

JUDAISM & POSTCONCILIAR CATHOLIC IDENTITY

- Topic: Developments in Christology Based on Postconciliar Approaches to Judaism and their Impact on Catholic Identity
- Convener: Carol Ann Martinelli, Independent Scholar, Detroit
- Moderator: Carol Ann Martinelli, Independent Scholar, Detroit
- Presenters: John T. Pawlikowski, Catholic Theological Union
Robert A. Krieg, University of Notre Dame

The Interest Group's focus is the renewal of Catholic identity and theology based upon the transformation of Catholic approaches to Judaism post Vatican II. The impact of recent scholarship and developments in Christology upon Catholic identity, in conjunction with emerging postconciliar approaches to Judaism, was addressed in the Interest Group's second of its three programs. Providing a basis for analysis and discussion of this issue, John Pawlikowski and Robert Krieg presented papers for the consideration of session participants.

John proposed "Parting of the Ways" scholarship as a new and preferred option to the single and double covenant models, as a basis for understanding the relationship between the Church and the Jewish People. This scholarship is based on new insights into the process of church-synagogue separation. It reintegrates Jesus and the early Church within the Jewish People in the first and second centuries. The research indicates that the movement begun by Jesus was a reform movement within Judaism not interested in creating a separatist sect; that Christians did not have a separate identity from Jews until well after the first century; and that the Pauline missionary movement, as Paul understood it, was a Jewish mission focused on Gentiles as the proper object of God's call. John pointed out that David Frankfurter even determined that there is evidence of a degree of overlap that challenges the construction of an historically distinct Christianity before at least mid-second century. The "Parting of the Ways" scholarship supports the understanding that Judaism and Christianity resulted from a parallel co-emergence process over an extended period of time.

Paul is traditionally viewed as the founder of Christianity, with his master narrative in Acts arguably providing an anti-Jewish perspective and a basis for Church supersessionism. Increasingly, however, Paul, through "Parting of the Ways" scholarship, is emerging as both a faithful Jew, appreciative of Jewish Torah, and simultaneously the founder of Christianity. Paul's view is considered an inclusivist model in terms of the Christian Jewish relationship - asserting revelatory newness through his understanding of Christ, but equally asserting continued Jewish covenantal inclusion after the Christ event.

Building on "Parting of the Ways" scholarship, paths to salvation may be understood as distinctive, but not totally distinct, based on a parallel understanding of the co-emergence of Judaism and Christianity. John understands the distinctive paths as having equal footing, neither inherently superior, yet one incorporating Paul's understanding of newness in the revelation in Christ and an incarnational approach to Christology and the other including a revelatory dimension to Judaism rooted in Torah.

Furthering consideration of Jesus' self understandings as a faithful Jew, Bob analyzed *Jesus: The Compassion of God* (1983) by Monika K. Hellwig, *Christology* (1995) by Gerald O'Collins, and *Jesus: Word Made Flesh* (2008) by Gerard Sloyan, all works by theologians that stress that Jesus was a Jew who may be properly understood only in relation to Judaism.

Bob highlighted that, engaging in liberation theology, Hellwig explains that Jesus proclaimed God's rule "in fidelity to the Jewish hope," and challenged "the structures and values and attitudes of human society" (p. 87). Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus radically changed the human situation, opening the way for all people to respond to God's love.

In his doctrinal theology, Bob noted that O'Collins argues that while Jesus upheld the creeds of Deuteronomy 26:5-9 and Joshua 24:2-13, he also implicitly conveyed his sense of his unique divine sonship (e.g., in Matthew 11:27). Today, in light of the paschal mystery, "Christ is there whenever and wherever we encounter the body of creation, suffering human bodies, Jewish bodies, the ecclesial body (indwelt by the Holy Spirit), the 'body' of world religions, and the historical 'body' of humanity" (pp. 317-18).

Undertaking a kerygmatic theology, Sloyan holds that Jesus set out to renew God's covenant with Abraham, Moses and Jeremiah and that he became the mediator of God's covenant with all people of good will. After some Jews encountered the risen Jesus and after the destruction of the Second Temple, "the religions of Israel" split into *Ioudaïsmós*, relying on the Mishnah and Talmuds, and *Christianismós*, anchored in the New Testament (p. 67).

In their respective texts, Bob concluded out that each theologian acknowledges that God's covenant with the people of Israel is eternal, but that only O'Collins explicitly answers the question concerning Jesus as the mediator of salvation for Jews as well as Christians.

Group discussion was based on a clear consensus that a renewed christology is at the foundation of a renewal of postconciliar Catholic identity. Acknowledging that Jews remain in covenantal relationship with God, doctrinal development is the means to resolve the theological impasse seemingly created by the finality and universality of the Christ event.

Thank you John and Bob for providing the Interest Group with an outstanding program!

CAROL ANN MARTINELLI
Independent Scholar
Detroit, Michigan