



# NEWS

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DATE: April 23, 1981

FROM: William Ryan

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## EUGENE J. FISHER NAMED CONSULTOR TO VATICAN COMMISSION ON JUDAISM

WASHINGTON--Pope John Paul II has appointed Dr. Eugene J. Fisher, Executive Director of the Office of Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), as a consultant to the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism.

Dr. Fisher, 37, is the first NCCB staff member and the first Catholic layperson from the United States appointed a consultant to the Commission. The only other American among 10 churchmen and theologians from throughout the world who serve the Commission in this capacity is Bishop Bernard F. Law of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Mo.

"This appointment by the Pope is a recognition of the creativity and vitality of the Catholic-Jewish dialogue in the United States, which has been enhanced by the scholarship and personal qualities which Dr. Fisher has demonstrated," commented Bishop Thomas C. Kelly, O.P., NCCB General Secretary.

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"Dr. Fisher's appointment is most gratifying and honors all of his colleagues at the Conference," Bishop Kelly said.

The Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism was established in 1974 by Pope Paul VI. It is under the jurisdiction of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity headed by Johannes Cardinal Willebrands. Eugene Fisher has been an observer at past meetings of the Commission, and was a member of the Catholic delegation to the meeting of the International Liaison Committee between the Roman Catholic Church and Judaism which was held in London early this month.

Dr. Fisher, who earned a doctorate in Hebrew culture at New York University, was named to head the office for Catholic-Jewish relations, which is part of the NCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, in 1977. He had previously been director of catechist formation for the Office of Religious Education, Archdiocese of Detroit, and taught at St. Francis School of Christian Education, Livonia, Michigan, and at St. John's Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, Mich. Dr. Fisher is a member of the Catholic Biblical Association, the National Association of Professors of Hebrew, and the Society of Biblical Literature.

He is the author of Faith Without Prejudice, 1977, and the co-editor (with Rabbi Daniel F. Polish) of Formation of Social Policy in the Catholic and Jewish Traditions, which was

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published last year. That book evolved from a meeting held at the University of Notre Dame under the sponsorship of the NCCB Secretariat and the Synagogue Council of America.

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