

NEW YORK TIMES SALUTES POPE PIUS XII

On Christmas Day 1942, as the Holocaust was raging, the New York Times published an editorial on the heroics of Pope Pius XII. Here is a selection from that statement that ran 70 years ago:

“No Christmas sermon reaches a larger congregation than the message Pope Pius XII addresses to a war-torn world at this season. This Christmas more than ever he is a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent. The Pulpit whence he speaks is more than ever like the Rock on which the Church was founded, a tiny island lashed and surrounded by a sea of war.

“Pope Pius expresses as passionately as any leader on our side the war aims of the struggle for freedom when he says that those who aim at building a new world must fight for free choice of government and religious order. They must refuse that the state should make of individuals a herd of whom the state disposes as if they were a lifeless thing.”

The previous Christmas was also marked by a New York Times editorial:

“The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas.

“In calling for a ‘real new order’ based on ‘liberty, justice, and love,’ to be attained only by a ‘return to social and international principles capable of creating a barrier against the abuse of liberty and the abuse of power,’ the Pope put himself squarely against Hitlerism. Recognizing that there is no road open to agreement between belligerents ‘whose reciprocal war aims and programs seem to be irreconcilable,’ he left no doubt that the Nazi aims are also irreconcilable with his own conception of a Christian peace.”

We feel confident that when the entire Vatican archives are released, there will be even more reason to salute the heroics of Pope Pius XII.

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