

Learning about Ourselves while Learning about Each Other: Proposals for Jewish and Catholic Education

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Prolegomenon

In what follows we present outlines of what ought to be stressed in educational programs aimed at the Catholic and Jewish communities. We propose to approach each community bearing in mind its particular theological and religious character, and community organization. This is often referred to as part of the asymmetry between the two communities, a factor that we have taken into consideration and have embraced as a necessary feature in our planning. We expect that tailor-made programs for various subsections of the community will be essential to the success of our program. We hope to speak to Catholics in theological and catechetical language and to Jews in the language of history and Jewish law. We are convinced that only such an approach, coupled with adequate staffing and funding, can bring about the success of that to which we are committed.

We have also prepared reports about current efforts in both the Catholic and Jewish communities to educate our children and adults about the issues we are concerned with at our meetings. These reports show that much less has been done than we might wish. However, they also demonstrate that many of our colleagues have developed successful and meaningful approaches. With the help of these already developed approaches, we can begin a process in which the new relationship of the Catholic Church

presentation of Christianity and

3. As part of the continuing education for teachers, catechists, clergy and lay leaders, courses, seminars, visits to Jewish sites should be organized, where feasible, in order to increase first-hand knowledge and to communicate the Church's new attitude.
4. As indicated in the Recommendations of the 2001 ILC meeting, "the curricula of Catholic seminaries and schools of theology should reflect the central importance of the church's new understanding of its relationship to Jews."
5. Educators should be made aware of teaching aids and other educational resources that are available in different languages on the Internet at sites such as www.jcrelations.net, www.sidic.org, www.bc.edu/cjlearning, in printed form or through other media.

Joint Educational Objectives

Much of what has been accomplished thus far depends on increasing understanding of the historical and religious aspects of our respective traditions and their interaction throughout the centuries. We recommend that we seek to reach large numbers of students, seminarians and lay leaders with a deep appreciation of our history, theology and new modes of cooperation.

The following joint projects are intended to provide avenues for a deepening of our understanding:

1. Existing websites dealing with Jewish-Christian relations need to be expanded and developed in order to provide a central source of materials for educators and leaders. Such sites need to provide an expanding library of materials in all languages used by members of the two faiths. We should aim to provide resources on all levels.
2. A series of exchange programs and reciprocal visits of an educational nature need to be organized to bring seminarians to meet one another directly and learn together about issues of common concern. Where feasible, faculty and course exchanges should be arranged on the university level between Catholic and Jewish institutions and/or between academic programs that teach Judaism and Christianity.
3. Seminars or conferences should bring clergy, educators and lay leaders together for the explicit