

1 **EPIC Wk 18 World at War**

2 Greetings and welcome back to epic journey through Church history. We take 20 seconds to go through
3 the 2000-year history of the Catholic Church. Now we're on our session of a world at war. We just
4 finished our discussion of the revolutions in modernism time period in the Church, how we saw the
5 Church affected by the, by the French Revolution, and also by the rise of modernism, that heresy that
6 brings intellectual confusion which attacks the *meaning of the faith*, it is a more formal attack against
7 the faith and much more insidious than ancient heresies that we've previously discussed leading up to
8 that period of time. So, before we get into this time period of World War and see the effects of how the
9 *enlightenment* and *French Revolution* actually impacted Western European society and the Church as a
10 whole, let's take time out and begin our time together in prayer.

11 *Father, Son, Holy Spirit, amen. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time again together.*

12 *Lord, we thank you for the opportunity to study our faith. We pray especially as we focus on this*
13 *time period of a world of war that we may come to know the effects of this time period in the history*
14 *of our world and that we are shaped by your grace and transformed by Your grace and may work so*
15 *that our world may never again experiences death, and devastation and destruction that we have*
16 *seen. May have Your grace to work for peace as did your holy saints and your Pope's words for peace*
17 *during this period of time, especially Pope Benedict XV and Pius XII. Help us Lord, by Your grace to be*
18 *effective witnesses and evangelists of the faith in order to spread your light throughout the world.*

19 *We pray these things we pray all things in Jesus' name. Let us pray together, Glory be to the Father*
20 *and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without*
21 *end. Father, Son, the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

22 Thank you all again for being here with us today during the session of *World at War*; all those listening
23 on the audio or watching the DVDs or in your parish or at home. So we're talking about the world at war,
24 this time period when Europe was ravaged by two devastating wars and we see two during this time of
25 the 20th century, the rise of **fascism** and **communism** and how both of these political ideologies really
26 shaped Europe and took large parts of Europe away from the faith and really begin to subject the
27 individuals to the whims of the state and began also an act of persecution of the Church and of
28 Catholics. So, we've chosen for this time period from 1914 to 1957 the color bright red in order to
29 symbolize the color used by the National Socialists in Germany, as well as fascist Italy in order to help us
30 remember what's going on here. This is a time period of great death and devastation and destruction
31 that is within our recent memory. So, it's important again for us to look back at this time and remember
32 what happened so we can learn that and keep that memory alive and make sure that these types of
33 events do not ever come again to our world. So our theme during this period of time is a discussion in
34 this session of the rise of **fascism** and **national socialism (communism)** where the individual begins to
35 be subjected to the state, where the whims of the state and the whims of the government begin to be
36 supreme, where the states try to control all aspects of individual life, where your loyalty is with the state
37 rather than with anything else, like your faith or the Church. We also see a rise in persecution against
38 Catholics wherever these types of political ideologies come into play, whether fascism, National
39 Socialism, or even communism in Russia. And it's a dark period of widespread death and destruction.
40 We'll talk about that as we go through the 20th century where we can see the effects of the 18th and
41 19th centuries, about the *fruit of these enlightened philosophies* that separate the face of Europe from
42 her Christian roots. And when I said earlier in our last time period, **if you separate yourself from the**
43 **Church, you separate society from the Church, and anything can come in and fill the vacuum, and**
44 **especially that leaves open this opportunity for *great evil* to come into the picture as well; to subject the**
45 **individual human being to the state and to bring about their own ideology and this morality that is**
46 **completely separate from God-given objective truth.**

47 So, Europe during this time period is shaken by two devastatingly horrific World Wars. The first world
48 war erupts in August of 1914, because Archduke Franz Ferdinand of the Austro-Hungarian empire is
49 assassinated by Serb nationalists in Sarajevo in June of 1914. This assassination then causes the

European nations to mobilize the Austro-Hungarian empire and declare war against Serbia because of the pacts and alliances and treaties that existed among the nations of Europe at this time. That declaration of war by the Austro-Hungarian empire to the Serbs, then forces all these other countries also to mobilize and declare war. So, at the end, we have Russia, Germany and France and England, all engaged in warfare this horrific war that will go on for four long years. Within five weeks of the assassination, the major nations of Europe had engulfed themselves in war. Early in 1914 and through the rest of the year of 1914, Germany actually makes some great military strides. They go through Belgium, they conquer the eastern part of France, and they get very close to Paris, but ultimately, they're forced back. Then a stalemate happens along the western front in Europe. And so, we see Germany and the allied nations of France and Britain engaging in this stalemated warfare with the creation of trenches. There's over 1300-mile-long front of trenches all throughout Western Europe as these three nations fight against each other, and not nit from 1916 to 1917. We see the Allied cause making some gains, pushing the Germans back a little. Eventually, the United States will come into the picture in late 1917 into 1918. The arrival of US troops helps end the war in Europe with the signing of the armistice on November 11 of 1918. The First World War brought about a horrific amount of death, devastation and destruction. As a result of this war, 8 million Europeans died and 5 million were wounded. We really have in our modern day a very difficult time understanding the extent of the devastation caused by this first World War. And almost 100 years ago, there was as an example, that the British on the first day of battle in the ***Battle of Somme*** in July of 1916, suffered 60,000 casualties. On one day of battle that's dead, missing and wounded. It's hard for us as Americans to really understand the extent of that devastation. But if you've ever been to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC, that great, black granite slab of a memorial, shaped like a V, you can see on those panels the names of over 50,000 Americans who lost their lives during that decade long War in Vietnam. So, imagine those names and that devastation in just one day. That's what happened here in the first world war. There were entire towns in Britain and other places of Europe and France and Germany, who lost all of the men from 18 to 35. Entire towns devastated of their men. And so, there's monuments in most towns, even throughout Britain and other places you can see monuments today of all the dead from that horrific, horrific war. That's hard for us to understand. So why did Europe engage in such a horrific act during the early part of the 20th century? From a material and temporal perspective with so much going for Europe, why did this happen? There's really no good temporal reason. The great military historian John Keegan says this about the First World War and why it happened. He said, *The First World War is a mystery. Its origins are mysterious and so is its course. Why is it that a prosperous continent at the height of its success as an agent of global wealth and power, and at one of the peaks of its intellectual and cultural achievements, choose to risk all it had won for itself, and all it had to offer the world to a lottery of such a vicious and local internecine conflict?* So, it was a modern-day historian asking this question, *why did you do this?* There is *no good temporal reason* for it. But I think if we see this event through the eyes of faith, we can see that there is definitively a spiritual reason for why the 1st World War happened. And it happened because of what we talked about in our last time period. This move of Europe away from its Christian roots, this change in society of how to understand society from an *intellectual perspective*, the *rise of modernism*, and in particular, the rise of these enlightened thinkers. They made it their goal, to become an anti-Christian movement; to move Europe and the whole world away from the Catholic Church. So, in the eyes of faith, we see how these degenerate ideologies bring Europe away from her Christian roots. We can also definitely see the work of Satan in this century, especially in this war, but we'll see also that during the war, Pope Benedict XV was one of the is one of the least known popes in the history of our Church; not a lot of books written about Benedict XV and many of us in the modern day don't really know that much about him and who he was and what he did. He doesn't occupy any kind of major significance in any work on Church history, but he had a very significant papacy, and his papacy really shapes the papacy that will occur during the Second World War with the papacy of Pius XII. So, to really understand how the Church responds to the Second World War,

