

# The-Two-Thousand Year Road to the Holocaust

## Session Four

### Anti-Judaism Spawns Anti-Semitism (1789-1914)

By Anthony J. Sciolino

*“The teachings and actions of the Church, including those of the popes themselves, for the better part of a century and a half, from the fall of Napoleon to the rise of Hitler, not only failed to combat anti-Semitism, but actively and purposely contributed to it, lent it authority, and honored some of its most active purveyors, and thus shares responsibility for making the holocaust possible”* **David I. Kertzer**

*“The darkest and bleakest side of the Christian faith is revealed in the Christians’ treatment of the Jews throughout history. Anti-Semitism is a terrifying prejudice that is rooted so deeply in the church’s life that it has distorted our entire message.”* **John Shelby Spong**

*“God of our fathers, You chose Abraham and his descendants to bring your Name to the Nations: we are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant.”* **John Paul II**, (Prayer at the Western Wall, Jerusalem, 2000)

## I. Revolution and the Continuing Threat to Papal Power (1789-1850)

**Background:** The Roman Catholic Church (hereinafter “Church”) is the oldest continuously functioning *institution* in the world and, for most of its history, one of the world’s most powerful. The Church steered Western civilization through historical events such as the fall of the Roman Empire, the Dark Ages, the Reformation, and the Age of Enlightenment. It influenced the political ideas and actions of powerful leaders in a variety of European nations. It made deep contributions to Western philosophical tradition through the works of religious philosophers like St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. It influenced civil law, secular institutions, customs, literature, art and architecture.

For centuries **church and state** were twin pillars of “**divinely ordered**” society; both closely aligned, each promoting and reinforcing the other’s authority. This cooperative arrangement began in 321C.E, when **Emperor Constantine** converted to Christianity and granted it official status in the Roman

Empire. Constantine and his successors then used religion as a means of maintaining and expanding political control over the empire. The Church in turn used state authority to promote and enforce doctrinal orthodoxy. In Christian Western Europe during the **Middle Ages** (from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries) when **feudalism** was the form of political and social organization, this mutually cooperative arrangement worked particularly well. The Church was at its pinnacle of influence over the lives of the faithful.

Church influence, however, was seriously threatened by the **Protestant Reformation** (1517-1648) when breakaway *reformed* churches unaffiliated with Rome were established, shattering the unity of western Christendom. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, its influence was even more seriously threatened by the **Enlightenment (Age of Reason)** and the political revolutions it spawned. Enlightenment thinkers advocated *reason* as a means to establish an authoritative system of aesthetics, ethics, government, and even *religion* which would allow *individuals* to obtain “objective truth” unmediated by the Church. Scientists like **Copernicus** and **Newton** proposed theories that contradicted church *doctrine*. “Radical” ideas like “**liberty, equality, fraternity**” undermined church authority based on *Scripture* and *tradition*. The Church’s privileged position within society was called into question and even violently challenged. *Separation of church and state; freedom of religion, freedom of thought*, for example, became revolutionary goals. As one way to protect its *institutional* interests, popes continued to form treaties (**concordats**) with secular rulers designed to salvage the Church’s favored treatment within society. This practice continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century when concordats were negotiated with fascist regimes in **Franco’s** Spain, **Mussolini’s** Italy and **Hitler’s** Germany\*.

\*James Carroll termed the **Reich Concordat** of 1933 a “*foundation stone of the Shoah.*”

In the first millennium emperors convened early church councils to settle doctrinal disputes. In the first and second millennia emperors and kings influenced the selection of popes and bishops. Popes *excommunicated* kings (e.g. Henry IV and Henry VII of England) and even a Byzantine emperor (Leo III). King Otto I in 963 deposed Pope John XII. The Church taught the “**divine right of kings**” and from the faithful demanded *obedience* to secular rulers; secular rulers, in turn, demanded obedience from their subjects to church authority. Popes were **absolute monarchs** of the **Papal States** in central Italy from 781 to 1870. For centuries power struggles and political intrigue were commonplace. **Lord Acton**, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Catholic nobleman, charged that the Renaissance Papacy’s primary sin was “*power and politics.*”

Demanding strict obedience to its doctrines, bolstered by state power, the Church condemned religious diversity and sought to stamp out **heresy**. One of its instruments for preserving *orthodoxy* was the **Holy Inquisition**, which, among other things, burned tens of thousands of *heretics* at the stake. Historian James

Carroll has observed that more Christian martyrs died at the hands of Christian emperors than had been killed by pagan ones. At every important moment and turning point in the history of western civilization, popes were involved as “participants, promoters or critics.” By the 11th century, despite the **East-West Schism** (1054), papal power in spiritual and temporal matters had become *absolute*. The **Protestant Reformation**, however, began a downward spiral of the papacy’s power and caused a “siege mentality” to form within the Vatican. The Enlightenment only made matters worse. This siege mentality, as fully manifested during the pontificate of **Pius IX** (1846-78), particularly in his “War” against **Modernism**, continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the history of the Western world the bible has often been misused to justify *negative* behavior against certain groups. For example, Scripture has been used to justify violence against racial, ethnic or other minorities, including blacks, women, homosexuals and members of other faith traditions, *especially* Jews. The bible has been misused to bless wars, to torture dissidents and even to kill people deemed to be “God’s enemies.”

