

## Archbishop's new role in Vatican-Jewish relations

PETER KOHN

A SENIOR Australian Catholic cleric has been appointed Consultor to the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, who serves as Archbishop for Canberra and Goulburn, has a history of close relations with the Jewish community.

Speaking to *The AJN*, Prowse, who chairs the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations, said: "My appointment is just a reflection of the Vatican's regard for the high quality of good relations we have in Australia with Catholics, Christians and the Jewish community."

Asked how Catholics could draw closer to Jews, Archbishop Prowse said: "To learn more from our Jewish friends about the Holocaust and the ongoing reverberations and impacts that this continues to have throughout the world. It's developing deep friendship bonds with what I would call our elder brothers and sisters."

He would like "improved dialogue" between Israel and its neigh-

bours and a reversal of the decline in Israel's Catholic population.

The Archbishop noted that next year marks the 50th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the landmark declaration of the Second Vatican Council which overhauled relations with Jews. "Fifty years for Jews and Catholics is not a long time, it's only five minutes, so we feel we still want to unpack that document and see how we can take things further – certainly to root out any anti-Semitism and its vestiges. Also for Jews to learn from us and on moral and ethical issues to see how we can help each other."

Archbishop Prowse's interfaith learning dates from age five and his schooling at Sisters of Sion in Melbourne, a Catholic order committed to bonding with Jews. During his seminary years, Rabbi Dr John Levi was a teacher. Judaism "is part of my DNA", the Archbishop said.

Jeremy Jones, director of International and Community Affairs at the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council, described Prowse as "a personal friend and a friend of the Jewish community. He is a strong proponent of inter-religious dialogue and cooperation."

## Cheers to SodaStream

ADAM KAMIEN

LABOR MPs, staffers and candidates showed their solidarity with SodaStream, when they gathered for a fizzy drink in Canberra last week.

Organised by Jewish MP Michael Danby and Mike Kelly, international affairs advisor to Opposition Leader Bill Shorten, the gathering raised a glass to the Israeli company, and its brand ambassador Scarlett Johansson.

Last month Johansson resigned from her longstanding ambassadorship of Oxfam after the international aid organisation openly criticised her decision to endorse SodaStream, which has a factory in the West Bank.

MPs Mark Dreyfus, Bernie Ripoll, David Feeney, Shayne Neumann, Senator Alex Gallacher and Chair of the Israel/Australian friendship group Senator Glen Sterle were all in attendance.

Danby said, "Labor politicians have always been keen to turn up to anti-BDS actions which I have organised, and it's not just because they have involved excellent Max Brenner chocolates, and now refreshing beverages."

"Labor believes that the best path to peace and security is through dialogue, not by demonising businesses."

Shadow attorney-general Dreyfus said that while the stunt might appear



Labor polities toast SodaStream. From Left: Shayne Neumann, Mark Dreyfus, Mike Kelly, Michael Danby, David Feeney, Bernie Ripoll.

"light-hearted" there was a "serious point" to be made about the peace process.

"Labor supports a two-state solution to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians," he said.

"We support a secure State of Israel living alongside a Palestinian State. And as a part of this Labor opposes the BDS and supports successful companies that employ both

Palestinians and Israelis."

Sterle said the SodaStream factory was a boon for its Palestinian workers.

"How could it possibly help the cause of the Palestinians if 500 of them lost their jobs?"

"The Ma'ale Adumim factory brings Israelis and Palestinians together. It's hard to hate, when you work with each other on an equal basis each day."



יום ראשון, 16 למרץ  
SUNDAY, 16 MARCH • 1:00PM–5:00PM

Caulfield Racecourse • Gate 2 • Station Street, Caulfield East

For tickets or info: 9524-7700 • 0417-054186 • [www.trybooking.com/77636](http://www.trybooking.com/77636)

ב"ה

**DIRECT FROM ISRAEL!**

PARTY LIKE NEVER BEFORE WITH INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED ISRAELI

**LEHAKAT SUMSUM BAND**

להקת סומסום ישראל!

**ALL-NEW RIDES THIS YEAR!**

**UNLIMITED FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!**

**UNLIMITED FOOD!**

**UNLIMITED RIDES!**

**FREE GIFTS FOR KIDS!**

Snow Cones, Pop Corn, Fairy Floss & Mishloach Manot!

**Entrance Tickets:**

all-inclusive—unlimited rides & food!

**\$15** pre-booked online (by 13/3/14)

**\$18** at the gate

Children under 2 — free entrance.

**Rain or shine!** If necessary, festival will move undercover.