krakow, once it had re-opened, and in the faculty of theology of the Jagiellonian University. He was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Sapieha in Krakow on Nov. 1, 1946. Shortly afterward, Cardinal Sapieha sent him to Rome, where he worked under the guidance of the French Dominican, Garrigou-Lagrange. He finished his doctorate in theology in 1948 with a thesis on the subject of faith in the works of St. John of the Cross (*Doctrina de fide apud Sanctum Ioannem a Cruce*). At that time, during his vacations, he exercised his pastoral ministry among the Polish immigrants of France, Belgium and Holland. In 1948, he returned to Poland and was vicar of various parishes in Krakow as well as chaplain to university students. This period lasted until 1951, when he again took up his studies in philosophy and theology. In 1953, he defended a thesis on “evaluation of the possibility of founding a Catholic ethic on the ethical system of Max Scheler” at Lublin Catholic University. Later, he became professor of moral theology and social ethics in the major seminary of Krakow and in the faculty of theology of Lublin. On July 4, 1958, he was appointed titular bishop of Ombi and auxiliary of Krakow by Pope Pius XII and was consecrated Sept. 28, 1958, in Wawel Cathedral, Krakow by Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak.

On Jan. 13, 1964, he was appointed archbishop of Krakow by Pope Paul VI, who made him a cardinal on June 26, 1967, with the title of S. Cesareo in Palatio of the order of deacons, later elevated pro illa vice to the order of priests. Besides taking part in Vatican Council II (1962-1965), where he made an important contribution to drafting the Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, Cardinal Wojtyła participated in all the assemblies of the Synod of Bishops. The Cardinals elected him pope at the Conclave of Oct. 16, 1978, and he took the name of John Paul II. On Oct. 22, he solemnly inaugurated his Petrine ministry as the 263rd successor to the Apostle. His pontificate, one of the longest in the history of the church, lasted nearly 27 years. Driven by his pastoral solicitude for all churches and by a sense of openness and charity to the entire human race, John Paul II exercised the Petrine ministry with a tireless missionary spirit, dedicating it all his energy. He made 104 pastoral visits outside Italy and 146 within Italy. As bishop of Rome, he visited 317 of the city’s 333 parishes. He had more meetings than any of his predecessors with the people of God and the leaders of nations. More than 17,600,000 pilgrims participated in the general audiences held on Wednesdays (more than 1160), not counting other special audiences and religious ceremonies (more than 8 million pilgrims during the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 alone), and the millions of faithful he met during pastoral visits in Italy and throughout the world. We must also remember the numerous government personalities he encountered during 38 official visits, 738 audiences and meetings held with heads of state and 246 audiences and meetings with prime ministers.

His love for young people brought him to establish the World Youth Days. The 19 World Youth Days celebrated during his pontificate brought together millions of young people from all over the world. At the same time, his care for the family was expressed in the World Meetings of Families, which he initiated in 1994. John Paul II successfully encouraged dialogue with the Jews and with the representatives of other religions, whom he several times invited to prayer meetings for peace, especially in Assisi. Under his guidance, the church prepared herself for the third millennium and celebrated the Great Jubilee of the year 2000 in accordance with the instructions given in the Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio adveniente. The church then faced the new epoch, receiving his instructions in the Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio ineunte, in which he indicated to the faithful their future path. With the Year of the Redemption, the Marian Year and the Year of the Eucharist, he promoted the spiritual renewal of the church.

He gave an extraordinary impetus to canonizations and beatifications, focusing on countless examples of holiness as an incentive for the people of our time. He celebrated 147 beatification ceremonies during which he proclaimed 1,338 blessed; and 51 canonizations for a total of 482 saints. He made Thérèse of the Child Jesus a Doctor of the Church. He considerably expanded the College of Cardinals, creating 231 cardinals (plus one in pectore) in nine consistories. He also called six full meetings of the College of Cardinals. He organized 15 Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops - six Ordinary General Assemblies (1980, 1983, 1987, 1990, 1994 and 2001), one Extraordinary General Assembly (1985) and eight Special Assemblies (1980, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998 (2) and 1999). His most important documents include 14 encyclicals, 15 apostolic exhortations, 11 apostolic constitutions and 45 apostolic letters.

He promulgated the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the light of tradition as authoritatively interpreted by the Second Vatican Council. He also reformed the Eastern and Western Codes of Canon Law, created new Institutions and reorganized the Roman Curia. As a private doctor, he also published five books of his own: "Crossing the Threshold of Hope" (October 1994), "Gift and Mystery, on the 50th anniversary of my ordination as priest" (November 1996), "Roman Triptych" poetic meditations (March 2003), "Arise, Let us Be Going" (May 2004) and "Memory and Identity" (February 2005). In the light of Christ risen from the dead, on April 2, 2005, at 9.37 p.m., while Saturday was drawing to a close and the Lord's Day was already beginning, the Octave of Easter and Divine Mercy Sunday, the church's beloved pastor, John Paul II, departed this world for the Father. From that evening until April 8, date of the funeral of the late Pontiff, more than 3 million pilgrims came to Rome to pay homage to the mortal remains of the pope. Some of them queued up to 24 hours to enter St. Peter's Basilica.

On April 28, the Holy Father Benedict XVI announced that the normal five-year waiting period before beginning the cause of beatification and canonization would be waived for John Paul II. The cause was officially opened by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, vicar general for the diocese of Rome, on June 28 2005.

