

GOOD NEWS

In the December *Catalyst* we mentioned that the bookstore chain, Borders, and a Milwaukee bookstore, Harry W. Schwartz, were pushing the anti-Catholic screed by John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*.

Borders provided clarification saying it was the publisher, not anyone connected with the bookstore chain that wrote the glowing account. They had no plans to post the ad again.

We got a better response from A. David Schwartz of Harry W. Schwartz bookstore. This is exactly what he said in a letter responding to the complaint lodged by William Donohue: "Sir, I was appalled to see the prominent promotional place that was given to *Hitler's Pope* in our November 2000 newsletter. That was a seriously misconceived placement, which brought a strenuous rebuke from me to my advertising staff. The newsletter's time is past, but the lesson remains. Thank you for reinforcing my judgment."

If you would like to thank Mr. Schwartz for being so straightforward, contact him at the bookstore, 219 N. Milwaukee St., Milwaukee, WI 53202.

We will continue to challenge anyone who seeks to promote this scurrilous attack on Pope Pius XII and welcome those who want to debate the issue.

SWEEPS WINNER

We are proud to announce that Father John Kelly of Somerville, Massachusetts, won the beautiful Lenox Nativity Set in our

annual Christmas sweepstakes. Congratulations to Father John and many thanks to all who those who participated in making the sweepstakes a success.

CATHOLICS AS MARTYRS?

A good book review is not necessarily a favorable one—it is one that accurately informs the reader of the author's thesis and then analyzes how successful he was in sustaining his argument. At least this is true for non-fiction works. Similarly, a bad review is one that misrepresents what the author said and then criticizes him for his “failing.”

This is what happened to Robert Royal in the pages of the *Washington Post Book World* when Lauren F. Winner recently reviewed his new work, *Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century: A Comprehensive World History*. Royal was on target when he labeled the review an “angry diatribe.”

Fairness dictates that our members should know that Bob Royal is a member of the Catholic League's board of advisors; he is currently president of the distinguished Faith and Reason Institute in Washington. But fairness also dictates that the *Washington Post* should never have published Winner's ideologically driven review.

Royal demonstrates that millions of Catholics were martyred in the twentieth century and that most of them died under totalitarian regimes. Because the lion's share met their fate under Communism, Winner decides to shoot the messenger (Royal) because she can't bear his message (that putting leftist theory into practice has had murderous consequences). So she resorts to *ad hominem* attacks (e.g., “one doesn't read a book by the director of Faith and Reason Institute expecting

political evenhandedness”).

Not surprisingly, Winner trots out the old canard about the alleged “silence” of the Church during the Holocaust. That most of those who died under Hitler were Catholic—even if they were not all singled out like Jews—is something she’d rather not discuss. They were just “in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

If you’d like to register a complaint, do it with Marie Arana, Editor, *Washington Post Book World*, 1150 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20071. You might ask her to explain what her take is on Winner’s opening salvo against Royal: “It may look as if Christians have been running the show for the last 100 years, but for every Christian in power there was, somewhere, a Christian getting killed for his faith.”

That kind of snide remark suggests that Winner has made up her mind: the real power brokers of the past century—the ones responsible for all the bloodshed—are followers of Christ. So how could it be that so many have been martyred?

As the former mayor of New York, Ed Koch, once said, it is libelous to say Christians killed Jews during the Holocaust. Nazis did it. It would be instructive to see whether Arana (forget Winner) agrees with this assessment.

Meanwhile, Royal’s book is available for \$39.95 from Crossroad. Ask your local bookstore to secure a copy for you. You’ll more than likely agree with the American Library Association’s review of Royal’s book as published in *Booklist*: “An eloquent, painstakingly researched tribute to those ordinary human beings who managed to meet oppression and death with extraordinary dignity, grace, and faith.”

HATE ADS MAKE THE ROUNDS

The insidious “Earth’s Final Warning” hate ads that the Catholic League relentlessly challenges made their way into several newspapers recently.

