

PREFACE

This number 12 marks a new step in the history of *Immanuel*. As we had announced in the preceding issue, Reverend Coos Schoneveld, who had been during eleven years the executive secretary of the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel, to whom we are indebted for the inspiration and creation of *Immanuel*, has been called to the very important position of General Secretary of the International Council of Christians and Jews. One will read in this issue "Postscript and Preface," the text of the lecture given to the Rainbow Group, in which Doctor Coos Schoneveld presents the summary of his work in Israel and his vision of the future of Jewish-Christian encounter. As his successor as the editor of *Immanuel*, I am aware of the difficult inheritance which has been left to me. It is my hope and desire to continue his work with the same spirit and fervor which he has shown as the director of *Immanuel* throughout these past ten years. Another element marks the threshold of the new era. This enterprise of *Immanuel* would not have fared so well without the help and support of different institutions which have from the very beginning encouraged this project. On the last page of every issue, in the list of acknowledgements, we recall their names with gratitude. With this present number begins a new cooperation. The Interfaith Affairs Department of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has proposed to help the promotion of *Immanuel* in taking care of subscription and distribution throughout U.S.A. and Canada. The Editorial Board gives thanks to this organisation for this help without which it would have certainly been awkward to continue the publication of *Immanuel* with the same rhythm and efficiency.

Moreover, one will see that in this issue there is a new section. Along with the already existing four headings: Hebrew Bible; New Testament and Judaism of the First Centuries; Jewish-Christian Relations, past and present; Contemporary Religious Life in Israel; it has seemed necessary to add a fifth: Jewish Thought and Spirituality, which will encompass all that concerns the spiritual tradition of Judaism: Prayer, Liturgy, Philosophy and Mysticism. It might be thought that the creation of this new section is a sign of the progress accomplished by *Immanuel* since the beginning and of the increasing interest which it has stimulated.

Still, as old Aristotle observed in his analysis of nature and change, essential stability underlies changing circumstances and conditions. It is the same, I hope, as far as the fundamental project is concerned, with the evolution of *Immanuel*. Perhaps this is a propitious moment to recall its original purpose, namely to make available to scholars interested in Judaism, its origin, tradition and history, but living all over the world, the fruits of reflection and research on the local scene, carried on in Hebrew. The same thing could be said about theologians at work on the relation between Israel and the Church, as well as to men of good will engaged in Jewish-Christian exchanges. With this in mind, *Immanuel* would profess to be an expression of the work being done by the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity. Its basic inspiration and intention is to promote a more objective and at the same time a more lucid and generous mutual understanding between Christians and Jews, the starting point being the unique experience of Christian life in Israel.

In this perspective, *Immanuel* is at once the inheritor and the continuator of the pioneers who have blazed a trail and left us the fruits of their labours. Accordingly, this is the place to mention three friends whom the Lord has recently called to himself. First let us recall the memory of two "elders" who died during this present year: Monsignor A. C. Ramselaar and Dr. Hans Kosmala. The former was one of the first to engage in Jewish-Christian encounter, starting from the end of the Second World War. The moving spirit behind the Apeldoorn meetings, he was one of the team engaged in the preparatory work for Vatican II, and he later worked as an expert in the elaboration of the Declaration *Nostra Aetate*. More recently he participated in the scholarly enterprise *Compendia Rerum Judaicarum et Novum Testamentum*, an indispensable tool for those whose interest lies in the difficult and delicate matter of Judeo-Christian relations during the early centuries of the Church. On a more personal note, each of his visits to Jerusalem was an encouragement for us, and we know that whether in Rome or in Holland, he always acted as an energetic ambassador on our behalf. As to Dr. Hans Kosmala, apart from the reputation he deservedly built up in the world of Jewish and Christian scholarship during his long career as Director of the Swedish Institute in Jerusalem, he remains in our minds as one of the founders of the Ecumenical Fraternity over which he presided during its early reunions. Not having at that stage any fixed headquarters, the library of the Swedish Institute served that purpose for our first public conferences. On the level of our particular undertaking the *Yearbook* of which Hans Kosmala was the editor remains for *Immanuel* an example of openness, honesty and intellectual rigour.

Finally, we would like to evoke here the memory of the late Monsignor Cornelius Rijk, taken as he was prematurely from the work he accomplished with SIDIC of which he was the director and inspirer. Everyone having to do with the encounter between Jews and Christians will already be familiar with the thought and career of this biblical expert who discovered in and through his research the singularity of the Jewish identity and vocation. At the end of the Council he was named, in collaboration with Cardinal Willebrands and Monsignor Moeller, the first official at the Vatican ever responsible for Jewish affairs, thus preparing the way for what was later to be the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism. His premature death adds him to the list, already long, of those who have worked in the same field and were removed all too soon from our company if not from our affection: Dom Samuel Stehmann, Mother Aline of Sion, Father Jean-Paul Lichtenberg, Father Pierre de Contenson, Father Jean Roger and quite recently Father Roger Braun. The fate of these precursors seems to confirm a mysterious law: following the example of Israel itself it is impossible to work in Jewish-Christian relations without having in one way or another to suffer or die. From the divine standpoint this necessity only makes more urgent the task we are engaged in. What we want to underline here however is that an enterprise like *Immanuel* would not even have existed were it not for the courage and efforts of these pioneers.

EIKHONAM LIBERAKHA.

Marcel J. Dubois