The words most often quoted to justify negative behavior against Jews are found in the **New Testament**. The favorite text of anti-Semites is in the Gospel of **Matthew**, written about 70 C.E. In this narrative, during the trial scene before Roman Governor Pontius Pilate prior to the crucifixion, the Jewish crowd is portrayed as responding to Pilate’s protestation of Jesus’ innocence by saying, “*His blood be on us and on our children.*” (Mt. 27:25) Christians have persecuted and murdered Jews throughout history based on the “*collective guilt*” of these words.

The **Gospel of John** (90-100 C.E.) quotes Jesus as saying that the Jews are “*from your father the devil and you choose to do your father’s desires.*” (8:44) Whenever the phrase “*the Jews*” is used in this gospel, it with a pejorative undertone. When the author of John describes the first post Easter appearance of the risen Christ, for example, he says that the disciples were in hiding behind locked doors, “*for fear of the Jews.*” (**20:19**) The not so subtle message of the four gospels and other New Testament books is that Jews are *outsiders, evil, and anti-Christ*. Most scholars contend that scriptural “misinterpretation” occurred because the gospels were read *without regard to their Jewish context*.

Since at least 167 C.E. when **Melito**, bishop of **Sardis**, made the first recorded charge of **deicide** (God killing) against them, Christians have badly mistreated the Jewish people. Animus against Jews based on misreading the New Testament was rife in the writings of the early Church Fathers. For example, **Eusebius** (263- 339) taught that Jews *forfeited* both the promises due them under biblical covenants and their special status as God’s “**chosen people.**” **St. Cyprian** wrote in 248 that the Jews have fallen under the heavy wrath of God, because they have departed from the Lord, and have followed idols. In 387, **St. John Chrysostom** of Antioch, who initiated and perfected the *Adversus Judaeos* (anti-

Judaic) sermon genre, wrote: “*The Synagogue is a brothel, a hiding place for unclean beasts...*” In 388, **St. Ambrose** defended the *righteousness* of synagogue burning.\* “*The blood of Jesus,*” **Origen** wrote, “*falls not only on the Jews of that time, but on all generations of Jews up to the end of the world.*” Accordingly, many Christians concluded that whatever misfortune the Jews suffered was **divine punishment**.

\***Kristallnacht**, (the “*Night of Broken Glass*”) in November 1938, which began the Holocaust, included the burning of hundreds of synagogues throughout Nazi Germany and Austria.

The teaching of **St. Augustine** (354-430), on the other hand, provided the theological basis for securing legal recognition for Jews within the Roman Empire. It was this recognition, in part, that enabled Jews to *survive* under the “rule of Christendom.” For Augustine, Jews witnessed to the truth of Christianity and, therefore, had to be sheltered from harm. Thus various popes like **Gregory I** and **Gregory X** attempted to protect Jews, for example, from forced conversion (Pope **Leo VII** in 937 encouraged his newly appointed archbishop of Mainz to expel all Jews who refused to be baptized.) and the ritual murder libel, see *infra*. Jews, however, according to Augustine, were possessors of the “*mark of Cain,*” whom God required to wander the earth in “*perpetual servitude*” until they voluntarily converted to Christianity. St. Augustine wrote: “*the Church admits and avows the Jewish people to be cursed, because after killing Christ they continue . . . in impiety and unbelief.*”

The **Synod of Toledo** in 687 ordered the burning of the Talmud and other Jewish books. In 1270 **St. Thomas Aquinas** wrote that Jews sin more in their unbelief than do pagans because they have abandoned the way of justice “*after knowing it in some way.*” In 1434 The **Council of Basel** decreed that Jews cannot obtain academic degrees.

It is important to note that anti-Jewish animus was not shared by all Christians. In 1247 Pope **Innocent IV**, for example, wrote in defense of Jews: “*They are wrongly accused of partaking of the heart of a murdered child at the Passover. . . Whenever a corpse is found somewhere, it is to the Jews that the murder is wickedly imputed. They are persecuted on the pretext of such fables. . . they are deprived of trial and of regular judgment; in mockery of all justice, they are stripped of their belongings, starved, imprisoned and tortured.*” Another notable exception was **St. Bernard** of Clairvaux (1090-1153).

