Notes of Cardinal Faulhaber about his Audience with Pope Pius XI, March 10, 1933

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Translation from the German original:

White talar (rochet) of moirée silk, white zucchetto (skullcap), red shoes. Spoke mostly Italian with some German interspersed.

The Holy Year: I came before, because the Holy Father had so much work. A good sign about his health that he had undertaken so much work. He has gotten healthier since the recent Holy Year than before. Welcome, I am happy to see you and to see you looking so good. He was long in doubt whether little [St.] Therese [of Lisieux] had given him an inspiration after Holy Mass. He was only concerned that the Pan-Protestantism of [Lutheran Archbishop] Söderblum [of Uppsala, Sweden] would come before him. We could not have said: No.

The nicest thing about my reception was that we heard about his health. The Pope also looked really good and very ruddy, only just at the conclusion, I felt tired. “You look better in Rome than in Munich.” “For everyone who is saved by the blood of Christ” – ready! Pious souls do not understand: Salvation without ceasing – comes next year [Holy Year of 1933].

Bavaria: How is [Bavarian State President, 1924-1933] Held? A good man, a true Catholic. Early today I read – I’m helping: von Epp as Commissar, he is intended for Bavaria. I said: Not for the state police. I said: Thus kept from the revolution. Minister Stützel and a journalist [editor’s note: Fritz Gerlich, editor of anti-Nazi newspaper *Der Gerade Weg*, “The Straight Way,” in Munich] maltreated. “That is hateful – brutal.” Hindenburg is an upright man.

Hitler: He has pleased me, he is the first statesman who has spoken against Bolshevism. “For political reasons.” I said: He speaks very piously, in Königsberg about Providence and how he prays. He has read or heard everything. The Bolsheviks themselves have written of him: They will find a way to kill the Pope. He is certainly threatened, he must be well protected, a bodyguard is essential. I said: He does not say anything contrary to Rosenberg and the others hostile to the Church, because he fears to be considered as a Rome-ling, a lackey of the Pope. Papen has the trust of von Hindenburg and he is a true Catholic. He will not do anything against the Church as long as Hindenburg is alive, thus . . . [editor’s ellipses]

Bolshevism: Very long. They have their money only for their own purses and for propaganda. A Father Neveu, Redemptorist, consecrated Bishop, sends a long letter every month, very brave, who knows how long he will live. He stands up and takes from a small bookshelf three heavy packages, not yet opened. These are secret reports from the “East Help.” In Berlin, we receive everything that goes out “Strictly Confidential” or “Secret.” Likewise in Spain, Mexico. Here on this table lie pamphlets, exact translations of Russian pamphlets. Mussolini said to him: In Italy they are surveilled, he promised not to do anything in Italy, but in the harbors they expect ships, also in Spain . . . [editor’s ellipses]

I said: Klausener promised no longer to allow radio messages like the one of Christmas 1931, before turning them on, but now he has been removed from his post.

Toward Russia, I said: St. Therese must help. At that he livened up. Here on the table is a relic of hers. She has often helped me. In the Holy Year I was often tired, did not want to keep going. – With a relic in my pocket I went out. Inspirations too, from the Holy Year. Many thoughts on serious issues. I recounted: The reliquary helped me in innumerable occasions. He said: Me repeatedly too.

The “Senza Dio” forbidden in Germany, naturally also its newspapers. But there is a spiritual hatred that only pastoral care can attack, to that no answer. But he continued: One should not make martyrs in Germany, and quiet propaganda can accomplish just as much as loud. All money sources coming out of Russia. The people are dying of hunger, the old and the young, because everything is going for propaganda.

To us the question, whether to do something toward “Senza Dio.” He has received several answers to that (as it appears, he has not yet read them, perhaps even mine). Protestant propaganda: They are exploiting the sad state of the people. Our people are very poor. He holds printed statistics about all the dioceses of Italy: Only just a few parishes where there are no Protestants. Totally remote dioceses and parishes. Fortunately no more money is coming from America. He leafed all the way through the statistics. Rome has grown and seeds have been sown that the Protestants use also. There is so little in the new suburbs, we are a mission territory. And now six (editor’s ?) churches built. I saw them in the “Vatican Illustrated.” “Good people help me, the need is so great, they write me: They are going to the Protestants.” I said: Also many letters to me, people leaving the Church, if not . . . [editor’s ellipses] He gave every month 50,000 Lire for bread for people who eat only once a day, and only bread and water. The Bourbons in Italy have exhorted the Bishops to keep the people under control. No streets are built. 84% [editor inserted a ? mark here] illiteracy. One typical person says: I believe in God, but there is a difficulty for me in believing in him, that he has left the Bourbons in power so long.

They have built no parish churches. Now there are still 4,000 parish churches to build, we have built 600. With new methods it goes so fast. When good people help me. In Germany there are parish churches everywhere. We should have 400 built per year in order to have 4,000 in 10 years. But in my view there should be more built. He spoke long and expansively about this.

We want to work through “Deus Scientiarum” so far as possible. It did not come to the point that we gave “relazione.” If universities are built among us, then Catholic universities become doubly essential. I should say a word about the Catholic university at the Catholic Congress. That is good. He became animated again and held a printed statistic: All the dioceses, all the parishes, gave 3 million for the Sacred Heart University in Milan, not less than before. I have not lost trust in our people, but this horrible state of things, it made a deep impression on Mussolini.

Here Sardegna: He read the name aloud. Totally impoverished villages and they gave. I will say that in the Consistory.

I said: If there is unrest at home, one must start travel earlier. Half standing, he asked: Whether a restoration is coming. I said: Some from the coalition want it, others not. With us it was earnest, but still impossible. Whoever comes must provide work and bread, and that he [editor’s note: Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria] cannot do.

In conclusion: “Don’t work so much!” Nothing compared to the work of Your Holiness. “Munich alone would give enough work for a bishop.”

Dr. Weissthanner was called in, very quickly: My blessing upon everyone. Standing to talk, very sincerely. Pulled on the tablecloth. They work a lot. I read your speeches. He himself had read a manuscript between the audience of Cardinal Rossi, a Carmelite, and me.