

CARDINAL KASPER HONORED BY JEWISH COMMITTEE

Called a "Champion" Against Anti-Semitism

WASHINGTON, D.C., MAY 4, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Cardinal Walter Kasper was honored last week by the American Jewish Committee for his "extraordinary" achievements in interreligious affairs.

The president of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, as well as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, was given the prestigious Isaiah Interreligious Award at the end of the committee's annual meeting, which was held Wednesday through Friday.

A committee communiqué reported Friday that the award was given in acknowledgement of the cardinal's "longstanding commitment to Jewish-Catholic dialogue and leadership in advancing understanding between the two faiths."

The prelate said, "I am deeply moved by this high distinction and I cannot but express my deep gratitude to [the American Jewish Committee] for the honor conferred upon me as a German, as a Catholic theologian and as president of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Jews."

He continued, "I am deeply grateful that I have been able to contribute to making a difference in relations between our two communities and to a healing process of the deep wounds inherited from the past."

Cardinal Kasper stated that his work in the relations between the Vatican and the Jewish communities was "not merely a duty, but rather a personally engaging and fulfilling task."

He affirmed that Catholics and Jews together "have embarked on a vision of a world without anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism."

"We strive together to make a difference in the world," the prelate continued, "working for the good of our children and the children of our children so that atrocities such as the Holocaust can never happen again."

The committee's International Director of Interreligious Affairs, Rabbi David Rosen, presented the award.

He acknowledged, "Cardinal Kasper has made some of the most far-reaching statements regarding the Catholic Church and Judaism, has firmly opposed attempts to proselytize Jews and has been a champion in the struggle against anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism."

The communiqué also noted the cardinal's "central role" in helping establish relations between the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the Holy See.

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