History’s first organized assault on Jews and first instance of *mass murder* occurred in 414 when the people of newly Christianized Alexandria massacred the city’s Jewish community. Around the same time, history’s first recorded charge of **ritual murder** (blood libel) was brought in Antioch. During the **First Crusade** called by Pope **Urban II** in 1096, killing reached particular frenzy. **Crusaders**, on their way to the Holy Land, murdered over 10,000 Jews in France and Germany. Before execution, Jews were generally given the choice --

“*convert or die.*” Mass killing resumed during subsequent crusades and has occurred thereafter, for example, in Russia where violent **pogroms**\* took place between 1871 to 1906, particularly following the assassination of Czar Alexander II.

\**Kristallnacht* (“Night of Broken Glass was a state sponsored pogrom.

Jews were **expelled** *en mass* from various European countries, including **England** in 1290, **France** in 1306, **Hungary** in 1349, **Spain** in 1492 and **Portugal** in 1497. Baseless and vile **myths** about them circulated freely, often resulting in violence and persecution. Jews were crudely stereotyped, ostracized, vilified and demonized. They were compelled to live in **ghettos** (the first one built in Rome by decree of **Pope Paul IV** in 1555) and forced to wear distinctive clothing/ insignia. The **Fourth Lateran Council** in 1215 decreed they had to wear a yellow shawl or beret to be easily distinguishable from Christians.

Jews were mocked and **ritually degraded** during Lenten *carnival* celebrations and on other occasions. **Gregory XIII** in the 16<sup>th</sup> century instituted the practice of forced attendance at religious services to hear *conversionary* sermons. Anti-Jewish laws denied them civil rights, see *infra*. Though contrary to church law, Jews were **forcibly** converted to Christianity. During the **black plague/bubonic plague** in Europe (1348-1350), ethnic Germans slaughtered thousands of Jews, who throughout history have been **scapegoated** for natural and human catastrophes, see *infra*. Jews were among the tens of thousands burned at the stake by the Inquisition. In the **Chmielnicki massacres** of 1648-56, **Ukrainians** (Cossacks) slaughtered more than 100,000 of them in cities and towns across Poland. It is a *painful* truth that much of what occurred during the Holocaust has antecedents in Christian history.

Heads of state, acting with papal approval, barred Jews from owning real estate, holding public office, attending universities, hiring Christian servants, practicing certain professions. Mixed marriage with and proselytizing to Christians was punishable by death. Because church doctrine forbade Christians to practice usury, Jews became bankers and jewelers. This created an opportunity which allowed them to become the dominant financiers of Europe. Even kings and popes borrowed from Jewish bankers. Involvement in banking, however, linked to the biblical story of **Judas Iscariot** who betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, fed stereotypical prejudice that Jews were venal money-grubbers.

Sixteenth century Protestant reformer **Martin Luther** was virulently anti-Judaic in his later years. Angered by the Jews’ refusal to convert, he wrote a scathing tract ***On the Jews and Their Lies*** depicting them as Christ killers and criminals bent on ruling the world.\* Luther advocated burning synagogues, schools, and homes, and driving Jews “*like mad dogs out the land.*” The Nazis prominently displayed this tract at National Socialist Party rallies.

\*This *ruling the world* theme reappears in the 20<sup>th</sup> forgery and hoax, “**The Protocols of the Elders of Zion**,” which became a cornerstone of Nazi racist propaganda, see *infra*.

“**Anti-Judaism**,” what the Church termed its traditional hostility toward Jews based on *religion* (rooted in the New Testament and writings of the early Church Fathers), remained an integral part of its doctrine and practice into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Church taught that it *alone* had the “truth” and exclusive “means” to **salvation**. All other religions were false and, as “**error has no rights**,” subject to repression. Critics contend that church taught “anti-Judaism” down through the centuries has been a powerful motivator of anti-Jewish behavior.

Pursuant to the Church’s doctrine of “**supercessionism**,” Christianity was said to have fulfilled and *superseded* Judaism, thereby rendering it *insignificant* in **salvation** history\*. As a consequence, there was no legitimate reason for Judaism to exist. Because they rejected Jesus as **Messiah**, crucified him and stubbornly refused to convert to Christianity, Jews, according to this view, were condemned to suffer and to live as *outcasts* in society. Many Christians came to believe that Jesus’ **love commandment**, i.e. “*love one another as I have loved you*,” did not apply to Jews and whatever calamities befell them, they *deserved*. Most historians agree that this attitude in 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe stoked the fires of Nazi **anti-Semitism**\* and helped make the Holocaust possible.