we need to understand what Pope Benedict XV did and why. Pope Pious' wealth, actions and activities, how he helps to bring relief to Europe and how he deals with the situation of Germany and the Jews later on in the 20th century. Pope Benedict XV had **three main principles** that he followed during the course of the First World War in terms of how the Vatican and how the Church was going to relate to these nations at war in Europe.

1). **PERFECT NEUTRALITY**: He wanted to ensure that the world knew that the Church was not going to take sides. During this conflict, the Church was going to be governed by a specific principle of *perfect neutrality*. Even though he was neutral, He wanted to ensure that the Church would continue to teach during this conflict and try to bring an end to the war. So, he always taught and preached that war should be governed by **moral law**; that there are certain things that you can do in war and certain things that you cannot do in war. His whole advocacy of a *total war concept* was where you would bomb specifically civilians instead of military targets; he spoke out against. He also spoke out against the use of certain weapons, which were just immoral weapons like poison gas that affect not only the combatants but also noncombatants. Sometimes his protests were issued publicly. Sometimes his protests of what went on during the war were issued privately. And that's the same type of activity in principle that Pius XII will enact in the Second World War. Sometimes it was prudent to issue a public outcry. Sometimes it's more important *diplomatically* to do so privately. So, he also spoke out on the deportation of Belgian and French workers from occupied territory in Belgium and France, and their deportation to Germany to be used as laborers in Germany. So, he spoke out against that and sometimes again, he spoke privately.

2. PERFECT CHARITY: The second major principle was throughout the war he extended charity to all victims of the war, regardless of their nationality. So, the Church was going to be governed by *perfect neutrality*, and also by *perfect charity*, really to all victims of the war. **PRISONERS of WAR BUREAU**: He oversaw and crafted various prisoner exchanges between the nations at war. He also established what was called the **Prisoners of War Bureau**, where he provided communication and relief between POWs and their families. So, if your father your husband, your brother had been captured and was a POW, you can contact the Vatican, ask about his whereabouts and his health and the Vatican would contact that nation where he was held captive and establish a line of communication between the families. **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**: He also made sure that he passed out and distributed vast amounts of money to all the victims during this war. He gave out 5.5 million lira from the Vatican's personal Treasury, the Church's own money, his personal money that he had control over as Pope-he divvied that out and distributed that to people who were in need. He also distributed 30 million lira that people donated throughout the Church; people would send money to the Holy Father, and he would take the money that was sent to him and then distributed to those in need. It's estimated that he gave away so much money that when he died, the Vatican actually had to go into debt and take a loan out to pay for his funeral expenses.

3. PEACE is PRIORITY: So, the third principle that Pope Benedict XV did during the First World War was his call for *peace at every opportunity*. He always took every opportunity that he could to call for peace and try to bring an end to the hostilities. In 1917, he issued what was known as the **plea for peace**, where he brings about a discussion on how the nations could come to peace, where he called for a reduction in the production of armaments, where he brought forth the principle and the idea that any future or issue between nations can be settled at the international level through some kind of arbitration and negotiation. The idea of a United Nations was that of Benedict XV but did not come until after the Second World War. US President Woodrow Wilson took many of Benedict's ideas and brought them into his **14 points**. And he adopted most of the proposals that Benedict had actually brought forth at the end of the war. He also continued to make calls for peace by saying that *peace should be granted without reparations and Germany as a whole should not be forced into paying reparations to the allied nations that she had invaded and brought devastation to*. If the world had listened to Benedict XV, peace without reparation, then perhaps Hitler never would have come to power in Germany and the second world war might not have ever happened. Now, after the war, there was a great international

respect for Benedict's actions during the war. The Turks even erected a statue in his honor because of his peace efforts during the war, not only for how he served the Church during the war, but even after the war, he continued to serve the Church well by completing the new **Code of Canon Law** that had begun under his predecessor Pius X. He actually reiterated the condemnations of modernism and moral relativism, also that were issued by his predecessor Pope St. Pius X. He also canonized Saint Joan of Arc during this time so to try to give Europe a saint that they could look to, try to imitate the life of Christ and not engage in warfare again. Ultimately, the Pope Benedict died in January of 1922. His whole life and his pontificate shaped even our own day because our current holy father, Pope Benedict XVI chose the name Benedict in order to emulate Benedict XV. He said soon after he became pope he stated, *I wish to speak of why I chose the name Benedict. Firstly, I remember Pope Benedict the XV, that courageous prophet of peace who guided the Church through turbulent times of war. In his footsteps, I place my ministry in the service of reconciliation and harmony between peoples.* So, to understand Benedict XVI, we have to understand the pontificate of Benedict XV and what he did during his pontificate to bring about peace among nations. And so, this obviously is a central focus of our current Holy Father's ministry.