The *Montgomery Journal* in Rockville, Maryland ran the ad twice, once on October 8 and again on November 26. Our initial contact with the publisher, Ryan Phillips, was contentious, but then he settled down and acknowledged our objection.

His first response was to say that his newspaper was “very liberal,” and that it didn’t matter that other publishers have decided not to run the ad again. When challenged, he said he might run an ad charging that the Holocaust was a fraud. But when asked if he would run an ad by the KKK, he said he wouldn’t. In the end, Phillips said he would review the ad again with his staff and was “leaning toward not accepting such an ad if it was placed again.”

We protested placement of the ad in the Martinsburg, West Virginia newspaper, *The Journal*; the *Austin American-Statesman*; and the *Des Moines Register*. We are awaiting their response.

It should also be noted that in November the ad was mailed to residents of Boca Raton, Florida in the form of a pamphlet. This particular “Earth’s Final Warning” ad is the work of Cornerstone Publishing. It charges that the Catholic Church is taking over the world and features a picture of President Clinton and Pope John Paul II on the cover smiling. It is the work of Cornerstone Publishing. Members can write to the publishing firm at P.O. Box 609, Graham, Washington. 98338

THE ACLU'S FRIVOLOUS LAWSUITS

- 2001 began with another ACLU lawsuit. The subject? The posting of the Ten Commandments on a monument in a Plattsmouth city park in Nebraska.
- At the behest of the ACLU, a court in Muhlenberg County in Greenville, Kentucky has asked the county attorney to review a request to post the Ten Commandments as part of an historical display in the county courthouse.
- A federal appeals court ruled in December that a Ten Commandment monument on the lawn of a municipal building in Elkart, Indiana violated the First Amendment. The Indiana chapter of the ACLU declared victory.
- Pittsburgh's Allegheny County Courthouse was the scene of another fight over the posting of the Ten Commandments. This time the ACLU deferred to its sister organization, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, letting them file suit.
- The ACLU is currently appealing a decision made last fall by a district court that allowed a moment of silence in Virginia's public schools. The Union maintains that this practice is unconstitutional because it amounts to state-sanctioned prayer.
- Three new prison chapels are being built in Louisiana—all with private funding—but the ACLU doesn't like it. It says the chapels improperly promote Christianity over other religions.
- Rastafarian students in Lafayette Parish, Louisiana discovered what the ACLU means by religious liberty when the Union took their case after they were banned from class violating the school's dress and hair code. The ACLU defended the students, on religious expression grounds, for wearing their hair in braids and covering their heads.

- In California's Mojave Desert there is a memorial for the local men who died in World War I. Because the memorial is in the shape of a cross, the ACLU threatened legal action. The National Park Service, which controls the land, immediately folded and allowed the ACLU to win uncontested.

- Olathe Public Library in Olathe, Kansas no longer marks books suitable for Christians. That is because the library's board gave in to a protest from the ACLU.

- Rita Cline is Shawnee County treasurer in Topeka, Kansas. In her offices, she has posters proclaiming "In God We Trust." The ACLU sued to get them removed. But this time they lost. Big. Not only will the posters remain, U.S. District Court Judge Sam Crow labeled the ACLU's action "patently frivolous," and ordered the civil libertarians to pay for Cline's legal fees.

We congratulate Judge Crow and the American Center for Law and Justice for winning this case. The wonder is why other judges don't have the courage to slap the ACLU with frivolous lawsuits.

Constantine's Sword: A Review Article

By Robert P. Lockwood

When John Cornwell's book, *Hitler's Pope* was released, many critics missed the point in the sensationalism surrounding his unfounded claim that Pius XII was a silent collaborator in the

Holocaust. Cornwell wrote the book as an advocacy paper against the leadership of Pope John Paul II within the Church and in favor of a particular so-called liberal vision of how the Church should function.