\*“*Th(e) tendency to ignore the Jewish roots of Christianity, to reduce the Hebrew Bible to a collection of prophecies pointing to Christ, to see the New Testament rendering void the covenant with Israel, to imagine Judaism as a historical curiosity rather than a living religion -- these have shaped centuries of anti-Semitism.*” (**Hahnenberg**, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of Vatican II*, p.161)

**John Shelby Spong**, former Episcopal bishop of Newark, author of *The Sins of Scripture*, has written: “*Until we (Christians) embrace the depth of the problem and identify what it is in the Christian faith itself that not only gave anti-Semitism its birth but also regularly sustains it, we will continue to violate the very people who gave us the Jesus we claim to serve.* (p.186)

# I. Revolution and the Continuing Threat to Papal Power (1789-1850)

## A. Popes under Siege

### 1. The Church Defines Itself

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Church had established “absolute” authority over Western Christendom with the pope as *supreme* leader.” According to its worldview, Roman Catholicism was the **fulfillment** of Judaism, the *one true faith* and *only* means to salvation. Other religions were “false” and subject to repression. The Church viewed itself as a “**perfect society**,” sole repository of the “truth,” and embodiment of God’s kingdom on earth.

Leadership within the Church was *hierarchical* or *pyramidal* in nature with the pope at the top, then in descending order, came bishops, priests, religious and at the bottom-- the laity. In this model of church, those at the top “had” the truth; those below “received” the truth. The role of the laity was, derisively, said to be “*pray, pay and obey*.” Modern theologians characterize this model of church as *institutional*.\* It remained the prevailing model until changed by **Vatican Council II** in 1964. Here’s how that model is defined in one religious encyclopedia:

\**Institutional* model of church --- aspects of: 1. *clericalism* (views clergy, especially the higher clergy, as the source of all power and initiative) tends to reduce the laity to a condition of *passivity* (demanding docility and obedience), and to make the lay apostolate a mere appendage of the hierarchical apostolate (“*pay, pray, and obey*”); 2. *Juridicism* (views church authority in same way as state authority) tends to exaggerate the role of human authority and thus turn the gospel into a new law, characterized by excessive concern with legalistic formalities, to the neglect of the spirit and of service (e.g. **doctrine of infallibility**); 3. *Triumphalism* (dramatizes the Church as an army set in array against Satan and the powers of evil). This model of church seeks to save souls by *converting* them to Catholicism, sees Church as a “perfect society;” It tends to become rigid, doctrinaire and conformist, absolutist, authoritarian and supremacist. Fostered the “circle the wagons” mentality that developed after the **Council of Trent**, the **Enlightenment**, and **French Revolution** and formed its pathological fear of *modernism* and *communism*.

Popes were the successors of **St. Peter** the Apostle, the “rock” upon which the Church was built and to whom Jesus had given the “keys of the kingdom.” Accordingly, the Pope, *theoretically* in conjunction with church councils, had power to define Catholic dogma *in errantly*, i.e. without error. This power of “**papal infallibility**,” was declared dogma by **Vatican Council I**

(1869-70) during the pontificate of **Pius IX**. Papal “inerrancy” and other authoritarian doctrines have made it difficult for the Church to acknowledge and alter problematic practices such as those that precipitated the Protestant Reformation.

\*Certain conservative members of the Vatican curia, citing papal infallibility, argued that there was no need for Vatican Council II, no need for what Pope John XIII termed “*aggiornamento*.”

As God’s representative on earth, the Pope ruled over a “*divinely ordained*” kingdom. As “**Vicar of Christ**” on earth, he was *the* prophetic exemplar of *ethical* behavior. “**The Deputy**,” Rolf Hochhuth’s controversial play about **Pius XII** and the **Holocaust**, first performed on Broadway in 1963, takes its title from that designation. Hochhuth, a Protestant playwright, makes the provocative charge that by his “silence” and inaction during Hitler’s **Third Reich**, Pius XII failed in his role as “Vicar of Christ.”

## 2. Papal Authority

Popes exercised **absolute authority** in religious matters based on **faith** and **tradition**. Religious *diversity/nonconformity* were condemned and severely punished. A *fundamentalist/literalist* view of Scripture prevailed; faith *trumped* reason and science. The Church through the **Holy Inquisition** sought to preserve Christian **orthodoxy** by rooting out and suppressing **heresy**\*. Jews were among the tens thousands of victims burned at stake. As monarchs of the Papal States for eleven centuries, popes, like kings and emperors, exercised absolute authority (by **divine right**) in temporal matters as well. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, however, the Protestant Reformation ruptured the unity of Western Christendom and dealt a serious blow to papal authority. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century social, economic, religious and cultural forces unleashed by the **Enlightenment** continued the assault. With the outbreak of the **French Revolution** in 1789, the situation for the papacy reached crisis proportion.

