



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CATHOLIC OFFICIAL PRAISES NEW SURVEY ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STATEMENTS ON JEWS

WASHINGTON--A new study of efforts by Catholic institutions to implement recent Church statements on Jews will contribute to continued work in this area, according to an official of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"The results of the study show clearly that here in the United States the Second Vatican Council's mandate concerning correct attitudes towards Jews and Judaism, as well as subsequent documents by the Holy See, are taken seriously and have yielded great spiritual riches for Catholic education and parish life," said Dr. Eugene J. Fisher, Executive Director of the bishops' Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations.

The study, entitled Documentary Survey Report of Catholic Institutions' Implementation of the 1965 Conciliar Statement on the Jews, the 1974 Guidelines on the statement, and the 1975 U.S. Bishops' Statement on the Jews was prepared for the 20th anniversary this month of the 1965 promulgation of the Vatican II document Nostra Aetate. Sister Rose Thering, O.P., Professor of Education at Seton Hall University, made the study.

The survey sought to determine what effect, if any, the

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documents have had on curricula, teaching methods and materials, ecumenical programs and faculties. It was carried out through questionnaires sent to Catholic colleges and universities, seminaries, high schools, superintendents of schools, and diocesan ecumenical commissions.

According to Sister Thering, the findings indicated that most Catholic institutions have a deep appreciation for their rootedness in Judaism, and for the contributions of the Jewish people; they displayed love and respect for Jews and for contemporary Judaism. Respondents also indicated that Christian-Jewish studies had increased their own religious faith.

The study found that areas needing special study included such matters as the Holocaust, the Pharisees, the Passion Narratives, and the Jewish "Land Tradition."

"Because the issues raised by Catholic-Jewish relations are intertwined with every essential element of the Church's self-understanding, from biblical interpretation and the origins of our liturgy to ecclesiology and eschatology, the implementation of Nostra Aetate remains a key 'litmus test' for assessing the significance of the Council for the local Church," Dr. Fisher commented.

"While Sister Thering's study reveals that much work remains to be done, it suggests empirically the observation that the renewal of the Church called for by the Council is alive and well in the United States."

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