Thank you for your kind invitation to join you this evening to celebrate the 20\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary of The Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Jerusalem Lectures. This is my first visit to DePaul University and I could not think of a better occasion than coming here to join with friends in the Jewish community to honor my distinguished predecessor, Cardinal Bernardin, for whom this series is named.

My thanks also to the American Jewish Committee, the Chicago Board of Rabbis, the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, and the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, for their support during the past two decades for these lectures. Since my arrival in Chicago, your leaders have been nothing but gracious and warm in welcoming me, and I want to reaffirm what I have told them in our conversations, namely, that I want to build on the already strong relationships which my esteemed predecessors, especially Cardinals Bernardin and George, have cultivated with the sons and daughters of Abraham.
On a personal note, I want to share with you my own fond memories of Cardinal Bernardin. We got to know each other well during my years of service, beginning in 1981, at the papal delegation in Washington. At that time he was the Archbishop of Cincinnati but a year later came to Chicago as the 7th Archbishop. His leadership in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops extended well beyond his term of office as our president and has had a lasting impact on the life of our Church.

I also know that he gave his “Jerusalem Lecture” in 1995 at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The topic was anti-Semitism—a topic of no small interest then and now. The late cardinal’s words on that occasion were an important sign of the Church’s steadfastness to the agenda of Nostra Aetate. This is something our distinguished lecturer, Rabbi David Sandmel, recognized in a recent personal reflection entitled “Raised in a World of Dialogue.” There he remarked: “…the commitment to Nostra Aetate that I have encountered on the part of the Church officials

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has provided a framework for working through the difficulties that have arisen, and that inevitably will arise.”

That kind of commitment is needed more than ever today. Recently we have seen a rise in anti-Semitism in Europe and elsewhere. This has sometimes been accompanied by incidents of violence and even death. These sad moments point to the fact that the way of thinking embraced in Nostra Aetate, and the New Narrative spoken of by Father Crossin in last year’s Bernardin Jerusalem Lecture, have not taken hold. The framework of mutual understanding articulated by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council helps in resolving difficulties that are not embraced by all.

Some people seem to be returning to, or perhaps more realistically, never left, the previous narrative. As we know, it is much easier to know “who you are against rather than what you are for.” In hard times and even in good ones, blaming others and not taking responsibility is an easy thing to do.

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Recent events call us to enhance our efforts at mutual understanding and make them more widely known, to develop a positive narrative that will capture the imagination of most people, and to make our positive relationships that which comes first to mind for the majority of people. The default position must be positive—friendship, hospitality, mutual concern—precisely those characteristics evident as we come together this evening.

How might we move in these positive directions?

1. **We must continue our healing processes**—for many people the centuries of conflict are still alive in local traditions and anecdotes. We must continue to acknowledge the truth of the past as we move into the future. This is an ongoing project.

2. **We must continue to esteem the values of the Jewish tradition** and its contribution to the Church. As my predecessor, Cardinal Francis George, noted in his 2005 Bernardin Lecture in commenting on *Nostra Aetate* #2:
“As a Catholic, I must both respect the truth in Judaism and preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods of Jewish faith and the values of Jewish culture and society.” Pope Francis has also weighed in on this in *Evangelii Gaudium*: “God continues to work among the people of the Old Covenant and to bring forth treasures of wisdom which flow from their encounter with his world” he wrote; adding: “For this reason, the Church also is enriched when she receives the values of Judaism.”

3. **We must continue our catechesis**, our positive instruction of the next generations, for many Catholics and some Jews as well have not assimilated the changes of the last 50 years and thus need to embrace our new framework for looking at things.

4. **We need to continue to work toward deeper mutual understanding and toward deeper sensitivity to the**

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3 See Evangelii Gaudium, #249. Also see Rabbi Rosenthal in his Introduction to *A Jubilee for All Time*, p. xxiii.
needs of those on the margins—especially those living in Chicagoland.

5. Most importantly, we must continue to develop our friendship with one other. Our friendship roots our common understanding and our common efforts.

The friendship the Archdiocese of Chicago enjoys with the sponsoring partners of this lecture series has borne much fruit, which we see in our gathering tonight. The fruit yielded through common labors should make us proud of all those who cultivated it, but it also should give us hope that like all good fruit, it will produce seeds for future growth.

Thank you for allowing me to share these reflections. I wish you God’s choicest blessings.