\*On February 16, 1600, the Inquisition executed **Giordano Bruno**, Italian philosopher and scientist, for the crime of heresy. He was burned alive at the stake. Bruno, like **Galileo**, championed the **Copernican** system of astronomy which placed the sun, not the earth, at the center of the solar system. He refused to recant his belief throughout eight years of imprisonment by the Venetian and Roman Inquisitions. In 1992, after 12 years of deliberations, the Church finally admitted that **Galileo** had been right in supporting the theories of Copernicus. The Inquisition had forced an aged Galileo to recant his ideas under threat of torture in 1633. No such admission, however, has been made in the case of Bruno whose writings remain on the Vatican’s list of forbidden texts. (Cf. Creationism vs. Darwinism)

## B. Disaster Strikes the Papacy

### 1. The French Revolution (1789-1799)

The **French Revolution** was a period of political and social upheaval in Europe during which the government of France, previously an absolute monarchy with feudal privileges for aristocracy and clergy, changed into a radically new form based on principles of **equal rights** for all citizens, including, **freedom of religion**,\* and *separation* of church and state. The Church had been the biggest landowner in France. Its extensive real property holdings were confiscated and a state imposed church tax abolished. Jews were granted equal rights of citizenship.

\*The Church condemned religious liberty until the doctrine was finally officially reversed by **Vatican II** in 1965.

The French monarchy's close ties to the Church were severed in the wake of widespread **anticlericalism**. During the **Reign of Terror**, high clerics (many of whom were landowners) were among those who met their fate under the **Guillotine**'s blade. Priests and nuns were also guillotined. "Radical" ideas based on *reason*, reflected in the slogan "**liberty, fraternity, equality**," tore at the fabric of papal *authoritarianism* based on *faith and tradition*, twin pillars of church authority. Similar to Martin Luther's reaction to the **Peasant Revolt** of 1524 in Germany, church leaders were appalled at the social disorder and mob rule resulting from the French Revolution.

Granting equal citizenship rights to Jews violated church doctrine mandating their "marginalization" within society as punishment for **deicide** and continued refusal to convert to Christianity. Since Jews benefited from the revolutionary changes sweeping France and Europe, they were **blamed** for causing them. This continued a centuries long tradition of **scapegoating** them for catastrophic events in western and eastern Europe, events like the **black plague** of the 1340's and the assassination plots against Czar Alexander II of Russia in 1887.\*

\* Foreshadowing what would happen in Nazi Germany when Jews were scapegoated for **Bolshevism, Germany's loss in WWI, the Versailles Treaty** and for the social and economic problems of the **Weimar Republic**.

### 2. Napoleon Occupies Italy (1796-1814),

Napoleon's occupation of Italy (1796-1814) *temporarily* ended eleven centuries of temporal rule of the Papal States in central Italy. Two successive popes, **Pius VI** and **Pius VII**, were driven into exile. The Inquisition was abolished, certain religious orders were suppressed. The gates of Rome's **ghetto**, established by decree of Pope **Paul IV** in 1555, were torn down. As had happened

in France, Jews were emancipated and given full rights of citizenship. Napoleon's regime, however, collapsed in 1814 at the **Battle of Waterloo** and when French occupation of Rome ended, papal power was restored to the *status quo ante*.

## C. Pius VII (1800-1823)

### 1. Pius VII Abandons Napoleonic Reforms (1814)

Upon returning from exile to Rome in 1814, **Pius VII** abandoned Napoleon's reforms. *Against* the advice of his secretary of state and of **Prince Metternich**, prime minister of the Austrian Empire under the **Hapsburg** monarchy which had restored him to power pursuant to a *concordat*, Pius VII ordered Jews back into the ghetto. Jews were once again to be kept separate, so as not to *defile* Catholics. Anti-Jewish restrictions were reinstated.\* For example, they were barred from certain professions, their freedom of travel was restricted, they were required to wear distinctive clothing; they were forbidden to own real estate; they were forbidden to teach in or attend universities and forbidden to employ Christian servants. Efforts to convert Jews were reinstated. The Inquisition, which had been abolished during the French occupation, was revived.

\*These church imposed restrictions on Jews in the Papal States are precursors of Hitler's **Nuremberg Laws** of 1935 and Mussolini's **Manifesto of Italian Racism** of 1938.

### 2. Vilification of Jews Continues

In 1820 and again in 1831, popular revolts erupted within Italy against papal *temporal* authority. Its *reactionary* worldview once again challenged, the papacy's "siege mentality," which began with the **Protestant Reformation**, continued. Increasingly seen as *the* personification of what was wrong with *modern* times, Jews were targeted for vilification.

### 3. Forced Baptism/House of Catechumens.

According to church doctrine, Christ's **Second Coming** could not occur until *all* Jews converted to Christianity. A related doctrine required that a Jewish child who had been baptized – with or *without* parental knowledge and consent – could not be returned to non-converted parents. Jews entering the **House of the Catechumens**, a residence for converts in Rome and elsewhere, were required to have their children baptized. Between 1814 and 1818, police, under orders of Pius VII, entered Rome's ghetto on twenty-two different occasions, always at night, to seize Jews and take them to the House of the Catechumens. In that brief period, seventeen married women, three fiancées and twenty-seven children were removed by force. Mothers had a simple choice -- accept baptism and keep your children or leave without them. (Kertzer. The Pope Against the Jews, p.54-55)

## D. Leo XII (1823-1829)

### 1. Ravenna in Revolt

In 1825, confronting a growing rebellion aimed at ending papal rule in the papal state of Ravenna, **Leo XII** dispatched **Cardinal Agostino Rivarola** to root out subversives. Rivarola succeeded, overseeing trials in which 500 people were found guilty and several executed. Meanwhile, in Rome, Leo XII refused to commute the death sentences of two leaders of a local revolutionary cell who were beheaded.