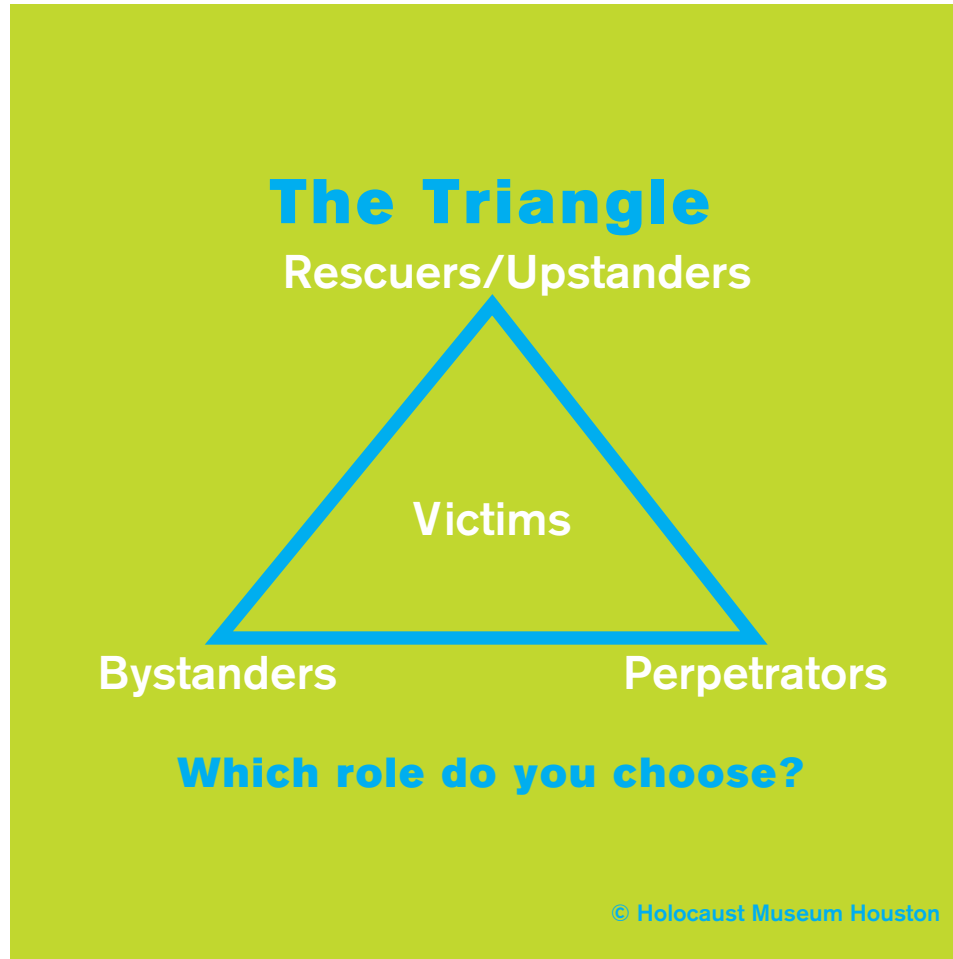
[http://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/press/documentazione/documents/santopadre\\_biografie/giovanni\\_paolo\\_ii\\_biografia\\_breve\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/santopadre_biografie/giovanni_paolo_ii_biografia_breve_en.html)



## Timeline of the Life of Pope John Paul II – from the “Blessings” Exhibition

- 1920 Karol Jozef Wojtyla is born in Wadowice, Poland (May 18).
- 1929 Wojtyla’s mother dies.
- 1932/33 Wojtyla’s older brother, Edmund, dies at age 26.
- 1937 Wojtyla is invited by the father of his close Jewish friend, Jerzy Kluger, to visit the Jewish synagogue (with his father) to hear the famous Jewish opera star, Koussevitzky, serve as cantor.
- 1938 Wojtyla’s neighbor and good Jewish friend, Ginka Beer, leaves Wadowice for Palestine to escape growing antisemitism.  
Wojtyla and his father move to Krakow so he can study drama at the university.
- 1939 The Nazis invade Poland (Sept. 1, 1939), and Wojtyla and his father flee eastward. He returns to university in October, but on Nov. 6, 1939, the university is looted and closed, ending his plans to study.
- 1940 Wojtyla begins work as a forced laborer in a stone quarry and continues until 1944. He makes the decision to study for the priesthood.
- 1941 A Jewish ghetto is created in Krakow (March).  
  
Wojtyla’s father dies in the spring.  
  
“Liquidation” of the ghetto begins. This is when transports of Jews travel from the ghetto to concentration camps (autumn).
- 1942 Wojtyla’s classes at the university are forced to go “underground” to hide from the Nazis.
- 1946 Wojtyla is ordained as a priest in Krakow (November).
- 1949 Wojtyla is appointed to chaplaincy at the university where he had studied.
- 1958 Wojtyla becomes an auxiliary bishop at age 38.
- 1962 The Second Vatican Council is convened in Rome (concluded 1965) – Concludes with announcement of “*Nostra Aetate*.”
- 1964 Wojtyla is appointed archbishop of Krakow at age 42.

- 1965 Wojtyla is reunited with his childhood friend, Jerzy Kluger (Nov. 25).
- 1978 Wojtyla elected 264<sup>th</sup> pope of the Catholic Church at age 58 (Oct. 16).
- 1979 As Pope John Paul II, he makes his first return trip to Poland (June).
- 1986 Pope John Paul II visits Jewish synagogue in Rome (April 13).
- 1993 Pope John Paul II signs “Fundamental Agreement” recognizing establishment of full diplomatic relations between the State of Israel and the Vatican (Dec. 30).
- 1994 The Vatican welcomes Shmuel Hadas, the first Israeli ambassador to the Vatican.
- 2000 Pope John Paul II arrives in Israel (March 21).
- Pope John Paul II visits Yad Vashem, the Museum of the Holocaust (March 23).
- Pope John Paul II visits the Western Wall, last remnant of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem (March 26).
- 2005 His Holiness Pope John Paul II dies in Rome (April 2).



## Objective:

Students will consider the different roles that individuals assumed during the Holocaust and relate these roles to choices people make in contemporary society.

The European Jews, along with non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust (communists, socialists, political dissidents, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, Sinti and Roma, Poles and those physically and mentally challenged), were targeted for death or discrimination by the National Socialist regime in Nazi Germany. These people were innocent victims. Depending on time and context, citizens could choose how to respond to what they saw happening around them. They could either become a perpetrator, rescuer/upstander or bystander. A small percentage of the population was comprised of perpetrators; less than one percent made a decision to be rescuers/upstanders. Most people settled on the role of bystander.