FATIMA: Now almost to the end of the war, Europe is presented with a miraculous event. And this is the appearance of our Blessed Mother, and she appears in Portugal in 1917 to three small shepherd children Lucida dos Santos, Francisco and Jacinta Martos. First an angel appeared to them, and then eventually, the Blessed Mother who will appear to them, and she appeared to them first on May 13 of 1917. And then she would appear on the 13th day of each month over ~~eight consecutive months~~. She told them to pray the rosary every day to bring peace to the world and an end to the war. And actually, she appeared to them after a score of six consecutive months from May 13, 1917, all the way up to October. So, when she appeared to them, she showed them three visions. The first one she gave them was a vision of what it was like for souls to be in hell and in order to help them realize how the importance of praying the rosary and imitating the life of Christ and living a life of virtue and of Christian morality. She also asked for Russia to be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart. Unfortunately, it did not come to pass and later in 1917, the Russian Bolshevik revolution would come to pass, and Bolshevism and communism would affect not only Europe as a whole but even the whole world, but also in particular the Catholic Church, which will suffer under severe persecution in Russia. And then the Blessed Mother's secret that she gave to the children was a vision of a bishop dressed in white, who would be gunned down and so this vision was to foretell events that would happen in the future. And she said to them, too, *This war will end. But if men do not refrain from offending God, another and more terrible war will begin during the pontificate of Pius XI.* And so, she gives a whole other indication to the world that unless the world changes, unless you come back to her Christian roots, unless she ends her separation from the civilization and the culture in the Church, which brought her to where she was, at this time of the 20th century, another, more devastating war would come to pass. Unfortunately, that prophecy came true when a second world war came upon Europe in 1939. The last appearance of our Blessed Mother in Portugal was on October 13, 1917, where she appeared to the children and the children saw her in St. Joseph and the infant Jesus as well. And there were 70,000 people gathered around the children to try to see our lady as well as the children they didn't see or label what they did see was a miraculous event of the sun, dancing across the sky. And this helped to show these people the reality of God. The reality is the Blessed Mother tries again to bring about a conversion of heart and conversion of souls to Christ and to the Church. Ultimately, Lucido dos Santos and Francesco Martos die at a very young age, 10 and 11. They die as a result of this influenza epidemic that had come about as a result of the First World War. Jacinto Santoso actually lives for quite an extended period of time. She doesn't die until much later until 2005, at the ripe young age of 98, and she died on **February 13, 2005**. Both Jacinta and Francesco Martos were beatified by our late Holy Father John Paul II on May 13, 2000. So, our Lady appears and gives a clarion call to return to her Christian roots, and if she refuses to do so or doesn't, then again, a

more devastating war would come into the world, and only then would we see a rise of communism and socialism throughout the world which will persecute the Church. And that's exactly what happened.

MEXICO: We see first in Mexico in 1917, the rise of a socialistic, anti-religious revolutionary government that will actively persecute the Church. Just to give you a sense of how bad things got in Mexico, during this time there was a governor of the province of Tabasco under the name of Tomas Cannonball, who named his children Lenin, Lucifer and Satan. This is how far from the great country of Mexico, once aligned so closely to the Catholic Church, had fallen away with the rise of the socialism. So those are kind of hard names to live up to if you're a kid. Under persecution from 1931 to 1936, churches are closed, Church run schools, orphanages and hospitals also are shut down by the revolutionary government in Mexico. Some bishops are actually stripped of their citizenship and expelled from the country in 1927. Clergy were arrested and forced to act in secret. Again, we see another country enacting the state sponsored persecution of the Church and the Church forced to go underground but we still see the heroic witness of priests who are willing, at the at the risk of their own lives, to minister to the Catholics in this country. We see one particular priest that's that becomes a martyr for his witness and his intimate life with Christ. And this is the martyr blessing Miguel Pro. Miguel Pro is arrested, along with two of his brothers on trumped up charges of participating in a plot to assassinate the Mexican president in 1927. He was a 36-year-old man and one of 10 children from his family. He had a special relationship with laborers and really wanted to minister to them. That was the special focus of his apostolic activity. During the persecution, he would even wear disguises in order to go around and minister to these Catholics in secret. Execution was ordered by the regime, and they actually invited journalists and photographers to come in to record his execution in the hope that by doing so they can spread the images that would help prevent people from continuing to live their Catholic faith and that they would leave the faith. Unfortunately, what happened because it was such a moving image that Blessed Miguel Pro brought to his execution; he embraced his martyrdom with such great fervor and heroism, that it became not a image that had people leave or flee from the Church, but rather people were drawn to the faith because of it. Right before he was executed, he stretched out his arms in the form of a cross, and his last words were *Long live Christ the King*, and then he was executed by a firing squad. And this image became so popular in Mexico, the image of that photograph of him right before his death, that the regime had to ban it because it was used and referenced by so many people. It's estimated that 250 to 300,000 people were killed as a result of this revolutionary regime in Mexico, in the socialist regime in the 1920s and 1930s. And today Mexico still suffers from the effects of this revolutionary regime. It wasn't until 1991, that anti Catholic articles of the Constitution of Mexico were finally repealed. So, Mexico was still struggling very much to recover her Catholic identity as a result of this socialist regime.