### 2. Jewish Myths Perpetuated

In 1825, a booklet written by the procurator general of the Dominican order, **Father Ferdinand Jabalot**, was published and widely distributed. It restated traditional libels against Jews, i.e.: they were guilty of **deicide**, were crazed with the lust for lucre and desired to bring about the ruin of Christians. So intense was their hatred of Christianity, Fr. Jabalot claimed, that no evil was too great for them: *“They wash their hands in Christian blood, set fire to churches, trample the consecrated Host.....kidnap children and drain them of their blood, violate virgins.”* (Kertzer, *ibid*, p 64.) Jews are ever busy *“cheating, and hoodwinking Christians,”* which was no surprise, since the Talmud called on Jews to cheat Christians at every opportunity. Christians unfortunate enough to fall into their clutches, are likely to emerge *“not only without their shirt, but without their skin.”* (*Ibid.*, p 65.)

Pope Leo XII subsequently appointed Fr. Jabalot head of the **Dominican** order worldwide.

## E. Gregory XVI (1831-1846)

### 1. Ritual Degradation

Within days of Gregory XVI's election as pope in 1831, the people of Bologna – second largest of the Papal States – revolted. As Pius VII had done in 1814, Gregory XVI called on the Hapsburg monarchy of Austria to quell the revolt. Once his authority was restored, Gregory denounced those who espoused revolutionary ideas like *democracy*, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state. **Ritual degradation** of Jews during carnival time continued as did **forced attendance** at liturgies where homilies were preached aimed at converting them.

### 2. Papal Condemnation

Gregory XVI declared in 1832: *“that we must secure and guarantee to each one **liberty of conscience\***, this is one of the most contagious of errors...To*

*this is attached **liberty of the press**, the most dangerous liberty, an execrable liberty, which can never inspire sufficient horror.”* (James Carroll, Constantine's Sword, the Church and the Jews, p. 441)

*\*”Deep within our conscience we find a law which we have not laid upon ourselves, but which we must obey. Its voice, ever calling us to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in our heart at the right moment... For we have in our hearts a law inscribed by God... Our conscience is our most secret core and our sanctuary. There we are alone with God whose voice echoes in our depths.”* Vatican II’s “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” (“**Gaudium et Spes**”), 7 December 1965

*\*”It is through our conscience that we see and recognize the demands of the divine law. We are bound to follow our conscience faithfully in all our activity so that we may come to God, who is our last end.”* Vatican II’s “Declaration on Religious Liberty,” (“**Dignitatis Humanae**”), 7 December 1965

### 3. **Ritual Murder (Blood Libel)**

In April 1840, newspapers throughout Europe reported a story from Damascus, Syria about the disappearance of an elderly Italian Capuchin monk, **Fr. Tommaso**. Fellow monks spread a rumor that Fr. Tommaso had last been seen heading for the city’s Jewish quarter. Twelve Jewish leaders were arrested. Four died from mistreatment; most of the rest, all of whom were tortured, confessed involvement in the monk’s **ritual murder**. **Jasper Chasseaud**, an American diplomat in Beirut, wrote: *"A most barbarous secret for a long time suspected in the Jewish nation...at last came to light in the city of Damascus, that of serving themselves of Christian blood in their unleavened bread...a secret which these 1840 years must have made many unfortunate victims."*

### 4. **Prince Metternich Rebuffed Again**

In 1843, Prince **Metternich**, the papacy’s protector pursuant a **concordat** between the Vatican and the Austrian Empire, wrote Gregory XVI a letter urging him to show tolerance toward Jews. Gregory refused, replying; *“the prohibitions on the Jews “a Nation of deicides and blasphemers of Christ,” forbidding them from employing Christian servants or wet nurses, from owning real estate...from living outside the ghetto are prohibitions founded in the sacred Canons. These, in order to guarantee Christian religion and morality, command the separation of Christians and Jews.”* (Kertzer, *ibid.*, p. 82)

## II. Pius IX Declares War on “Modernism” (1846 -1878)

**Scope:** **Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti** became pontiff in 1846, taking the name **Pius IX**. His pontificate (1846-78) was filled with military, political, ideological and cultural turmoil, as Italian patriots under the leadership of **Giuseppe Garibaldi** and **Camillo Benso**, Count of Cavour, sought to unify Italy (**Risorgimento**). Rather than adapt to the revolutionary changes sweeping Italy and Europe, Pius IX, like his predecessors, influenced by the papacy’s *siege mentality*, chose to hunker down and resist them. He responded by *rejecting* “**modernism**,” a policy which continued to dominate the Church until **Vatican Council II** (1962-65). The Republic of Italy formed in 1870 ended eleven centuries of *theocratic* rule over much of Italian territory and ended what remained of “feudalism” in the *medieval* Church.