## Questions:

- What events during this time period influenced individuals and their decisions?
- Why do you believe so few decided to be rescuers/upstanders?
- What qualities do you believe the rescuers/upstanders had?
- How do ordinary people become perpetrators?
- What changes do you think would have occurred during this time period if the bystanders had helped the rescuers/upstanders in the struggle against the perpetrators?
- Why do you think people often assume the role of bystander when faced with challenging situations?
- Which role do you choose when facing a conflicting situation? Why?
- What would cause you to become a rescuer/upstander?
- How do you think society can encourage people to take the role of rescuer/upstander?

## Genesis 12:1-3 – The Basis for a Jewish-Catholic Dialogue and Partnership

*The Jewish religion is not extrinsic to us but, in a certain way, is intrinsic to our own religion. With Judaism, therefore, we have a relationship that we do not have with any other religion. You are our dearly beloved brothers and, in a certain way, it could be said that you are our elder brothers.*

– From Pope John Paul II's discourse during his visit to the Rome Synagogue on April 13, 1986

12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will show thee:

12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be blessing:

12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curse thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

### English Translation and Transliteration from the Hebrew text:

12:1 God said to Abram, 'Go away from your land, from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you.

*Vayomer Adonay el-Avram lech lecha me'artsecha umimoladetecha umibeyt avicha el-ha'arets asher ar'eka.*

12:2 I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you great. You shall become a blessing.

*Ve'e'escha legoy-gadol va'avarechecha va'agadelah shemecha veheyeh berachah.*

12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and he who curses you, I will curse. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you.

*Va'avarechah mevarachecha umekalelecha a'or venivrechu vecha kol mishpechot ha'adamah.*

### Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to “be” a blessing?
- What did the pope mean by the statement that Judaism is “intrinsic” to Christianity?
- What did the pope mean by claiming Jews were the “elder brothers” of Christians?

## During Your Visit Activity

As you tour “A Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People,” select five events in the life of Pope John Paul II that you believe influenced him to develop the text for the following message:

### Message of His Holiness John Paul II on the 50th Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

Source:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/messages/pont\\_messages/1993/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_19930406\\_ebrei-polacchi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/pont_messages/1993/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19930406_ebrei-polacchi_en.html)

As the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising approaches, together with the whole church, I wish to remember those terrible days of the Second World War, days of contempt for the human person, manifested in the horror of the sufferings endured at that time by so many of our Jewish brothers and sisters.

It is with profound grief that we call to mind what happened then, and indeed all that happened in the long black night of the *Shoah*. We remember, and we need to remember, but we need to remember with renewed trust in God and in his all-healing blessing.

In their Pastoral Letter of Nov. 30, 1990, the Polish bishops wrote about what took place in Poland then, but also about the present-day responsibility of Christians and Jews: “the mutual loss of life, a sea of terrible suffering and of wrongs endured should not divide but unite us. The places of execution, and in many cases, the common graves, call for this unity.”

As Christians and Jews, following the example of the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing for the world (Cf. *Gen* 12:2ss.). This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to be first a blessing to one another. This will effectively occur if we are united in the face of the evils which are still threatening: indifference and prejudice, as well as displays of antisemitism.

For what has already been achieved by Catholics and Jews through dialogue and cooperation, I give thanks with you to God; for what we are still called to do, I offer my ardent prayers. May God further guide us along the paths of his sovereign and loving will for the human family.

*From the Vatican, April 6, 1993*

## Post-Visit Activities

### The “Golden Rule” in World Scripture

The meaning embodied in the phrase “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” Leviticus 19:18, is not limited to Judeo-Christian belief. Pope John Paul II knew this, and in his many visits to nations all over the globe, he emphasized the common ethos of “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Speech by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, speaking to Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders at the Interreligious Meeting at the Pontifical Institute, Notre Dame, Jerusalem, March 23, 2000:

*Each of our religions knows, in some form or another, the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Precious as this rule is as a guide, true love of neighbor goes much further. It is based on the conviction that when we love our neighbor, we are showing our love for God, and when we hurt our neighbor, we offend God. This means that religion is the enemy of exclusion and discrimination, of hatred and rivalry, of violence and conflict. Religion is not, and must not become, an excuse for violence, particularly when religious identity coincides with cultural and ethnic identity. Religion and peace go together! Religious belief and practice cannot be separated from the defense of the image of God in every human being.*

Before introducing this lesson, start your students thinking and talking about respect:

- Have students work as a class or in small groups to brainstorm responses to the question: What does "respect" mean to me?
- Have students make a list of synonyms for the word respect. For example, esteem, honor, regard, value, cherish, appreciate, admire, praise, compliment...
- Ask if anyone has heard of the "Golden Rule" – where have they heard the term? What is the meaning/purpose of the “Golden Rule”?
- Review the handout, “The Golden Rule in World Scripture.” Discuss how they are (or are not) alike in meaning.

## Handout: The “Golden Rule” in World Scripture

### Islam. Forty Hadith of an-Nawawi 13

Not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.

### Jainism. Sutrakritanga 1.11.33

A man should wander about treating all creatures as he himself would be treated.

### Hinduism. Mahabharata, 5:1517

This is the sum of duty: Do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

### Buddhism. Sutta Nipata 705

Comparing oneself to others in such terms as “Just as I am so are they, just as they are so am I,” he should neither kill nor cause others to kill.

### Confucianism. Analects 15.23

Tsekung asked, “Is there one word that can serve as a principle of conduct for life?” Confucius replied, “It is the word shu--reciprocity: Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.”

### African Traditional Religions. Yoruba Proverb (Nigeria)

One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts.

### Judaism. Talmud, Shabbat 31A

A certain heathen came to Shammai and said to him, “Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot.” Thereupon he repulsed him with the rod which was in his hand. When he went to Hillel, he said to him, “What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah; all the rest of it is commentary; go and learn.”

### Christianity. Bible, Matthew 22.36-40

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.”

### Baha’i Faith. Baha’u’llah, Gleanings

Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.

### Taoism. Lao Tzu, T’ai Shang Kan Ying P’ien, 213 – 218

Regard your neighbor’s gain as your own gain and your neighbor’s loss as your own loss.

## Lawrence Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Lawrence Kohlberg developed a study based on presenting subjects with a series of dilemmas and evaluating the reasoning used in their responses.

