

January Dialog Features Messiahship Discussion

"Messiahship: The Christian View," was the subject of the January dialog between Mobile Christian and Jews. It was key noted by Sr. Theresa Bretthauer, M.S.B.T., coordinator of religious education at Holy Family parish, Mobile.

Sister Theresa defined Messiahship as the Hebrew belief in the coming of the Anointed One, the **Christos**, the subject of many Hebrew prophecies and expectations.

She surveyed the Messianic beliefs prevalent at the time of Jesus: 1) the "Dynastic Messiah" of

Psalm 89, who would come from the Davidic line of kings and be victorious over Israel's political enemies, and establish prosperity, political prestige and power; (2) the "personal Savior-Messiah" of Jeremiah and the second Isaiah, anointed by the Spirit with power for spiritual renewal; (3) The "priestly Messiah" of the intertestamental period and the Dead Sea Scrolls, which saw the Messiah as an Essene prophet combining both the Aaronic priesthood and the Davidic kingship; and (4) the "warrior Messiah" destined to be slain on the field of battle

and thus to usher in an age of peace, justice and joy.

Sr. Theresa showed how Jesus rejected the military, political, dynastic and warrior concepts of the Messiahship, identifying Himself from the start of His ministry with Isaiah's Suffering Servant, destined to bring Good News to the poor, liberation to captives, sight to the blind, and peace, hope and fidelity (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18-19).

Sister Theresa surveyed the practices of the primitive Church, as described in the Acts of the Apostles, to show how the title **Christos**, bestowed on Jesus by the

Christian community, designated Him as the best manifestation of God's living intimately with His human children and the best sign that the world is redeemed.

In the discussion and dialog that followed, many questions were raised by the Jewish participants concerning the Divinity of the Christian Messiah and the

relationship of the Messiah to God the Father as well as the meaning of the salvation promised by Him.

The February 16 dialog will center on Jewish traditional and contemporary views of the Messiah. The discussion will be led by Rabbi Stephen Jacobs, who hosted the January 19 meeting at the Springhill Avenue Temple.