

**VATICAN IS OPENING HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL
WW2- ERA FILES ON POPE PIUS XII**

WHO WAS THIS MAN KNOWN AS “HITLER’S POPE”?

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PIUS’ ACTIONS WILL BE SCRUTINIZED TO DECIDE IF HE SHOULD BE DECLARED A SAINT.

HIS DETRACTORS SAY HE WAS ANYTHING BUT



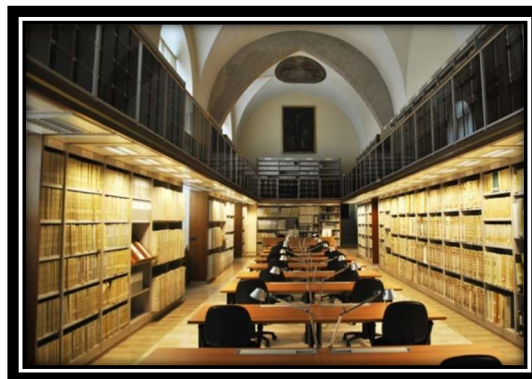
In this file photo dated Sept. 1945, Pope Pius XII, wearing the ring of St. Peter, raises his right hand in a papal blessing at the Vatican. Pope Francis said on Monday, March 4, 2019, that he has decided to open up to researchers the Vatican archives on Second World War-era Pope Pius XII, who has been accused by Jews of staying silent on the Holocaust.



MARCH 6, 2020

The Papacy has never been an institution to duck controversy and has managed to survive for centuries from the death of the Roman Empire, through Charlemagne, schisms that set two Popes against each other, Crusades, the rise of communism, and two World Wars

One Pope, Pius XII served through the Second World War, **walking a line between the expectations of world leaders and the Catholic congregation.**



Vatican War Archives

The current Catholic leader, Pope Francis, has announced that he has fast-tracked the release of the archives belonging to the reign of Pius XII saying, “The church is not afraid of history.”

Pope Francis says the church is confident that the papacy would withstand the findings by historians studying the archives, saying Pius was “criticized, one can say, with some prejudice and exaggeration.”

“The church isn’t afraid of history, on the contrary, it loves it, and would like to love it even more like it loves God,” Francis said. “Thus, with the same trust of my predecessors, I open, and entrust to researchers, this patrimony of documentation.”



He said the Pius papacy included “moments of grave difficulties, tormented decisions of human and Christian prudence, that to some could appear as reticence.” Instead, he said they could be seen as attempts “to keep lit, in the darkest and cruelest periods, the flame of humanitarian initiatives, of hidden but active diplomacy” aimed at possibly “opening hearts.”

The Vatican normally waits 70 years after the death of a pope before making his archives available for study.

The period covered is 1939 to 1958 when Pius XII died. 150 scholars from worldwide institutions have applied to view the documents. Sixty can be accommodated at one time.

Some historians have criticized Pius XII for not condemning the Nazis as vocally as some would like, calling him ‘Hitler’s Pope’ when Hitler himself said of Pius XII that he was, “no friend of mine.”

However, it was not enough to curb historians dubbing Pius ‘Hitler’s Pope’.

Italy’s leader, and Axis ally of Germany, Mussolini got wind of news of the Pope’s warnings to the leaders of the Low Countries before Germany’s invasion and took it personally, ordering his Vatican ambassador to lodge an official protest.

His foreign minister claimed Pius XII was, “ready to let himself be deported to a concentration camp, rather than do anything against his conscience.”

While critics point to the fact that Pius XII was remarkably silent regarding Hitler’s treatment of the Jews, never condemning genocide publicly, he was credited with encouraging convents, monasteries, and other institutions to hide thousands of Jews.

Pius XII was silent still when Nazis raided a Jewish ghetto a mere 800 yards from St. Peter’s Square. The Nazis deported 1,259 Jews that night. Only 16 survived the war.

When deportations became a very real threat 477 Jews took refuge within the walls of the Vatican itself with a further four thousand hidden in Rome

Pius XII had a strong record of speaking out against the Third Reich before he became Pope.

For the twelve years he spent as papal nuncio in Germany from 1917 to 1929 he gave forty speeches denouncing aspects of the emergent Nazi ideology.

In 1935, when he was Cardinal Secretary of State for the Vatican, he sent a letter to the Bishop of Cologne in which he described the Nazis as, “false prophets with the pride of Lucifer.”

As Cardinal he signed the Reichskoncordat with Hitler’s Government to set out a diplomatic agreement that would protect the status of the Catholic Church within the borders of Nazi Germany.

However, between the ratification of the document in 1933 and the outbreak of war, he issued 55 complaints regarding violations of the treaty.

In 1937 he issued an encyclical written in German and distributed to churches and cathedrals throughout Germany which denounced the paganism of Nazi ideology.

This infuriated Hitler and a series of highly visible immorality trials of Catholic clergy ensued.