The basic interview consists of a series of dilemmas such as the following:

### *Heinz Steals the Drug*

*In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging 10 times what the drug cost him to make. He paid \$200 for the radium and charged \$2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about \$ 1,000, which was half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said: "No, I discovered the drug, and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife. Should the husband have done that? (Kohlberg, 1963, p. 19)*

Kohlberg is not really interested in whether the subject says "yes" or "no" to this dilemma but in the reasoning behind the answer. Based on his research, he developed six stages of moral development, summarized below:

**Stage 1** – Preconventional – consequences of the action ("Will I be punished?")

**Stage 2** – Preconventional – benefits derived from the action ("Will I get what I want?") and principle of reciprocity ("Does the victim deserve it?")

**Stage 3** – Conventional – love and approval from family and friends ("Will my family get mad at me?")

**Stage 4** – Conventional – precepts of law and/or religion ("Is this right according to the law?")

**Stage 5** – Postconventional – fairness, justice and truth ("Is there a higher good that can come from the action I do?")

**Stage 6** – Postconventional – broader conception of universal principles (Kohlberg eventually found that he was unable to consistently evaluate at this level and kept the evaluations at Stage 5)

Understanding the concepts of moral development can be useful in understanding the decisions people make when confronted with moral dilemmas. To learn more about Kohlberg and his research, please consult your school's psychology textbook, guidance staff and the Internet.



## A Study of “The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness” by Simon Wiesenthal

Simon Wiesenthal was a Holocaust survivor and famed Nazi hunter.

### For Grades 9-12:

Students will read the book and subsequently examine and discuss the question of forgiveness in light of the uniqueness of the Holocaust and their religious faith.

An archived reading group and questions for discussion about the text can be found at

[http://www.jhom.com/bookshelf/sunflower/discussion\\_intro.htm](http://www.jhom.com/bookshelf/sunflower/discussion_intro.htm).

**SYNOPSIS OF BOOK:** While imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp, Wiesenthal was taken one day from his work detail to the bedside of a dying member of the SS. Haunted by the crimes in which he had participated, the soldier wanted to confess to and obtain absolution from a Jew. Faced with the choice between compassion and justice, silence and truth, Wiesenthal said nothing. But even years after the war had ended, he wondered: Had he done the right thing?

Wiesenthal presented this ethical dilemma to leading intellectuals and theologians of various faiths. The responses of 53 distinguished men and women are presented in “The Sunflower.” The respondents were theologians, political leaders, writers, jurists, psychiatrists, human rights activists, Holocaust survivors and victims of attempted genocide in Bosnia, Cambodia, China and Tibet. They included the Dalai Lama, Matthew Fox, Mary Gordon, Yossi Klein Halevi, Arthur Herzberg, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Cynthia Ozick, Desmond Tutu and Harry Wu. Their responses, as varied as their experiences of the world, remind us that Wiesenthal’s questions are not limited to events of the past.

This important book has provoked international dialogue, bringing together people of diverse backgrounds and faiths, to confront profound and disturbing moral questions. Often surprising and always thought-provoking, “The Sunflower” challenges you to define your beliefs about justice, compassion and human responsibility.

## Moral Compass Lesson: What Would You Do?

### For Grades 6-12:

The following materials have been selected to prompt discussion about personal moral values, and to get students thinking about what they would do if they were faced with a difficult choice.

Instructions:

1. Pose the Survey Question asked in 2002 ([see next page](#)) to your students and read the survey results.
2. Read the results of the survey and then pass out copies of the *Los Angeles Times* article and the quotation from Elie Wiesel.
3. If possible, view the video from the Today Show, "Caught on Tape: Why Didn't Anyone Help?" View the video from MSNBC's Today Show: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21134540/vp/24999997#24999997>
4. Optional (suggested for grades 9-12): Hand out copies of the speech on "moral relativism" by Pope Benedict XVI.
5. View the Web site for "Ethical Dilemmas for Classroom Discussion: The Daily Dilemma Archive" and select discussion topics to incorporate in your classroom. <http://www.goodcharacter.com/dilemma/archive.html>
6. When finished, repeat the survey question and discuss.

## Truth Is Relative, Say Americans

In two national surveys, one for adults and one for teenagers, conducted after the 9/11 tragedy (in 2002), people were asked the following question:

*Some people believe that there are moral truths that are absolute, meaning that those moral truths or principles do not change according to the circumstances. Other people believe that moral truth always depends upon the situation, meaning that their moral and ethical decisions depend upon the circumstances.*

*How about you? Do you believe that there are moral absolutes that are unchanging or that moral truth is relative to the circumstances, or is this something you have never really thought about?*

**SURVEY RESULTS:** Discuss the results of the survey (below). What were the results in your class? Are you surprised? Why or why not? What effect can these attitudes have for the future of our society?

By a three-to-one margin (64 percent vs. 22 percent) adults said truth is always relative to the person and their situation. The perspective was even more lopsided among teenagers, 83 percent said moral truth depends on the circumstances, and only 6% said moral truth is absolute.

The gap between teen and adult views was not surprising, however, when the adult views are considered by generation. While six out of 10 people 36 and older embraced moral relativism, 75 percent of the adults 18 to 35 did so. Thus, it appears that relativism is gaining ground, largely because relativism appears to have taken root with the generation that preceded today's teens.

Those who professed to be actively involved in a religion were more likely than non-religious individuals to accept moral absolutes. Among adults, 32 percent of those who identified as religious said they believe in moral absolutes, compared to just half as many (15 percent) among the non-religious contingent. Among teenagers, there was still a two-to-one ratio evident, but the numbers were much less impressive: only 9 percent of religious teens believe in moral absolutes versus 4 percent of the non-religious teens.

The surveys also asked people to indicate the basis on which they make their moral and ethical decisions. Six different approaches were listed by at least 5 percent of the teenagers interviewed, and eight approaches were listed by at least 5 percent of adults. In spite of the variety communicated, there was a clear pattern within both groups. By far the most common basis for moral decision-making was doing whatever feels right or comfortable in a situation. Nearly four out of ten teens (38 percent) and three out of ten adults (31 percent) described that as their primary consideration.

