

Contact: Joseph Gallo / Herb Corbin
KCSA Worldwide
(212) 896-1269
jgallo@kcsa.com

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PAVE THE WAY FOUNDATION TO DELIVER MESSAGE OF THANKS TO POPE JOHN PAUL II

LARGEST GATHERING OF JEWISH LEADERS TO EVER MEET WITH SITTING POPE

NEW YORK, January 5, 2005 – Pave the Way Foundation announced today that it has been granted a special private audience with His Holiness Pope John Paul II in Vatican City on Tuesday, January 18, 2005.

A group of some 160 Jewish leaders, rabbis and cantors from throughout the United States, Europe and Israel – which is the largest group gathering of Jewish leaders to ever meet with a sitting pope -- will attend the audience and thank the Holy Father for all the work he has done to reconcile the two faiths.

They will recognize the Pope's efforts during his 26-year pontificate in bringing down the walls of hate, as well as his contribution towards religious reconciliation with the Jewish people and the State of Israel. The Rabbis intend to recite a special prayer in his honor at the ceremony.

Gary Krupp, President and founder of the Pave the Way Foundation, stated, "Our mission at Pave the Way is to bring together men of good will, no matter what their religious background and to ruthlessly tear down any wall that stops this from happening."

"His Holiness, Pope John Paul II has been doing just that for decades. It is only fitting that we humbly thank him for all he has done for the Jewish people of Earth and, in turn, making inroads toward true peace on Earth," added Mr. Krupp, who is the seventh Jewish man in history to be knighted by the pope to the order of St. Gregory the Great.

The group attending the audience will include Oded Ben-Hur, Israeli Ambassador to the Holy See; Amire Ofek, Israeli Consul for Media in New York; Rabbi Adam Mintz, president of the New York Board of Rabbis; Rabbi Shmuel Rene Sirot, Past Chief Rabbi of Europe and France; Rabbi David Lincoln, Chief Rabbi of the Park Avenue Synagogue, New York; Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chief Rabbi of Efrat, Jerusalem, Rabbi Joseph Arbib of the Great Synagogue in Rome and Gadi Golan, former Director of Religious Affairs for the Israeli Foreign Ministry.

The group also will include over 12 Cantors, who on Monday, January 17, at 8 p.m. will present a concert at the Great Synagogue in Rome for the delegation and representatives of the Vatican and the Roman Jewish Community.

Mr. Krupp pointed out that Pope John Paul II has a very long history of supporting the rights of the Jewish people and of speaking out against anti-Semitism and, factually, of discrimination of any group. In 1978 he characterized anti-Semitism as "opposed to the very spirit of Christianity." In 1987, he called on all Christians to

develop, together with the Jewish community, “common educational programs which...will teach future generations about the Holocaust so that never again will such a horror be possible. Never again!”

“Pave the Way Foundation has been instrumental in helping to close the gap between the Vatican and the State of Israel in their talks to finalize full diplomatic relations”, says Elliot Hershberg Chairman of Pave the Way.

As further evidence of the effectiveness of their efforts, Mr. Krupp announced that the Vatican has given permission for the loan of the Maimonides Manuscripts along great Jewish writings to the Israel Museum for its 40th anniversary exhibit in spring 2005.

Mr. Krupp, who initiated the loan request of the manuscripts from the Vatican Library, commented that. “This is the first time these historic manuscripts will be on Israeli soil.”

The Pave the Way Foundation said it wished to acknowledge the personal support of this project by Fr. David Jaeger, OFM, and Legal representative for the Franciscan Custody in the Holy Land and Ambassador Oded Ben-Hur, Israeli Ambassador to the Holy See.

Pave the Way intends to address other areas where communication has broken down. Specifically, its next major project will be to lead a large group of religious and private business leaders from the United States Muslim community to a welcomed pilgrimage to Israel

About Pave the Way Foundation

Pave the Way has a simple yet monumental goal – to enable all world religions to achieve their goals by embracing their similarities and savoring their differences. In today’s world, some try to achieve their goals through violence, in the name of religion. To silently allow this to happen defames every faith. Our vision is that the unified voice of the world’s great religious leaders condemning violence and promoting trust will pave the way to peace.

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