RUSSIA: On the other side of the world from the revolution in Mexico, there is the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Revolutionaries take over that country, and they're atheist at heart they began to attack religion and persecute the Church in January of 1918. A decree is issued against the religion calling for the complete and utter separation of Church and state and also calling for the Catholic Church to be deprived of all of its lands and all of its possessions. So the government comes in and confiscates Church land. In 1922 alone, 8000 priests and monks were executed throughout Russia simply for being Catholic. By 1925, it is estimated that 200,000 Catholics and every single Catholic bishop in Russia vanished or was killed in this year alone. The Soviets continue their persecution countries that are aligned with them or that they actually occupy especially the country of Ukraine, a country that hasn't had a deep relationship with the Catholic Church, has always persecute Ukrainian Catholics, and actually tried to get the Ukrainian Catholics and Ukrainian Catholic Church to join with the Russian Orthodox Church to enter into SCISM and move away from the Catholic Church. But the Ukrainian Catholics persisted in their loyalty to the Holy Father and to the Church as a whole. If you want a good understanding of what was going on in Russia during this time in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, even to the 60s, I highly recommend the works of a priest by the name of Father Walter Chizik. He writes a book of great importance and with

great spiritual authority. It is called *With God in Russia*, which is his autobiography. He was a priest who went into Russia and ministered secretly, was captured by the Soviets and held in prison for a long period of time, even spent time in Siberia in a gulag, and his works are just full of his love for the Russian people and how he continued to minister, as a priest, throughout this this captivity. So, we'll see how revolution then sweeps into other countries into Italy and Germany during this period of a world at war.

SPAIN: we have a great Spanish Civil War, which erupts in 1936 and that also greatly impacts the Church. We have the nationalists and the Republicans fighting and also communists fighting amongst each other and during the whole Spanish Civil War, it is estimated at around 7000 priests and religious were killed. So, it's an intense time of a Catholic country, like in Mexico, undergoing a severe persecution in the Church. So, this whole period of a world at war really is representative again of the fruits of our period we talked about before the period of the revolutions and modernism, how Europe separates herself from the Christian faith and from the Church. What ultimately comes about is the rise of great violence and great death and devastation. So also, now we shift our focus to what happens in

ITALY/GERMANY: In Italy and Germany, in this early part of the 20th century, we in this period of time, the Second World War. Our Pope at this time was Pope Pius XI and he was a shrewd diplomat, a very intelligent man, and he desired to safeguard the independence of the Church and the rights of Catholics among these different European nations by entering into and establishing **Concordat**, and we've mentioned that in our last time period of revolutions and modernism, that was really his main objective of his papacy. As he looked around, he saw a world in conflict and he saw the rise of these new these new forms of government in Europe and other places in the world that are attacking the Church and attacking the independency of the Church and persecuting Catholics and you want to ensure that they can enter into these international agreements, and to try to bring some kind of legality to the safeguarding of the Church. I've heard people say that in Italy in 1922, the fascist come to power under Benito Mussolini, and Mussolini, interestingly enough, took an interesting approach to the Church. He knew he could not go out of his way to actively persecute the Church in Italy, because he knew his history. He knew what happened to those who had persecuted the Church, and this is what he said, *The History of Western civilization from the time of the Roman Empire to our days shows that every time the state clashes with religion, it is always the state which ends in defeat*. So, Mussolini, despite all his problems, at least he was a good student of history, and he knew that when he went against the Church the Church always wins so what Mussolini decided to do was, he entered into a negotiation with a holy father to try to solve what was known at the time as **The Roman question**. And the Roman Question basically, came back to what we talked about in our last time period of revolutions and modernism, where the Papal States had been taken away from the Holy Father when Italy was unified. And so, there was this question of what do you do with the Pope and the Vatican? Is the pope supposed to be independent of Italy? Is the Vatican a part of Italy? How do we solve this question? So, Mussolini and Pius XI come together, and they discuss this and ultimately what's issued is what's known as the **Lateran Treaty of 1929**. And this Lateran Treaty creates a sovereign nation for the Holy Fathers who live in a sovereign nation which he still is head over the Vatican City State. The treaty also guarantees the rights of the Church in Italy and declares that Catholicism would be the soul and official religion in the country. It allows for holy days to be celebrated as state holidays, and for the Church to be able to teach Catholic education in the public schools. The Church for her part agreed to divorce herself from any kind of role in Italian politics. So Pius XI was able to enter into agreement with Mussolini to safeguard the rights of the Church, and also specifically to create and establish a sovereign nation for him to govern and to rule to maintain independency of the papacy, which we've seen over our study of Church history has been a very big question. Throughout the history of our Church, the pope is always trying to be that independent ruler and not to be subject to the whims of a set of various secular rulers.

GERMANY: So now we go north, and we see the situation in Germany during the 1920s as a result of a financial crisis in Germany, brought on partially because of the reparations that were enforced on Germany as a result of the Treaty of Versailles ending the First World War. We see the rise in national