Among adults, other popular means of moral decision-making were based on the values they had learned from their parents (15 percent), based on principles taught in the Bible (13 percent) and based on whatever outcome would produce the most personally beneficial results (10 percent).

Teenagers were slightly different in their approach. One out of six (16 percent) said they made their choices on the basis of whatever would produce the most beneficial results for them. Three alternative foundations were each identified by one out of 10 teens: whatever would make the most people happy, whatever they thought their family and friends expected of them and on the basis of the values taught by their parents. Just 7 percent of teenagers said their moral choices were based on biblical principles.

Once again, the age pattern was evident. People 36 or older were more than twice as likely as adults in the 18-to-35 age group to identify the Bible as their basis of moral choices (18 percent vs. 7 percent). The proportion of young adults who selected the Bible as their primary moral filter was identical to that of teenagers. In contrast, more than half of the young adults (52 percent) and teenagers (54 percent) base their moral choices on feelings and beneficial outcomes compared to just one-third of adults 36 and older who do so (32 percent).

## Pope Benedict XVI and “Moral Reativism”

### Pope Asails Moral Relativism in Australia Visit

By Tim Johnston

Thursday, July 17, 2008

**SYDNEY:** Pope Benedict XVI laid out a modern agenda Thursday for the event that the Catholic Church is describing as the largest gathering of young people on the planet, putting social justice and the environment center stage and attacking moral relativism.

“The concerns for nonviolence, sustainable development, justice, and peace and care for our environment are of vital importance for humanity,” the pope said.

“They cannot, however, be understood apart from a profound reflection upon the innate dignity of every human life from conception to death,” he said in an address to more than 140,000 people at his first appearance at World Youth Day here.

He was formally welcomed to the country by an Aboriginal group. Earlier, he praised Prime Minister Kevin Rudd for what he described as his “courageous decision” to make a formal apology recently for past mistreatment of indigenous Australians.

The pope also issued a call for his audience to put religion at the center of their public and private lives.

“Do not be confounded by those who see you as just another consumer in a market of undifferentiated possibilities, where choice itself becomes the good, novelty usurps beauty, and subjective experience displaces truth,” he said.

He also urged that faith take a central position in the moral universe, attacking the idea that there are no absolute truths.

“Relativism, by indiscriminately giving value to practically everything, has made ‘experience’ all-important. Yet experiences, detached from any consideration of what is good or true, can lead not to genuine freedom, but to moral or intellectual confusion, to a lowering of standards, to a loss of self-respect,” he said.

## Article by Zach Behrens, reprinted from the Los Angeles Times Man is Stabbed, Cries for Help, People Hear, Do Nothing, Man Dies

On March 9, (2008) 70-year-old Katan Khaimov went for a walk. He started at his West Hollywood apartment and was later found dead with stab wounds near Poinsetta Park, which is in Los Angeles at the WeHo border. For over an hour, Khaimov cried for help, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

The fact that Khaimov was slain has been hard enough for his neighborhood to accept. But the awful coda of his life has added to the soul-searching. Neighbors, it turns out, heard him dying — crying for help after being stabbed in the stomach — for more than an hour before anyone called the police.

Officials say several residents in Khaimov's neighborhood, which straddles the cities of West Hollywood and Los Angeles, believed his moans were the sounds of a vagrant. Cars also passed by while he was lying next to the street, still alive, his head and one arm flopped over the curb.

The Los Angeles Police Department's Capt. Clay Farrell of the Hollywood Division told the *Times* that he's not surprised. "Farrell acknowledged that residents' perception that they are less safe — 'right or wrong' -- is all that matters. Residents are often forced to weigh their concern for others against their own safety, and many times, Farrell said, 'people opt out' — opt not to get involved."

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### Questions:

- While this incident took place far from Houston, the problem is universal. What could neighbors, or passersby, have done to make the situation better?
- How does the quotation from Elie Wiesel on the following page complicate our response?

## Quotation from Elie Wiesel

Elie Wiesel was a survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp in World War II, author of "Night," and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

*In those times, there was darkness everywhere. In heaven and on earth, all the gates of compassion seemed to have been closed. The killer killed, and the Jews died and the outside world adopted an attitude either of complicity or of indifference. Only a few had the courage to care. These few men and women were vulnerable, afraid, helpless — what made them different from their fellow citizens? Why were there so few? Let us remember: What hurts the victim most is not the cruelty of the oppressor but the silence of the bystander.... Let us not forget, after all, there is always a moment when moral choice is made.... And so, we must know these good people who helped Jews during the Holocaust. We must learn from them, and in gratitude and hope, we must remember them.*

- To learn from those who risked their lives, view and read: "Polish Righteous: Those Who Risked Their Lives."

Source: <http://www.savingjews.org/>.

Excerpt from the Web site:

Few people know that among all the countries occupied by the Third Reich during the Second World War (1939-1945) only in Poland was any kind of help to a person of Jewish faith or origin punishable by death. This penalty was widely announced by the occupying authorities. What is more, this punishment was quite often imposed not only on the rescuer, but also on his/her family, often on neighbors and on whole towns or villages. The Germans believed in collective responsibility, trying to eliminate as many Poles and Slavic people as possible, making them the most terrorized populations after the Jews and the Gypsies. Close to 3 million Polish Christians lost their lives by execution, torture, starvation or overwork in more than 2,000 prisons, forced labor and concentration camps.

- "Wartime Rescue of Jews by the Polish Catholic Clergy"

Source: [http://www.savingjews.org/docs/clergy\\_rescue.pdf](http://www.savingjews.org/docs/clergy_rescue.pdf)

Excerpt from the Web site:

Rescue activities on behalf of Jews were carried out by priests, nuns and monks in more than 900 Roman Catholic Church institutions throughout Poland during World War II. The number of priests and religious involved in these activities was many times higher. This effort is all the more remarkable since Poland was the only country under Nazi Germany occupation where any form of assistance to Jews was routinely punishable by death. Several dozen members of the Polish clergy were executed for this reason. It must also be borne in mind that the Polish Catholic clergy were the only Christian clergy who were systematically surveilled, persecuted, murdered and imprisoned by the thousands as a result of Nazi genocidal policies.

