

Pope Pius XII, Hitler and the Jews: the Truth!!!

There have been incredible untruths written about Pope Pius XII regarding Hitler and the treatment of Jews during World War II –too many to list here. Perhaps the worst of them are contained in a shamefully researched book entitled “Hitler’s Pope”, literally chock full of errors and misinformation. Rather than trying to answer all the errors here, instead, I am going to let the Jewish people speak for me.

But where to start, there is so much! How about ***The Myth of Hitler's Pope: How Pope Pius XII Rescued Jews from the Nazis***, a book written by **Rabbi David Dalin**. It is equally chock full of glowing reports from some of the most influential Jewish politicians and Rabbis of the time, praising Pope Pius XII’s effort to rescue Jews from the Nazi’s during World War II. Reading all their quotes, it is enough to make you want to stand up and cheer!

Here are some examples. How about **Isaac Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem**. On February 28, 1944, he wrote a personal thank you to Pope Pius XII saying: "*The people of Israel will never forget what His Holiness and his illustrious delegates, inspired by the eternal principles of religion which form the very foundations of true civilization, are doing for us unfortunate brothers and sisters in the most tragic hour of our history, which is living proof of divine Providence in this world.*"

Similarly, **Israel Zolli, Chief Rabbi of Rome**, would write: "*What the Vatican did will be indelibly and eternally engraved in our hearts. . . . Priests and even high prelates did things that will forever be an honor to Catholicism.*" After the war, Rabbi Zolli would convert to the Catholic Faith, taking the Pope’s given name, “Eugenio”, as his baptismal name. Incredible!

But there’s more! **Rabbi Maurice Perlzweig**, Political Director of the **World Jewish Congress** would write: "*The repeated interventions of the Holy Father on behalf of Jewish Communities in Europe has evoked the profoundest sentiments of appreciation and gratitude from Jews throughout the world.*" **Nahum Goldmann**, president of the **World Jewish Congress**, would echo Perlzweig, saying "*With special gratitude we remember all he [Pope Pius XII] has done for the persecuted Jews during one of the darkest periods in their entire history.*"

And in a note to the Papal Nuncio in 1944, **Rabbi Safran** of Bucharest, Romania would write: "*It is not easy for us to find the right words to express the warmth and consolation we experienced because of the concern of the supreme pontiff, who offered a large sum to relieve the sufferings of deported Jews. . . . The Jews of Romania will never forget these facts of historic importance.*"

At the death of Pius XII, **Golda Meir**, Israeli Prime Minister-to-be, would write: "*We share the grief of the world over the death of His Holiness Pius XII. During a generation of wars and dissensions, he affirmed the high ideals of peace and compassion. During*

the ten years of Nazi terror, when our people passed through the horrors of martyrdom, the Pope raised his voice to condemn the persecutors and to commiserate with their victims. The life of our time has been enriched by a voice which expressed the great moral truths above the tumults of daily conflicts. We grieve over the loss of a great defender of peace."

But what sort of numbers are we talking about? Did Pius XII save hundreds, even thousands of Jews during the war? How about 860,000!!! In his book, "**Three Popes and the Jews**" (page 118), written to defend the actions of the Popes during World War II, prominent Israeli diplomat and theologian, **Rabbi Pinchas Lapide**, estimated that, "The final number of Jewish lives in whose rescue the Catholic Church had been the instrument is thus at least 700,000 souls, but in all probability it is much closer to . . . **860,000**", and that this number "**exceeded by far those saved by all other churches... and rescue organizations combined.**" Stunning! In response, the Israeli Government created a memorial forest in the Negev Desert, planting 800,000 trees as a monument to the heroic efforts of Pius XII and the Jewish lives he saved.

But really, the truth about Pius XII is exactly what Catholic's would hope for and expect from the successor of St Peter -great charity in the face of extreme danger. Again, **Rabbi Lapide** sums things up well I think: "*The primary guilt for the slaughter of a third of my people is that of the Nazis who perpetrated the holocaust. But the secondary guilt lies in the universal failure of Christendom to try and avert or, at least, mitigate the disaster... Only against the background of such monumental egotism... can one begin to appraise the Pope's wartime record... Loud words - or prudent deeds? The dilemma must have been sheer agony, for whichever course he [Pius XII] chose, horrible consequences were inevitable... the Pope, unlike many far mightier than he, alleviated, relieved, retrieved, appealed, petitioned - and saved [Jews during WWII] as best he could by his own lights. **Who, but a prophet or a martyr could have done much more?**"*

There have been so many falsity's spread about Pius XII over the last few decades, that even some Catholics were starting to doubt his courageous work. Well, doubt no more!

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