

BRIAN KILMEADE DEAD WRONG ON PIUS XII

[Bill Donohue](#)

On April 16, on "Fox & Friends," Brian Kilmeade was critical of Pope Leo XIV, and in the course of his remarks he said the following: "Historically, Pope Pius XII did nothing knowing, documents show that 6 million Jews were being slaughtered. The Vatican knew about it, did nothing, signed a deal with the Nazis not to invade."

Shaking his head in agreement was Rich Lowry, editor-in-chief of National Review.

Besides the incredibly dumb remark about the Vatican deciding not to invade—invade with what?—Kilmeade knows nothing about this subject. He is dead wrong. Apparently, Lowry is just as clueless.

The Vatican archives show concretely that the debate is over. Pope Pius XII did more to save Jews than any other world figure. Here is a quick summary of his heroics taken from my book, *Why Catholicism Matters*.

1940

- In the December 23, 1940 issue of *Time* magazine, Albert Einstein was quoted as saying, "Being a lover of freedom, when the Nazi revolution came to Germany, I looked to the universities to defend it, but the universities were immediately silenced. Then I looked to the great editors of the newspapers, but they, like the universities, were silenced in a few short weeks...Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing the truth."

1941

- In its Christmas Day editorial, the *New York Times* said, "The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas."

1942

- In its Christmas Day editorial, the *New York Times* wrote, "No Christmas sermon reaches a larger congregation than the message Pope Pius XII addresses to a war-torn world this season."

1943

- Hitler's biographer, John Toland, said, "The Church, under the Pope's guidance, had already saved the lives of more Jews than all other churches, religious institutions, and rescue organizations combined, and was presently hiding thousands of Jews in monasteries, convents, and Vatican City itself."
- Speaking about events in 1943, Sir Martin Gilbert, perhaps the foremost historian of the Holocaust, noted that "the test for Pacelli was when the Gestapo came to Rome in 1943 to round up Jews. And the Catholic Church, on his direct authority, immediately dispersed as many Jews as they could."
- In 1943, the World Jewish Congress thanked the pope for persuading Italian authorities to remove 20,000 Jewish refugees from internment camps in Northern Italy.
- On July 25, 1943, Hitler began his plan to kidnap the "Jew-loving" pope.

1944

- Jewish scholar Jeno Levai describes what happened in the spring of 1944 in Hungary. "Over 20,000 passports had been issued by the papal Nuncio—on the average of 500 a day."

1945

- Anton Zolli, the Chief Rabbi in Rome, converted to Catholicism. He explained why in his book, *Why I Became a Catholic*. “No hero in history has commanded such an army; none is more militant, more fought against, none more heroic than that conducted by Pius XII in the name of Christian Charity.” He chose the name Eugenio (after Eugenio Pacelli, Pius XII) as his baptismal name.

1958

- When the pope died, Golda Meir, Israel’s foreign minister (she would later become prime minister), telegraphed the Vatican saying, “When fearful martyrdom came to our people in the decade of Nazi terror, the voice of the Pope was raised for the victims. The life of our times was enriched by a voice speaking out on the great moral truths above the tumult of daily conflict. We mourn a great servant of peace.”
- Among the Jewish organizations that praised the pope were the following: Anti-Defamation League, the Synagogue Council of America, the Rabbinical Council of America, the New York Board of Rabbis, the American Jewish Committee, the World Jewish Congress, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the National Council of Jewish Women.

Former Israeli diplomat and author Pinchas Lapid estimated that approximately 860,000 Jewish lives were saved by Pope Pius XII. One thing is certain: no leader, religious or secular, did more to save Jews than Pope Pius XII. He is more than a “Righteous Gentile”—he deserves to be made a saint.

If Kilmeade knew anything about the critics of Pius XII, he would know that many have had to walk back their accusations.

In 2017, the BBC announced the results of an internal probe of the war record of Pope Pius XII. It said it was wrong to characterize him as being “silent” during the Holocaust. In

1999, the author of *Hitler's Pope*, John Cornwell, admitted that he was wrong in making this assessment, and retracted his charge that the pope supported Hitler.

Catholic League board of advisors, University of Mississippi law professor Ronald Rychlak, has also written voluminously about the yeoman efforts of Pius XII during the Holocaust. Gary Krupp, a Jewish student of this subject, who was once critical of the pope, has a drove of documents on his website, Pave the Way Foundation, that detail the great work of this wartime pope.

Kilmeade is a talking head—he is not an historian. He is way out of his league on this subject.

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