## Interdependent Characteristics of Rescuers During the Holocaust

“I believe that it was really due to Lorenzo that I am alive today; and not so much for his material aid, as for his having constantly reminded me by his presence... that there still existed a just world outside our own, something and someone still pure and whole... for which it was worth surviving.”

Primo Levi describes his rescuer, Lorenzo Perrone, (from “If This Is A Man / Survival in Auschwitz”).

As noted with the Holocaust Museum Houston Triangle Lesson, there were roles that could be chosen during the Holocaust: perpetrators, rescuers/upstanders or bystanders. We know that less than one percent chose to be rescuers/upstanders. This group of ordinary people who took extraordinary actions serves as role models of moral courage.

Rescue during the Holocaust was conducted by all groups – Jews and Gentiles alike – and in all areas of Europe. Rescue could involve providing false papers or visas to travel out of a country, hiding those seeking refuge (notably this was done for children), providing food or shelter or being active in partisan actions. These actions could have taken place once or over an extended period of time. Nechama Tec, a Holocaust survivor and sociology professor, has researched altruism and compassion. In her studies of rescue during the Holocaust, she has not found a pattern but instead “a set of interdependent characteristics and conditions” that Holocaust rescuers share:

- They don’t blend into their communities;
- They are independent people, and they know it;
- They have a long history of doing good deeds;
- Because they have done right for so long, it doesn’t seem extraordinary to them;
- They choose to help without rational consideration; and
- They have universalistic perceptions that transcend race and ethnicity.

Yad Vashem recognizes those who were rescuers with the title, “Righteous Among the Nations.” One of Yad Vashem’s principal duties is to convey the gratitude of the State of Israel and the Jewish people to non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Those recognized receive a medal and a certificate of honor and their names are commemorated on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem. To learn more about this program, visit Yad Vashem’s Web site at [http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous\\_new/about\\_the\\_righteous.html](http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous_new/about_the_righteous.html).

“I’m not all good. I had the opportunity, and I happened to have made the right choice. A human being is like a piano. Circumstances play the keys. The war brought out the highest and lowest in people.”

— Rescuer Semmy Riekerk

Source: “The Holocaust: Readings and Interpretations,” p. 277.

## “Would You Let This Girl Drown?” Editorial by Nicholas Kristof

On July 8, 2009, Nicholas Kristof asked in an editorial printed in the *New York Times*, “Would You Let This Girl Drown?” The editorial can be accessed at [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/09/opinion/09kristof.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/09/opinion/09kristof.html?_r=1).

Kristof uses the hypothetical situation of a drowning girl to illustrate how the international community, and individuals in general, are more likely to go out of their way to save one person than to alleviate the suffering of many.

Facing History and Ourselves created a lesson using the editorial “Would You Save a Drowning Girl?” The lesson, which can be accessed at <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/facingtoday/would-you-save-drowning-girl>, contains the discussion questions listed below:

- Kristof explains, "A number of studies have found that we are much more willing to donate to one needy person than to several." Why do you think this might be the case? If true, what are the implications of this finding for the work of organizations and communities that strive to help those in need?
- Kristof argues that another factor that limits or encourages helping behavior is personal responsibility. Under what conditions are most people likely to feel more responsible for helping others? What factors reduce feelings of personal responsibility?
- Identify a time when have you felt personally responsible for helping others. What conditions encouraged you to feel this sense of responsibility? How does your experience support or refute the ideas in Kristof's editorial?



## Participate in a Service Project

### Helping others is a selfish act — it makes you feel good!

We hope your visit to the Holocaust Museum Houston exhibition about Pope John Paul II and the Jewish people has had a positive impact on your students. The pope's countless examples of moral leadership will hopefully spur those who learn about him to act in a similar manner. To that end, we are including information below about resources for service opportunities here and abroad.

- National Service-Learning Clearing House — a Web site with multiple resources for kids and teens:  
[http://www.servicelearning.org/instant\\_info/kids\\_teens/index.php](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/kids_teens/index.php)
- Save Darfur: <http://www.savedarfur.org/page/group/Teenswhoknowgenocideisuncool>  
Do Something: <http://www.dosomething.org/>

## Additional Resources

### Bibliography

#### Books about John Paul II:

“John Paul II: A Light for the World.”

Published in commemoration of the pope’s 25th anniversary as leader of the Catholic Church, this lavish 256-page volume is the first collection of photographs from the official collection of the Vatican.

“John Paul II: The Epic Life of a Pilgrim Pope.”

Over more than a quarter century, Pope John Paul II emerged as one of the most influential people of the era, shaping moral thought and political action. He was a pope of firsts and mosts. He was the most traveled pontiff by far, having visited and kissed the ground of more than 100 nations. He was the first pope to set foot in the main synagogue in Rome and the first to enter a mosque. One of the Vatican’s most prolific writers, he produced more than 80 encyclicals, exhortations, apostolic constitutions and letters, plus hundreds of other documents and several popular books. He became the first non-Italian pope in 4 1/2 centuries, and he was among the youngest in the modern era, just 58 when he ascended to the papal throne. With photos, text and the accompanying interactive, multimedia CD-ROM, this book traces the life of a charismatic, often controversial man, both at home in the Vatican and on his pilgrimages to the world.

George Weigel. “Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II.”

“Witness to Hope” is the authoritative biography of one of the singular figures — some might argue the singular figure — of our time. With unprecedented cooperation from John Paul II and the people who knew and worked with him throughout his life, George Weigel offers a groundbreaking portrait of the pope as a man, a thinker and a leader whose religious convictions defined a new approach to world politics — and changed the course of history. As even his critics concede, John Paul II occupied a unique place on the world stage and put down intellectual markers that no one could ignore or avoid as humanity entered a new millennium fraught with possibility and danger.

The pope was a man of prodigious energy who played a crucial yet insufficiently explored role in some of the most momentous events of our time, including the collapse of European communism, the quest for peace in the Middle East and the democratic transformation of Latin America. This updated edition of “Witness to Hope” explains how this “man from a far country” did all of that, and much more — and what both his accomplishments and the unfinished business of his pontificate mean for the future of the church and the world.

