

# ATTACK ON PIUS XII IS UNSEEMLY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an article by Deborah Dwork and Eric Greenberg criticizing the Catholic Church for pursuing the cause of sainthood for Pope Pius XII; it is published on the website of today's [\*Philadelphia Inquirer\*](#):

Deborah Dwork is a specialist in Holocaust studies at Clark University, and Rabbi Eric Greenberg is the director of interfaith policy for the ADL. Their credentials are not in question, but their judgment certainly is.

They begin their remarks by saying that "Pius refused even to say the word *Jew* during his famous Christmas speech of 1942." Funny how the *New York Times* was able to figure out who the pope was referring to at the time. "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." Nowhere in the *Times* editorial of December 25, 1942 does it mention the word *Jew*, but only the delusional would think the editors were praising the pope for speaking out about Puerto Ricans. Indeed, the *Times* ran an editorial the previous year, also on Christmas day, singling out the pope among world leaders: "The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas."

The *New York Times* was not alone in praising the heroics of Pope Pius XII. So was Rabbi Greenberg's organization: the ADL wrote gloriously of his efforts. So did the World Jewish Congress, Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, Emilio Zolli (the chief rabbi in Rome—he converted to Catholicism after the war, taking Pius' name as his baptismal name), and many others.

Furthermore, Israeli diplomat Pinchas Lapid credited the pope with saving as many as 860,000 Jewish lives. Today, English historian Sir Martin Gilbert credits the Catholic Church for its yeoman service.

There is always room for just criticism, but for Dwork and Greenberg to conclude that the cause of sainthood for Pope Pius XII is “an act of aggression against the Jewish people” is flat out unseemly. It also ill-serves Catholic-Jewish relations.