The latest author to exploit the Holocaust to present an internal Church agenda is James Carroll in his new book *Constantine's Sword*. Carroll's stated goal is to present a "history" of the Church and the Jews to show the linkage between Catholic belief and the Nazi Holocaust.

Carroll's thesis is that the anti-Semitism that resulted in the Holocaust is central to Catholic theology and derived from the earliest Christian expressions of belief, namely the Gospel accounts themselves. He concludes his book with a call for a third Vatican Council to make a series of changes in basic Catholic belief that he envisions purging the Church of this alleged fundamental anti-Semitism. As Carroll himself observes, "Human memory is inevitably imprecise, and it is not uncommon for the past to be retrieved in ways that serve present purposes." That neatly summarizes the whole point of this book. Which is bordering on a blasphemous use of the horror of the Holocaust for Church politicking.

Nazi anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and German acquiescence to it were not caused by religious differences between Catholics and Jews, or anti-Jewish outbursts during the First Crusade. Nazi hatred was of faith in anything but the Aryan race and the German nation-state. Hitler did not approach the world with a mode of thinking and belief rooted in the 1,900 years of Western civilization. Rather, he was rooted in the 150 years of elitist and racist thought that had abandoned the Judeo-Christian roots of Western civilization.

Carroll's book is described as a "history" of the Church and the Jews, but it is a great deal more personal rumination than serious historical, or theological, study. Half of the action seems to take place as Carroll ruminates at various sidewalk

cafes or churches.

Carroll's main sources from a Catholic perspective are disaffected theologians such as Hans Kung and Rosemary Radford Ruether, or Scriptural scholars like John Dominic Crossan from the Jesus Seminar. His knowledge – or at least his citation – of mainstream Catholic sources is limited to non-existent. He makes a single apparent reference to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* but calls it the "World Catechism."

Carroll centers his discussion of the roots of alleged Catholic anti-Semitism on the Gospel accounts of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. The theory goes that the "Jesus movement" of the first century, at war with the Pharisees for control of the "true Israel," enveloped the Passion narrative in anti-Pharisee myths, that would in turn establish an anti-Jewish contempt in Christianity.

As to the bodily resurrection of Jesus, Carroll writes: "Immediately after Jesus' death, the circle of his friends began to gather. Their love for him, instead of fading in his absence, quickened, opening into a potent love they felt for one another. Their gatherings were like those of a bereft circle, and they were built around lament, the reading of texts, silence, stories, food, drink, songs, more texts, poems – a changed sense of time and a repeated intuition that there was 'one more member' than could be counted. That intuition is what we call the Resurrection." This appears to be an understanding of the Resurrection for the brie and white wine set, rather than a Catholic and Christian understanding.

Constantine's Sword is a slogging journey through the history of the Church over the two millennia. He touches down here and there when it suits his purpose. For example, while the treatment of the 12th through the 16th centuries is endless, he barely touches on the nearly eight hundred years from Constantine to the calling for the First Crusade – which leaves a rather sizeable gap in the alleged causal linkage of

anti-Semitism in the Church from the Gospels to the Holocaust.

After meandering quickly through the age of the early Church fathers, Carroll arrives at what he sees as a decisive point: Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD. Before the battle, Constantine claimed to have seen a vision of the Cross, and the Christian symbol was placed on his standards on the day of battle. Carroll claims that this would lead to a central theological tenet of Catholicism that wrongly focused on the death of Jesus as atonement and reparation for sin. Thus the concept of salvation would come to dominate Christian thinking as the meaning of the life of Jesus, His death on the Cross an act of atonement for sin. This would lead to a "theology of contempt" that viewed the Jews as "Christ-killers."

At the same time, Constantine's exercise of authority in the Church, particularly in the name of Christian unity, brought a heretofore unheard of emphasis on defined doctrinal orthodoxy. Church authority (which would evolve into papal absolutism) now entered the Christian scene as well. Constantine, in Carroll's view, was a very busy man.

