

NOSTRA AETATE CELEBRATION

Welcome for the Catholic Community

With Cardinal Bernardin, our brother Joseph, with Sister Mary Breslin, Mundelein's President, with the entire Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Chicago, we welcome you, our Jewish sisters and brothers, to this special 20th anniversary celebration of Nostra Aetate, the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions. This is an evening for a most sincere Shalom, that beautiful and powerful greeting which is always a prayerful wish for the fullness of life, for the blessings of God's own peace. During these past twenty years, often we have greeted one another with Shalom as we entered into neighborhood dialog sessions, visited your synagogues, prayed together in our annual Sedar celebrations and welcomed your scholars to our campus for courses and for lectures. Tonight, as we commemorate Rabbi Heschel in a special way, I am reminded of his final visit to Mundelein. He was too weak to travel to Chicago, so we used our telelecture system. Rabbi Heschel spoke from the telephone in his office; his voice came over the public address system in our Learning Resource Center. We treasured his every word, as I am sure we will do tonight.

This evening's greeting of Shalom climaxes all of our efforts thus far to implement the Second Vatican Council's thrust and directives toward mutual understanding and appreciation of our common spiritual heritage as children of Abraham, our father in faith.

Particularly in our Sedar celebrations, whether they took place on our campus or with our own dear Rabbi Schaalman at Temple Emanuel, have

we come to cherish our oneness as covenanted people. In those Seder celebrations we learned to sing Dayenu, a most beautiful way to express the limitless love of our God. The word, Dayenu, reminds us that nothing is ever enough for our God. There will always be room for another manifestation of God's great love for us all. May this evening be a celebration of Dayenu as well as Shalom. Together let us celebrate one more manifestation of our God's never-ending love for us. And then let us continue to help our world know our God of love and peace, through our ongoing dialogs and celebrations together.

Now, this night, in its own way, different from all other nights, in the spirit of Dayenu, let us all know the welcome of Shalom.

Mundelein College Chicago
Carol Frances Jegen, BVM
November 1, 1985