socialism that begins to attack the Church and actually begins to preach and teach ideology which is completely antithetical to the Christian way of life. And the Church in Germany responds to this ideology of National Socialism between 1920 and 1927. The German Bishops warned the people of Germany against the national socialist ideology on five separate occasions, there was even one well known Catholic priest in Germany and now the name of **Father Rupert Mayer**. Fr Mayer had been a decorated chaplain in the German Army during the First World War, and he gave a well known and publicized talk, where he answered the question, *Can a Catholic be a national socialist?* And his answer to that question, was a definitive and absolute, *NO, a Catholic could not in good conscience be a member of National Socialism of the Nazi Party* because the Nazi Party espoused ideology completely at odds with the Catholic faith in a Christian life in 1931 The Bavarian bishops themselves even said that *Nazism is heretical*. It's a heresy that strikes at the heart of the Christian faith. So again, we see the Church in Germany and the bishops in Germany rising to the occasion, and actually addressing this ideology of National Socialism so that the people would know exactly where they would fall out between national socialism and the Church. Now, just like Pius XI entered into an agreement with Mussolini in Italy, so too, he was very desirous of entering into an agreement with a Nazi government in Germany because he knew what the Nazi ideology was going to do. It's going to come and persecute the Church. In order to try to safeguard the rights of the Church he wanted to establish an agreement. So, in 1933, he eventually was able to sign a *Concordat* with Nazi Germany to guarantee the rights of the Church in Germany. This kind of concordat was to safeguard the independency of Catholic organizations in Germany. The German/Nazi government agreed that the Church in Germany would be allowed to have free and unfettered access and communication to the Pope in Rome. It agreed to allow for religious education to be instructed in the schools and also agreed during this quarter **that any baptized Jew would be regarded as a Christian**, which was a big concession for the Church to receive because he knew, and the Church knew at this time that the National Socialism embraced the idea of anti-semitism. And so in order to have the Nazis agree that anyone who was a Jew, who became a baptized Christian would be considered a Christian; a great concession on the part of the Church because there were those in the Nazi Party, who at the time and later wanted to see any Jews, baptized or not, killed; they could still pass on the ethnicity, regardless of whether or not you converted to the Christian faith. So, the Church was able to get this demand out of the Nazis during this Concordat, although we'll see that soon. after the Concordat was signed, the Nazis and Hitler had no intention of actually following the agreement began an attack on the **sanctity of marriage and of human life**. Five days after the signing of the Concordat, they announced an issue for a *sterilization law*, which those in Germany who were considered to be unworthy or corrupt in their body would be forcibly sterilized so that they would not produce others. Also, they issued a law that said if you did not believe in national socialist ideology, that was grounds for divorce. So, you could divorce your wife or your husband simply because they were not a national socialist or didn't believe in party ideology. So, we see here on the very beginnings after this Concordat was signed that the Nazi government had no desire to follow it. They also attacked Catholic youth organizations throughout Germany in order to try to bring the German youth away from the Church and into the party. They actually tried to disband the Catholic youth league that was especially prevalent in the Catholic state of Bavaria to get rid of these Catholic youth organizations. They also held Hitler Youth Movement meetings that were held on Sunday mornings, so that you had to go to the Hitler Youth meeting, and you couldn't go to Church. **All this was designed to persecute the Church, and to eradicate Catholicism from German society**. Because of this, the breaking of the different pledges and agreements of the Concordat, Pius XI issues an encyclical in 1937, known as *Mit Brennender Sorge* (1937), which translated to English means *with burning concern*, and it was the only encyclical ever written in German. Large parts of it were drafted by Eugenio Pacelli, who at the time was the cardinal Secretary of State, and later ascend to the Chair of St. Peter and become Pius XII. In this encyclical, Pius 11th, condemned National Socialism as *anti-Christian*. He also denounced the idea of a national religion or National god, which was a foundation of the Nazi Party ideology. Ultimately, the Nazis banned the

publication of this encyclical in German in order to try to ensure that the people would have no knowledge of what the Holy Father said about their party.

ITALY: In 1938, Mussolini began to adopt the anti-Jewish racial laws which had been also brought about in Germany. As a result of this adoption in Italy of these antisemitic laws, Pius XII gave a speech in which he specifically said, *I say to you, it is impossible for a Christian to take part in anti semitism. It is inadmissible spiritually. We are all Semites.* So, we see here the Church, especially under pontificate of Pious XI building a foundation in order to address the major problem of Nazism, as it affects Western Europe, especially Germany during this period of time. Pius XII (Eugenio Pacelli) will take on many of the writings of the works of his predecessor and further the Church's attack against national socialist ideology. Pious XII was very well informed of the situation in Germany, because for an extended period of time, he was the Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin in Germany. He was the Pope's representative to the German government in the 1920s. While he was Apostolic Nuncio he was there during the rise of Hitler and the rise of National Socialism. He was an outspoken critic of both Hitler and the Nazi Party. He gave 44 public speeches during his time as Apostolic Nunzio. Of those 44 speeches, 40 contained specific attacks against national socialism. Also in 1936, as Secretary of State, he had established an organization to help Jews emigrate from Germany to other places of Europe and other places of the world because of the growing, ongoing anti-semitism in Germany. When Eugenio Pacelli was elected Pope in 1939, the Germans reacted in a way that helps us see that they saw Pius XII as an enemy of National Socialism. This is what one Berlin newspaper said on hearing that he had been elected Pope, *The election of Cardinal Pacelli is not accepted with favor in Germany, because he was always opposed to Nazism.* So, we talked about Pius XII and his wartime actions and what he did especially in regard to the Jews, as we continue our discussion here of a World War because unfortunately, in our modern day, a lot of criticism has been levied against Pious XII about his actions and activities during the war. And there's this whole modern **myth that has grown up that the Church did not care for what happened in Germany.** *The Church did not care what was going on against the Jews. The Church did not care about the spreading of the faith, and the Pope was silent, at best and at worst, he was actually personally an anti Semite,* is what our modern world tells us about Pius the 12th. And it's an absolute, complete and utter historical fallacy. Pius XII was very much involved in helping the Jews and then trying to ensure the National Socialism did not take root in Germany. So, during his pontificate, war clouds are looming across Germany. He says, in anticipation of this war and trying to get countries to be at peace and not engage in warfare, **Nothing is lost by peace. All is lost by war.** So, he continues to try to preach peace and bring the nations together. Unfortunately, Hitler and the national socialist government in Germany do not listen and they invade Poland in September of 1939. When Germany invaded Poland, they specifically made it an objective to round up Catholic priests, and when they first invaded the country, they rounded up 700 Priests and had them shot. Ultimately, 3 million Catholic Poles would be sent to concentration camps, many of them priests. One camp in particular was designated almost as a priest concentration camp and that was Dachau where the Germans sent 3000 priests from all over Europe, many of them from Poland, other 3000 sent to the camp, about 1000 of them actually perished during their captivity. Hitler made it a part of his government and a part of his plan during this time of the late 30s and early 40s to destroy the Catholic Church. He went so far as to say, *one is either a Christian or a German, one cannot be both.* So, you had to choose if you were a German citizen during his time under Hitler's mindset, whether you wanted to be a Christian or a German in his mind, you couldn't be both and he wanted to destroy the Catholic Church. He said he wanted to *crush the Catholic Church, like a toad and make sure to stamp out its complete existence.* During this time, we had several German martyrs who lived up to the calling of the of the faith and suffered martyrdom under the Nazi government. One in particular was an Austrian man named Franz Jägerstätter. Franz refused to join the Wehrmacht, the German army, he was called for conscription, but he refused to do so because of his deep Catholic faith and would have nothing to do with the German war machine and the National Socialist Party. So, he refused to join. Many people tried to convince him to join and still try to maintain his faith because he