#### Books about John Paul II and the Jewish People:

Gian Franco Svidercoschi. “Letter to a Jewish Friend: The Simple and Extraordinary Story of Pope John Paul II and His Jewish School Friend.”

This book tells the story of the amazing friendship of Karol Wojtyla and his closest Jewish friend, Jerzy Kluger. They had grown up together in Wadowice, Poland but, due to World War II, were separated and lost contact with one another until they discovered each other again in 1965 when Archbishop Wojtyla was attending the Second Vatican Council in Rome, where Kluger lived and worked.

Darcy O'Brien. "The Hidden Pope: The Untold Story of a Lifelong Friendship That Is Changing the Relationship Between Catholics and Jews – The Personal Journey of John Paul II and Jerzy Kluger."

John Paul II has made greater strides toward understanding and atoning for Rome's complicity in antisemitism than any other pope in history. "The Hidden Pope" shows how and why this rapprochement is taking place by telling the story of John Paul's lifelong friendship with Jerzy Kluger, a Polish Jew. The text is a fascinating and detailed depiction of John Paul's personal life, but the book's real significance lies in its frank demonstration of the way Karol Wojtyla brings his personal experience to bear on the eternal truths of Catholic theology.

Yehezkel Landau and Michael McGarry, CSP. "John Paul II in the Holy Land: In His Own Words."

Pope John Paul II has been the undisputed leader in fostering Jewish Christian dialogue for more than 25 years. He has labored intensely to change the hearts and minds of both sides and has never been afraid to apologize for the sins committed by Christian people against Jews. His visit to the Middle East in March 2000, where he was able to visit the places where Jesus had lived and walked, was a moving and extraordinarily rich experience, both for him personally and for the Catholic Church. However, it also gave rise to a certain amount of rumor and misunderstanding among Jewish, Christian and Muslim residents of the region. Many locals voiced suspicion regarding the real reason for the Pope's visit.

"Pope John Paul II in the Holy Land" forthrightly addresses these doubts and suspicions by documenting the pope's itinerary and recording the speeches that the pope gave at each stop along the journey. In addition to the pope's own words, this book also provides reflections on that visit from two important scholars, Fr. Michael McGarry and Prof. Yehezkel Landau — the former Catholic and the latter Jewish. Both have been participants in building the interfaith dialogue. The speeches that Pope John Paul II gave on his journey, taken together with the reflections of McGarry and Landau, collectively establish the critical importance of the pope's visit and candidly explore the difficult issues that remain unresolved. Taken together, these writings serve as a starting point for building mutual trust. They also compel us to think more seriously about the mystery of God's plan for humankind as revealed in these two great religions.

Byron Sherwin and Harold Kasimow. "John Paul II and Interreligious Dialogue."

This book includes excerpts from John Paul II's statements concerning Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and interreligious dialogue as well as responses from representatives of these different religious traditions. The book also contains a Catholic assessment of the pope on interreligious dialogue by the former head of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

### Speech by John Paul II:

"No Peace Without Justice, No Justice Without Forgiveness." Message of His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, for the Celebration of The World Day of Peace, Jan. 24, 2002, Assisi, Italy

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_20011211\\_xxxv-world-day-for-peace\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20011211_xxxv-world-day-for-peace_en.html)

## General Books on Jewish-Christian Dialogue:

Melody Knowles, Esther Menn and John Pawlikowski (editors). "Contesting Texts: Jews and Christians in Conversation about the Bible."

Themes explored include biblical authority, texts of violence, tradition, identity and the other, common hope. Contributors include David Novak, Barbara Rossing, Steven Weitzman, Hindy Naiman, Ralph Klein, Barbara Bowe, Larry Edwards, Sarah Tanzer, Walter Brueggemann, Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite and David Sandmel.

Geoffrey Wigoder and Leon Klenicki. "A Dictionary of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue."

The major theological and religious topics of the Jewish-Christian dialogue, treated separately by a Christian scholar and a Jewish scholar.

E. Kessler, Judy Banki and John Pawlikowski (editors). "Jews and Christians in Conversation: Crossing Cultures and Generations."

Avery Dulles, Leon Klenicki and Edward I. Cassidy. "The Holocaust, Never to Be Forgotten: Reflections on the Holy See's Document 'We Remember.'"

On March 6, 1998, the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with Jews issued a document entitled "We Remember: A Reflection on the *Shoah*." This was an important statement for the Roman Catholic Church that acknowledged not only the tragic historical reality of the Holocaust but responsibility for the Christian antisemitism that contributed to its happening. This document was the recipient of wide praise, some disappointment and much controversy.

This small volume brings together the statement itself, Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy's reflection of its history and the controversy surrounding its appearance and two reflections by highly respected theologians in the Catholic-Jewish dialogue. Jesuit theologian Avery Dulles has written prolifically on the foundations of the Christian faith, while Rabbi Leon Klenicki has been productive on the fundamental principles that must govern Jewish-Christian interfaith relations.

There is no better place for this document and reflections to appear than in the enduring and well-respected Stimulus Books series, which is dedicated to topics of vital interest to the Jewish-Christian dialogue. This moving, insightful and inspirational book will be a further step forward in the dialogue.

## Books about Poland, Jews, and World War II

Alter Kacyzne. "Poyln: Jewish Life in the Old Country."

Winner of the National Jewish Book Award. In 1921, photographer Alter Kacyzne was commissioned by the New York Yiddish daily, *Forverts*, to document images of Jewish life in the "old country." Kacyzne's assignment was to become a 10-year journey across "Poyln," as Poland's 3 million Yiddish-speaking Jews called their home, from the crowded ghettos of Warsaw and Krakow to the remote villages of Otwock and Kazimierz. Candid and intimate, tender and humorous, Kacyzne's portraits of teeming village squares and primitive workshops, cattle markets and spinning wheels, prayer groups and summer camps tell the story of a way of life that is no more.

For the last 60 years, Kacyzne's *Forverts* photographs — the sole fragment of his vast archive to survive World War II — lay unseen. Now, the work of this lost master is restored to the world in a volume of extraordinary force and beauty.

Uri Orlev. "The Island on Bird Street."