All this, of course, sounds a bit like a 16th Century anti-Catholic tract during the Reformation, or one of Jack Chick's contemporary pamphlets claiming Catholic descent from a Babylonian mystery religion. The over 275 years after Christ and preceding Constantine showed a steady development of an understanding of a distinct Christian faith as well as the development of a rich community, liturgical and theological life. Concerns over unity of belief are evident in the earliest years of the Church and a bewildering list of various heresies addressed by the Church long pre-date Constantine. The theological concept of Christ's atonement for sins was hardly a late-developing concept ingeniously inserted into Catholic life by a theologically illiterate Roman emperor, but is taught directly in the New Testament and in the writings of the early Church fathers.

Though Carroll's book can bend a coffee table at 756 pages, his litany of anti-Jewish incidents in Western history is spotty and lacking historical nuance. He touches on various events within Western history and concludes, actually quite briefly, with the Holocaust. Throughout these diverse and complicated historical trends and events, he sees a theology of the Cross and Church teaching on the atonement as being the dominant factor in generating anti-Jewish violence and anti-Semitic racism.

The Church and Nazism is confined in Carroll's book to less than 70 pages, about the same length that he gives to his suggestions for Church reform. He begins by restating his essential charge that "(h)owever modern Nazism was, it planted its roots in the soil of age-old Church attitudes and a nearly unbroken chain of Jew-hatred. However pagan it Nazism was, it drew its sustenance from groundwater poisoned by the Church's most solemnly held ideology – its *theology*."

This is, of course, a gross mis-reading of history. Hitler and Nazism were created by a rampant social Darwinism, an ubiquitous European belief that it was a virtual biological imperative that the lower classes be dominated by their racial superiors, the ideology of imperialism, the birth of scientism that would dispel the "myths" of religion, the campaign to radically excise the Church from public life, the denial of the sacredness of the individual for the good of the State or, as in communism, the good of the class, the creation of the myth of the Nietzsche-like Superman who could undertake any evil for the good of his race, and the replacement of Christianity with neo-paganism. The soil and poisoned groundwater for these Nazi aberrations were the views of 19th century liberalism that were the conventional wisdom of the times. The Catholic Church – its *theology* – was viewed as the enemy of this modern thought. The Church was not the progenitor of the beliefs that created Nazism. It was one of the last remaining bulwarks in Europe against it.

Carroll's book is not history at all, but an amateur's meditation on various historical events skewed to reflect the prejudices of his own thesis. This is not careful scholarship. This is simply a very long anti-Catholic essay.

The last section is Carroll's vision of an agenda for "Vatican III." The Church must abandon claims to universal and objective truth, realize the Gospels are anti-Semitic, abandon theology of the atonement by Christ for the sins of mankind, reject papal infallibility, ordain women, elect bishops, dismantle the "medieval clerical caste," forget the belief that Jesus is the only means of salvation, This will allow the Church "to embrace a pluralism of belief and worship, of religion and no religion, that honors God by defining God as beyond every human effort to express God." And while they are at it, forget nonsense like priestly celibacy and birth control.

Rather clearly, the objective solution Carroll has in mind already exists: Unitarianism.

No one can argue that members of the Church throughout the centuries, going to the highest leadership within the Church, engaged and endorsed at times anti-Jewish words, sentiments and actions. At the very same time, many within the Church officially condemned such actions and it was the very Church leadership that Carroll hopes to be abandoned that was most vociferous in that condemnation.

It was not the belief of the Church, the New Testament, the Church centered in Jesus, the understanding that Christ died for the sins of mankind, or the Church belief in an objective and universal truth that persists in Christ that created the horror of the Holocaust. It was the rejection of those, and the attempt to substitute for Judeo-Christian civilization a secularist pseudo-scientism of race, class and nationalism as the meaning of life.