was a husband and a father, but Franz remained steadfast in his faith. He was arrested and ultimately beheaded in 1943 by the Nazis because of his refusal to join the army. He was beatified in October of 2007. And his wife was present at his beatification ceremony. So, he gave this ultimate witness of his life for his faith in Christ. Also, during this time, we have two other great saints who died in Nazi concentration camps, St. Edith Stein (Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross). She and her sister were Carmelite nuns living in Holland at the time. They were arrested by the Nazis during a general roundup of Jews and deported to Auschwitz. They were gassed to death in 1942. Another great saint is Maximus Kobe, who was a conventional Polish Franciscan, who had a great devotion to our Blessed Mother and began an organization called the *Militia of the Immaculata* where he really undertook the efforts of the New Evangelization. He embraced the media and modern ways in which to spread the faith throughout Poland and even through the world. He traveled to Japan and established a city of the Immaculata Christian community in Japan as well. He was rounded up when the Nazis invaded Poland and sent to the concentration camp at Auschwitz. He was in a cellblock where a prisoner escaped and as a result of the one prisoner escaping, the Germans decided in retribution, that 10 prisoners will be executed for that one prisoner's escape. One prisoner that was chosen by the camp commandant was a Polish soldier who was a father and a husband and was very distraught when he was chosen to be executed. And so, St. Maximus Kobe left the formation, which that of itself was an act that could bring about death, but he left formation, walked up to the camp commandant and said, *I want to take the place of one of one of these prisoners*. The commandant asked him which one he wanted to take the place over and he pointed to that Polish soldier and said, *That man has a family*. And so, St. Maximilian Kobe and nine other companions were sent to a starvation bunker where they were starved by the Nazis for two weeks. During that two-week period, many of the inmates died and St. Maximilian was able to continue to live along with several of his fellow prisoners and he ministered to them. They sang hymns together and he tried to keep their spirits up. Eventually, he and a few other prisoners were killed by injection of carbolic acid. He died and his body was cremated, his ashes were scattered August 14, 1941. So we have during this period of time, a great example of the lives of martyrs and people who are willing to lay down their life for their faith in Jesus and their faith in the Catholic Church despite these horrific actions of the National Socialists and they provide a great example still for us, of how to live our life in this modern world, always giving an account of the hope that we have within us, the hope of Jesus Christ and His Church.

Pope Pius XII's wartime actions during the war continued to hold to the principles that we talked about earlier in this session of Benedict XV; the Vatican would undertake a policy of **perfect neutrality**. Now, the Germans complained about Benedict's actions during the war because they believed he was aiding the Allied cause and in many ways he actually did. One story was of how he prayed privately every day for Allied victory in order to ensure that the Germans would be defeated but publicly he tried to maintain this level of neutrality. He also undertook the **principle of charitable action** in order to ensure he dispensed charity to any victim of the war. He didn't choose sides when he brought forth this charity into Europe. He established in particular the **Pontifical Relief Society**, which was established primarily to help refugees who were fleeing the consequences of war throughout Europe, again, helping no matter who those refugees were. He also established what was known as the **Vatican Information Bureau**, (similar to the Prisoner of War Bureau that Benedict XV established during the First World War) so that families could contact the Vatican and try to get in touch with their loved ones who have become prisoners of war, and throughout the war, he continued to call for peace. He continued to publicly call for an end to the war and for nations to resolve their differences peacefully and bring an end to the suffering and the death and devastation on the great continent of Europe. He also, in terms his wartime activities towards the Jews were always oriented towards trying to ensure their safety. In order to prevent them from being rounded up and killed and executed by the Nazis. He approved the issuance of fake baptismal certificates for Jews throughout the Church, in the hopes that the Nazis would not round them up or send them to the concentration camps. The baptismal certificate for Jews stated that they

were Christians. He also instructed his Apostolic Nuncios throughout the world, His diplomatic representatives throughout the world to work with the local bishops to save as many Jews as possible.

ACCUSATIONS: Now, there are basically three modern accusations that are made against Pope Pius in terms of his wartime activities related to the Jews. 1. Modern people sometimes claimed that he didn't speak out. He didn't say anything publicly about Nazi treatment against the Jews. 2. They will say too, he didn't do enough. He did a few things, but it wasn't enough to help the Jews. 3. Another accusation was that he was personally was an anti Semite. And so, we'll take a look at each one of these things and destroy these modern accusations.