During World War II, a Jewish boy is left on his own for months in a ruined house in the Warsaw Ghetto, where he must learn all the tricks of survival under constantly life-threatening conditions.

Nechama Tec. "When Light Pierces the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi Occupied Poland."

Everyone knows the name of Anne Frank, but few people remember anything about the people who sheltered her. Who were the rescuers and what motivated them to risk their lives for persecuted Jews? Clearly such people deserve to be remembered and honored. And clearly an understanding of their motivations may help us cultivate such behavior in our own day.

Focusing on such "righteous Christians," Tec, herself a survivor helped by Poles, vividly recreates what it was like to pass and hide among Christians and what it was like for Poles to rescue Jews. Concentrating on Poland, the Nazi center for Jewish annihilation, Tec amassed a vast array of published accounts, unpublished testimonies and interviews yielding case histories of more than 500 Polish helpers, preserving for posterity the heroism of such people and filling a significant gap in our knowledge of the Holocaust.

## Movies:

"Paper Clips"

The award-winning, moving and inspiring documentary film that captures how students at Whitwell Middle School in Tennessee responded to lessons about the Holocaust — with a promise to honor every lost soul by collecting one paper clip for each individual exterminated by the Nazis. Despite the fact that they had previously been unaware of and unfamiliar with the Holocaust, their dedication was absolute. Their plan was simple but profound. The amazing result, a memorial railcar filled with 11 million paper clips (representing 6 million Jews and 5 million gypsies, homosexuals and other victims of the Holocaust) which stands permanently in their schoolyard, is an unforgettable lesson of how a committed group of children and educators can change the world one classroom at a time. Preview this video: <http://www.paperclipsmovie.com/>

"Pope John Paul II: Based on the Powerful True Story," starring Jon Voight,  
<http://www.ignatius.com/Videos/PopeJohnPaullI/learn.html>

## Internet Materials:

Judaism 101 [www.jewfaq.org/toc.htm](http://www.jewfaq.org/toc.htm)

The Vatican Web site [http://www.vatican.va/phome\\_en.htm](http://www.vatican.va/phome_en.htm)

**ANTISEMITISM:** (alternatively spelled anti-semitism or anti-Semitism; sometimes known as judeophobia) is prejudice and hostility toward Jews as a group. The prejudice is usually characterized by a combination of religious, racial, cultural and ethnic biases. While the term's etymology might suggest that antisemitism is directed against all Semitic peoples, since its creation it has been used exclusively to refer to hostility toward Jews.

**CONCENTRATION CAMP:** Camps in which Jews were imprisoned by the Nazis, located in Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe. There were three different kinds of camps: transit, labor and extermination. Many prisoners in concentration camps died within months of arriving from violence or starvation. The term concentration camp has lost some of its original meaning after the Nazi concentration camps of World War II were discovered, and has since been understood to refer to a place of mistreatment, starvation, forced labor and murder.

**GHETTO:** Etymology: Italian, from the Venetian dialect *ghèto* (literally “foundry” from *ghetàr* to cast), or the island where Jews were forced to live in 1516. Modern usage includes an area of a city inhabited by a minority group.

**KRISTALLNACHT:** Etymology: German, literally “crystal night” or “The Night of Broken Glass.” On the night of Nov. 9, 1938, a pogrom took place in Nazi Germany. Ninety-one Jews were murdered, and 25,000 to 30,000 were arrested and deported to concentration camps.

**NAZISM:** commonly known as National Socialism, refers primarily to the ideology and practices of the German-based Nazi Party under Adolf Hitler; and the policies adopted by the government of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, a period also known as the Third Reich. The official name of the party was the “National Socialist German Workers’ Party”.

**NOSTRA AETATE:** The “Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions” of the Second Vatican Council. Passed by a vote of 2,221 to 88 of the assembled bishops, this declaration was declared on Oct. 28, 1965, by Pope Paul VI. The title is Latin for “In our Time” and as is customary with Roman Catholic documents, it takes its title from the first line of the declaration.

**NUREMBERG LAWS:** A set of denaturalization laws passed in 1935 in Nazi Germany. The laws used a pseudo-scientific basis for racial discrimination against Jewish people. People were classified as “German” if all four of their grandparents were of “German blood,” while people were classified as “Jews” if they descended from three or four Jewish grandparents. A person with one or two Jewish grandparents was a *Mischlinge*, a person of “mixed blood.” The first of these laws, “The Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor,” prohibited all relationships between “Jews” (the name was now officially used in place of “non-Aryans”) and “Germans” and also the employment of “German” females under 45 in Jewish households. The second law, “The Reich Citizenship Law,” stripped persons not considered of German blood of their German citizenship and introduced a new distinction between “Reich citizens” and “nationals.”

**POGROM:** A form of riot directed against a particular group — whether ethnic, religious or other — and characterized by destruction of their homes, businesses and religious centers. Historically, the term as used in English has very often been used to denote extensive violence against Jews — either spontaneous or premeditated — but it has also been applied to similar incidents against other, mostly minority, groups. Pogroms are usually accompanied by physical violence against the targeted people and sometimes even murder or massacre.

**PONTIFICATE:** To perform the office of the Roman Catholic pope, the bishop of Rome

**SYNOD:** Primarily associated with Christianity, a council or an assembly of church officials or churches, usually called to resolve questions of administration or discipline.

**ZIONISM:** An international political movement that originally supported the reestablishment of a homeland for the Jewish people in historic Palestine (Hebrew: *Eretz Yisra’el*, “the Land of Israel”), and continues primarily as support for the modern State of Israel. While Zionism is based in part upon religious tradition linking the Jewish people to the land of Israel, where the concept of Jewish nationhood first evolved somewhere between 1200 BCE and the late Second Temple era (i.e., up to 70 CE), the modern movement was mainly secular, beginning largely so as a response by European Jewry to antisemitism across Europe.

## We Would Like to Hear from You!

We would love to receive feedback from you and your students about the impact this tour may have had upon your class.

Please e-mail comments to [education@hnh.org](mailto:education@hnh.org).

Thank you for including this exhibition in your curriculum. We hope you will use education programs available at Holocaust Museum Houston to enhance future lessons.