

JEWISH GROUP SUES VATICAN

The Coalition for Jewish Concerns has announced that it is going to sue the Vatican in an attempt to force the Holy See to open its archives relating to Jewish children sheltered by the Catholic Church during World War II.

Catholic League president William Donohue gave his reply today:

“In 1964, Dr. Leon Kubowitzky, an official of the World Jewish Congress, said, ‘I can state now that I hardly know of a single case where Catholic institutions refused to return Jewish children.’ He was referring to Jewish children who were hidden by individual Catholics and the Catholic Church—in monasteries and convents—from the Nazis during the Holocaust. The courage that these Catholics demonstrated, often at great risk to themselves, should be cause for congratulations, not condemnation. Sadly, this is not the case. But why?

“On January 9, the *New York Times* published a news story maintaining that an Italian newspaper recently disclosed a Vatican document implicating the Holy See in a scheme not to return baptized Jewish children to their families after the war. What has not received as much attention is what has been learned subsequently: this document was an unsigned summary, did not appear on Vatican stationery, was written in French, and bore the seal of a Catholic official working in France. More important, another Italian newspaper has disclosed that the original document has now been obtained, and it proves just the opposite of what has been alleged! To wit: Pope Pius XII, after being thanked by the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, Isaac Herzog, for sheltering Jewish kids during the war, acceded to Herzog’s request to return the kids to their original families. In other words, the first story was a hoax.

“But there is another issue here. The bullying tactics of the Coalition for Jewish Concerns, led by Rabbi Avi Weiss, are a disgrace. More reasonable is ADL national director Abraham Foxman: he has respectfully asked the Vatican to open all its archives on this subject. I stand with Foxman on this issue and appreciate his decorum.”