1. In terms of the first one, that he didn't speak out. absolutely not true. He authorized the Vatican Radio to issue broadcasts about the conditions of the Catholic Church as well as the Jews in Poland so that the world would know what was really going on in the early stages of the war when the Nazis first invaded Poland. Also, Vatican Radio condemned Nazi atrocities and practices. In 1943, one specific Vatican Radio broadcast stated, *He who makes a distinction between Jews and other men, is unfaithful to God, and in conflict with God's commands.* A very poignant response about the national socialist ideology of anti- semitism. Pious himself personally gave every Christmas an address to the world (popes continue to do this today). During this war time though Pious will specifically address the situation of the Jews and he called for peace. In 1941, he spoke out against them Nazism, the killing of Jews and called for peace. The New York Times, of all esteemed publications, wrote an editorial in 1941 that said this after hearing Pious' Christmas address, *The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness and enveloping Europe. He is about the only ruler left on the continent of Europe who dares to raise his voice at all. The Pope puts himself squarely against Hitlerism.* In 1942, the New York Times wrote after hearing Pious' Christmas address wrote, *The Pope has repudiated the National Socialist, the new European order. He's virtually accusing the German people of injustice toward the Jews.* So again, this whole notion that Pious did not speak out against Nazism, did not speak out against the Nazi policies toward the Jews is an absolute historical fallacy, a myth that has no basis in reality. There were times when Pious had to follow the precepts of his previous successor Benedict XV in terms of issuing some protests publicly and trying to issue some protests privately. There was a delicate balancing act he had to do throughout the war, because he knew that there was a danger that if he spoke out too forcefully and too often, that would actually bring about more retribution, and more danger to the Jews. He said that *during the war, we might have an obligation to honor fiery words against such things. That is all that is holding us back from doing so as a knowledge that if we should speak, we will simply worsen the predicament of these unfortunate people.* Sometimes when the Church leaders spoke out the Nazis retaliated by an even fiercer persecution and roundup of the Jews. And we see this in Holland in 1942. The Dutch bishops as a whole, spoke out against the deportation of Jews. As a result, the Nazis furthered their efforts to deport Jews, and it's estimated that almost 80% of the entire Jewish population of Holland was deported, the highest single percentage of any European nation. So, when the bishop spoke out forcefully, the Nazis retaliated forcefully, so Pious always had to keep that in mind whenever he issued any public condemnation. 2. Now, what about the second accusation of *he didn't do enough?* The Pope didn't do enough to help the Jews during the Second World War? Again, not true at all. We have to keep in mind the historical context. Pious was aware that Hitler had a plan to invade the Vatican, remove him from power, perhaps even kill him and set up an anti-Pope in Germany. And so, he was very aware and concerned about the independency of the papacy, and also the existence of the Vatican City State. When the Germans invaded Italy, he continued to help the Jews by instructing the bishops to allow Jews to live secretly in monasteries and convents. In the hope that the Nazis wouldn't search there and find them. He also personally had 500 Jews hidden in his summer residence of Castel Gandolfo. It's estimated that 5000 Roman Jews hid throughout the city in Church property during the whole German occupation of the city of Rome. One Jewish historian has estimated that the wartime actions of Pious XII saved over 860,000 Jews. So Pious XV and the actions of the Church saved almost 860,000 Jews, about 3% of those who survived the war. So, this whole accusation that Pious didn't do

enough is absolutely false. At the end of the war, Pious was widely praised for his efforts. During the war, the chief rabbi of Rome by the name of **Israel Zoli**¹ actually converted to the Catholic faith. In one measure because of the actions of Pius XII. He actually took as his baptized Christian name, Eugenio, a first name of Pius XV. In honor of the actions of this man during the war, when Pious died in 1958, **Golda Meier** who was the Israeli representative to the United Nations at the time and later would go on to be Prime Minister of Israel said this, *During the 10 years of Nazi terror when our people went through the horrors of martyrdom, the Pope (Pious XV) raised his voice to condemn the persecutions and to commiserate with the victims.* So again, she recognized what Pious had done. **Albert Einstein** even after when Pius XV died, said this, *Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth. The Church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand up for intellectual truth and moral freedom.* So, at the end of his life, Pius XV was widely praised for his wartime activities. Now, we contrast that with the modern day. How did these modern notions and accusations against Pious come about? They started in 1963. With the writing of a play by a German My name is Ruth Hackworth, and Rolf hackles route roads this play called The deputy was a play based on Pius the 12th and his wartime activities is a seven-hour play. And you characterize pious as a money-grubbing hypocrite who was very passive and who was very passive and disinterested in what was going on in the world. At the time. He ultimately the whole message of the deputy is that pious should have been more vocal that he didn't speak out enough against Nazi Nazism and what the Nazis were doing to the Jews. The Soviet communists also in the 1960s and 70s. Pick up this mantle of accusations against pious and spread it throughout Europe and the world in the hopes to discredit the Catholic Church in order to silence the Church within eastern Europe and their sphere of influence. Ultimately, there was even a book written by an ex-seminarian by the name of John Cornwall in 1999 that was entitled Hitler's Pope, or he makes a specific reference or specific accusation that pious was personally an anti Semite. All of these things are absolutely completely historically false. So, our period of time of the World War comes to an end with a death massive death and devastation and destruction throughout Europe. It's estimated that 100 million people died as a result of the efforts of communism. 25 million people in the Soviet Union 50 million people in China and then 20,000,020 5 million people elsewhere. We also see Nazism nationally. So National Socialism brings about the direct result of 20 million people 6 million Jews so the Church in Europe as a whole has faced this period of death and destruction. We'll see though how the Church then takes the world and takes the Church into a new light when our next time period of this new springtime we'll talk about that. When we convene again.