It was this experience that, some historians claim, *led to the reluctance of Pius XII to speak out during the war in case it led to more violent reprisals by the Nazis.*

The first researchers to receive access will be members of the Jewish community in Rome, the Israeli Holocaust Museum, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

American expert David Kertzer, who will also be among the first to lay eyes on Pius XII's papers has said there were "signs of nervousness" regarding what might be revealed.

Professor of modern European history at Sheffield University Mary Vincent said of Pius XII that, "he was a careful, austere and quite unlikable man, trying to steer a path through almost impossible circumstances."

While he was not a Nazi sympathizer, upsetting both Hitler and Mussolini, *by not publicly denouncing the mass genocide of Jews and other minorities Pius XII risked leaving a toxic legacy.*

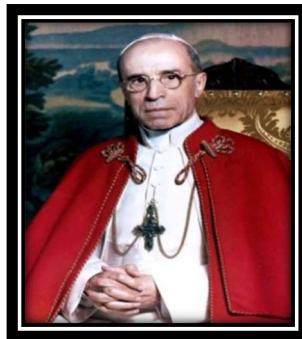
Vatican archivist and librarian Cardinal José Tolentino Calaça de Mendonça said, "The opening of the archives is decisive for the contemporary history of the church and the world,"

Prefect of the Vatican Apostolic Archive, Bishop Sergio Pagano is confident that the millions of pages of new material to be released will show that, *"the good was so great that it will dwarf the few shadows."*

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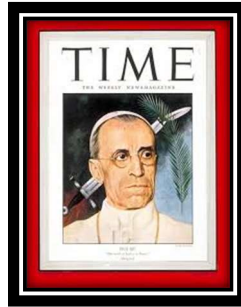
Pope Pius XII

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The Vatican hopes that the release of the archive will throw much-needed light on a dark period of the church's history.

With millions of documents to pore over, Vatican officials tell the Associated Press that it will take years to draw a formal conclusion about Pius XII's role during WWII.

TIME MAGAZINE COMMENTS



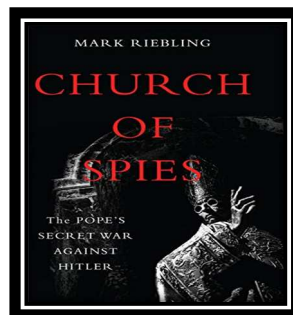
MAR 4, 2019

Here's how TIME [summed up](#) what was then known about the issue in 1958.

Pius ignored Allied pressure to speak out against Nazi genocide. In the autumn of 1942, Myron C. Taylor, Franklin Roosevelt's representative to the Vatican, gave the Holy See evidence of the anti-Jewish campaign, and the U.S. Minister to Switzerland warned the Vatican that failure to condemn these atrocities "is undermining faith both in the church and in the Holy Father himself." Baron Ernst von Weizsaecker, who claimed that he tried to protect the Pope from Hitler's wrath while serving as German envoy to the Holy See, cabled his Foreign Ministry superiors: "The Pope has not allowed himself to be forced into any demonstrative utterances against the deportation of the Jews."

[German Jesuit Robert Leiber, Pius XII's secretary,] admits that Pius "**found it difficult**" to speak out clearly against the murders, but adds, "This was providential. Otherwise, I fear greater harm would have been the result." Catholics point out that after the Dutch bishops issued a joint pastoral letter attacking the deportation of Jews; the Nazis retaliated by arresting Catholic converts from Judaism. In 1942 Cracow's Archbishop Adam Sapieha pleaded with the Vatican not to broadcast accounts of German atrocities since it would only make things harder for his people. The best evidence of Pius' judgment is his 1943 letter to Berlin's Bishop Konrad von Preysing: "We leave it to the pastoral leaders on the spot to weigh whether and to what degree the danger of retaliation and pressure in case of remonstrance by bishops make it appear advisable to exercise restraint to prevent greater evil, despite the listed grievances. Here lies one of the reasons why we impose limitations on ourselves in our public utterances."

THE BOOK REVIEW



The heart-pounding history of how Pope Pius XII -- often labeled "Hitler's Pope" -- was an anti-Nazi spymaster, plotting against the Third Reich during World War II.

The Vatican's silence in the face of Nazi atrocities remains one of the great controversies of our time. History has accused wartime pontiff Pius the Twelfth of the story of complicity in the Holocaust and dubbed him "Hitler's Pope." **But a key part of has remained untold.** Pope Pius ran the world's largest church, smallest state, and oldest spy service. Sainly but secretive, **he sent birthday cards to Hitler -- while secretly plotting to kill** him.

He skimmed from church charities to pay covert couriers and surreptitiously tape-recorded his meetings with top Nazis. **Under his leadership, the Vatican spy ring actively plotted against the Third Reich.**

Told with heart-pounding suspense and drawing on secret transcripts and unsealed files by an acclaimed author, *Church of Spies* throws open the Vatican's doors to reveal some of the most astonishing events in the history of the papacy. **Riebling reveals here how the world's greatest moral institution met the greatest moral crisis in history.**



For information concerning the information in the recently unsealed Vatican Files please copy and paste the below link into your browser.

<https://time.com/6270677/catholic-church-holocaust-documents/>



The Vatican

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