In an attempt to regain lost authority, Pius IX at **Vatican I** (1869-70) promulgated the Church’s most *triumphal* doctrine – **papal infallibility**. At a time of increasing *democratization* in many nations, under his leadership the Church became more *autocratic*. His 32 year pontificate, longest in papal history, marked the beginning of the modern papacy, intensified the Church’s *siege mentality* and continued policies demonizing Jews. One critic charges “*his was the most reactionary pontificate of modern time.*”

### A. “Siege Mentality” Intensifies

#### 1. Pius IX Condemns Democracy

Pius IX, (**Pio Nono**,) (1846-78) elected as the candidate of the liberal and moderate wings of the **College of Cardinals**, succeeded arch-conservative **Gregory XVI**. Initially sympathetic to democratic and modernizing reforms in Italy and the Church, he became increasingly reactionary after being deposed temporarily as ruler of the Papal States in 1848. Faced with a republican mob in Rome, Pius IX, “*hurled denunciations against the ‘outrageous treason of democracy’ and threatened prospective voters with excommunication.*” (. i.e. denial of sacraments)

#### 2. Jews Regain, Then Lose Freedom

In November, 1848, Pius IX’s prime minister was assassinated. Fearing chaos and popular revolt, he became the third pope in fifty years to flee Rome into exile. The following month **Giuseppe Garibaldi**’s army entered Rome. A unified **Italian Republic** was declared. As had happened when Napoleon’s army occupied Rome earlier in the 19th century, Jews were freed from the ghetto and granted **equal rights** under law. Jewish emancipation, however, once again proved to be short-lived because papal authority was restored in 1850, this time by *French* troops, pursuant to a concordat between the Vatican and the French Empire.

### 3. The Communist Manifesto (1848)

In 1848, the **Communist Manifesto** was published and became the papacy's worst nightmare\*. It advocated a classless and stateless society; abolition of private property; free love; and abolition of inheritance. Worst of all, it advocated the **abolition of religion**, terming it "*the illusory happiness of the people.*" It termed religion "*the opiate of the people,*" an obvious reference to church authority. That Karl Marx, one of its primary authors, was born a Jew, predictably, fueled animosity against Jews. (n.b. railing against **Judeo-Bolshevism** was one of Hitler's favorite propaganda ploys.) Ironically, Karl Marx was an anti-Semite.

\*The nightmare became reality some 70 years later with the **Russian Revolution** (1917-1918); involving first the overthrow of Czarist autocracy, then total elimination of the Church (Roman and Russian Orthodox) from Russian society. The Bolshevik aim was to replace religion with **materialistic atheism**. In October 1917, the Bolsheviks issued a decree abolishing private ownership of all landed estates and transferred all church property to the people. At the time, the Roman Catholic Church of Russia had on deposit with the Ecclesiastical College of the Czarist regime a total of 11 million rubles, which was seized by the Soviet government.

### 4. Jewish Restrictions Reinstated

When Pius IX returned to Rome from exile in 1850, he was a changed man. Whatever moderate views he held at the beginning of his pontificate were discarded. Convinced temporal control over the Papal States was essential to the Church's survival, he viewed forces of the "modern" world as arrayed against him. Jews, age old "*thorn in the side,*" many of whom had supported the Italian nationalists, therefore, had to be put back in their place. The Inquisition was re-established. The Italian Republic's proclamation of civil equality was revoked and Jews forced back into the ghetto. Jewish restrictions were reinstated, including, revoking their property rights, banning them from public hospitals, preventing them from giving evidence against Christians in papal courts and excluding them from all institutes of secondary and higher education. Moreover, Pius IX attempted to pressure rulers of European countries where Jews had already been given equal rights to revoke them. (e.g. Prussia granted citizenship to Jews in 1812, Denmark and Belgium in 1814)

### 5. Pope Denounces Civil Rights

Contending the Church was a "**perfect society,**"\* Pius IX repeatedly and publicly denounced separation of church and state, democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, religious pluralism and other *liberal* political ideas sweeping Europe in the mid-19th century. A united and *secular* Italy; the end of

papal temporal power, were, in his view, violations of God's *divinely ordained* plan and, therefore, "**blasphemy.**"

*\*"The Spanish State recognises in the Catholic Church the character of the **perfect society**..."* So begins Article 2 of fascist **Generalissimo Franco**'s concordat with the Vatican, echoing Pope Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* (Article 19) which claimed that the Church was a "perfect society." The concordat later asserts that civil law cannot prevail over church teaching.