¹**Rabbi Zolli:** Conversions are like snowflakes no one is like another. Each and every story of how Christ pulls a soul to himself is special, unique, delicately powerful. Each story is touched with redemptive beauty. Even the story of the five-year-old child who prays with his mother contains more than enough unexpected wonder and truthful beauty to make even the fattest angel dance. But the story of Israel Zolli is not about a child on bended knee. It is of a heroic rabbi caught in the maelstrom of World War II . **A Christ haunted life:** Rabbi Zolli was one of the most remarkable men of the 20th century. A leading European Jewish intellectual, chief rabbi of Rome, who converted to Christianity in 1944. Not much had been written about him the Jewish community considers him a heretic to his faith, and a traitor to his race. To Jesus, he is a trophy of grace. He was born in 1881 in what now is the Ukraine. As a young man, he worked in Florence where he also did his rabbinical studies. He became professor at the University of Padua and was named vice-rabbi of Trieste. In 1918, he became chief rabbi of the city. During this period, Zolli led a divided life. In public, the life of a rabbi celebrating certain number of rituals and shepherding the Jewish community. But alone with the Torah, he lived the life of a writer and thinker. This latter work eventually brought him onto the road leading to Christ. **Prepare the way of The Lord:** Before God does a work whether in redemption history or on human soul, he begins by preparing the way. The same can be said of Zolli's conversion. Before he publicly confessed, the winds of providence were preparing him. One such preparation was the slow pull of intellectual

curiosity. He had always been attracted to the Gospel. As a young rabbi studying the Old Testament, he could not just stop at the end of it: so he continued, and read the New Testament. For him, it was the natural continuation of the Old. He had always been attracted to the figure of Christ on the cross in which he saw the evidence of His being the "*Suffering Servant of God*" spoken of by *Isaiah*. Something he did not speak publicly about until after his conversion like Hazel Motes in Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood*, who was haunted by the *Compelling Christ*. For Zolli like Motes, "*Jesus moves from tree to tree in the back of his mind, a wild ragged figure motioning him to turn around and come off into the dark where he was not sure of his footing*" In 1938, he wrote *The Nazarene* in which he explored the exegetical (explainable) problems concerning the relations between the Old and the New Testaments. Soon after publication, he was transferred to Rome and named chief rabbi of the city. Seen as a rabbi who could build bridges and keep the peace continued his work both in public and in private where amidst his prayers and thoughts, *Christ moved from tree to tree in the back of his mind*. In 1942, the winds of providence began to stir again as the storms of war raged in Europe. By September 1943, the Nazis occupied Rome. The War had now come to Rome. Under Mussolini the Jews had been marginalized but not mistreated. Now a Nazi officer named Kappler demanded 110 pounds of gold in place of the Jews. The Jews feverishly managed to collect 77 pounds. The chief Rabbi Zolli realized his helplessness. For the first time he stepped into the Vatican and begged Pope Pius XII: "*The New Testament must not abandon the Old Testament!*" The Pope was so moved that by that afternoon, the remaining 33 pounds of gold was collected from the parishes of Rome. But Kappler took the Jews as well as the gold as rabbi Zolli begged in vain for him to take him as a trophy instead. His life for his people. A substitution to pay a ransom and satisfy wrath but Zolli's pleas went unheard. He was not the one to represent and redeem his people. *Christ once again move from tree to tree in the back of his mind*. From the betrayal and disappointment, a great courage arose in him settling into an *otherworldly* resolve. He walked away from that meeting determined to protect his community. Diplomacy had failed but all his cards had not yet been played. He had only begun to fight. The deportation of the Jews from Rome was fixed for 16 October 1943. Rabbi Zolli called on the Vatican once again. They began at once smuggling Jews out of Rome. Out of the 8000 Jews of Rome, they managed to get 4447 Jews hidden in over 150 monasteries and parish houses, hidden against the threat of the highest punishment from the Nazis. Till the threat was over, they were provided with all they needed for survival.

Haunted no more: The Americans freed Rome in June 1944. Yet Rabbi Zolli seemed to be caught in a deeper battle. Father Dezza, a Jesuit and friend of Zolli tells of a conversation they had on August 15, 1944. Zolli had come to him and revealed the tension of his soul : "*How can I continue living in this way when I think very often of Christ and I love Him?*" In October 1944, all tension was put to rest by the living Christ. On the holy day of Yom Kippur (day of Atonement), Zolli had an extraordinary experience which would come to be decisive. He was in the synagogue in contemplation and suddenly, in a vision He saw Christ beside him. Christ said to him: "*You are here for the last time: from now on you will follow Me.*" That was it. Zolli was profoundly moved, visibly shaken and spiritually renewed. He went to his knees a Rabbi but rose a Christian. At home that evening, he did not want to say anything to his family, but his wife told him that while he was in the synagogue celebrating Yom Kippur, she too had seen a figure of Christ next to him. His daughter Miriam, who was then 18, added that she had seen Jesus in a dream. For Rabbi Zolli it was the last sign he needed. He resigned from the synagogue and on 17 February 1945, Israel Zolli, the Chief Rabbi of Rome, and his wife made public confessions of faith in Christ and received a Christian baptism identifying them as a follower of Christ. After 40 years of rabbinical studies with fingers blackened by ink from hours of study, a tired rabbi weary from war's bitter sting, and weak from protecting his flock rose from the waters to find God was already there, with him, face to face.

Epilogue: Certainty of the mountains: In an interview after his baptism the good rabbi was asked why he had given up the synagogue for the Church, he gave an answer that showed he had a keen understanding of biblical realities: "*But I have not given it up. Christianity is the integration of the*

588 *synagogue. The synagogue was a promise, and Christianity is the fulfillment of that promise. The*
589 *synagogue pointed to Christianity: Christianity presupposes the synagogue. So you see, one cannot exist*
590 *without the other. What I converted to was the living Christianity."*
591 *"Then you believe that the Messiah has come?" the interviewer asked.*
592 *"Yes, positively," replied Zolli. "I have believed it for many years. And now I am so firmly convinced of the*
593 *truth of it that I can face the whole world and defend my faith with the certainty and solidity of the*
594 *mountains".*
595