*\*\*\*"The church....will receive its **perfection** only in the glory of heaven, when the time for the renewal of all things will have come (Acts 3:21.)"* Vatican II's "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," ("**Lumen Gentium**," 21 November, 1964

## **B. The Edgardo Mortara Kidnapping Case.**

1. **A forced baptism becomes a *cause celebre*.** In 1858, a sick five year old Jewish boy, **Edgardo Mortara**, who lived in the papal state of Bologna, was baptized *without* his parents' knowledge or consent by a Catholic servant girl who feared he would die and go to hell. As church law did not permit a baptized Christian to be raised by Jews, even his own parents, Pius IX ordered the Inquisition to forcibly removed the child from his parents. Claiming "**divine inspiration**," Pius steadfastly refused to return the boy to his parents, insisting that raising him as Christian was *God's will*. Pius *adopted* the child who later lived in a monastery, where he was eventually ordained as a priest.

Despite an international outcry and strong diplomatic pressure from **Emperor Napoleon III** of France (whose troops were defending Rome against Italian nationalists) and **Emperor Franz Joseph** of Austria, Pius IX refused to relent. No less than 20 editorials on the subject were published in the New York Times alone. His refusal to relent undermined public support for the continuation of the Papal States, one of the last vestiges of the *medieval* papacy.\*

\* In 1946 in France, the Church refused to return baptized Jewish children to surviving relatives. In a recently revealed letter from **Pius XII** dated November 20, 1946, he decrees that *only* those children be returned to their parents who had not been baptized.

2. *"The notion of **Jewish obstinacy** was a crucial element in the case of Edgardo Mortara. When the parents of the kidnapped Edgardo pleaded in person with the Pope for the return of their son, Pio Nono told them that they could have their son back at once if only they **converted** to Catholicism -- which, of course, they would do instantly if they opened their hearts to Christian revelation. But they would not, and did not. The Mortaras, in the view of Pio Nono, had brought all*

*their suffering upon their own heads as a result of their obduracy.*" (Cornwell, Hitler's Pope, p. 27)

3. In 1867, Pius IX spearheaded the effort to have **Peter Arbues**, a 15<sup>th</sup> century inquisitor famed for the **forcible conversion** of Jews, canonized to sainthood. In the canonization document, Pius IX stated: *"Divine wisdom has arranged that in these sad days, when Jews help the enemies of the Church with their books and money, this decree of sanctity has been brought to fulfillment."*

### C. The Syllabus of Errors (1864)

1. In 1864, Pius IX set the Church on a course firmly opposed to the modern world with his encyclical "**Syllabus of Errors**,"\* a list of 80 *errors* he condemned, including freedom of religion, separation of church and state, ending church control of public schools; bible societies, rationalism, socialism, **communism** and the notion that the papacy ought to reconcile itself with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization. The Church, he maintained, was besieged by demonic forces, a conspiracy of secret sects, i.e. Freemasons and Jews, concluding...*"it is from them that the synagogue of Satan, which gathers its troops against the Church of Christ, takes its strength."*

\* *"The public commotion that resulted from the Syllabus was without parallel in the history of the Church until our own day.... (as) it struck against the broad mainstream of public opinion. Even the average Catholic was shocked to hear the Pope condemning progress and modern civilization."* (Bokenkotter, A Concise History of the Catholic Church, p.282)

### D. Ritual Murder Myth Persists

1. In 1867, Pius IX gave the **ritual murder myth** new respectability by decreeing that the cult surrounding an allegedly martyred child, **Lorenzino of Marastica**, be accorded official church status. According to official accounts, on Good Friday 1485, when the child went out to play, Jews seized him, tore off his clothes, and crucified him on a nearby tree, draining his blood to make Passover matzos.

2. In 1869, Henri **Gougenot des Mousseaux** published a book, The Jew: Judaism and the Judaization of Christian Peoples, arguing that Jews required the blood of Christian children for their Passover bread. Pius IX praised the book and its author, awarding him the Cross of Commander of the Papal Order.

### E. Vatican Council I (1869-70)

1. The **Council of Trent** (1545-63) was the Church's response to the **Protestant Reformation**. It issued condemnations on what it defined as

Protestant heresies and defined various church teachings. The next council convened *three hundred years* later in 1869.

2. **Vatican Council I** opened on December 8, 1869. It affirmed the *Syllabus of Errors*; declared the dogma of **papal infallibility**; reinforcing long standing church doctrines of **supercessionism**, **triumphalism** and **ultramontanism**, all attempts to shore up and centralize papal authority.

a. “**papal infallibility**” is the dogma that, by action of the Holy Spirit, the pope is preserved from error when he solemnly promulgates dogmatic teachings on faith or *morals*. By 1869 most Catholics already believed that a Pope could, alone, define the word of God through church dogma. But no Pontiff had ever said so *explicitly*, and some bishops, including **Bernard McQuaid**, bishop of Rochester, New York, thought that making “papal infallibility” a dogma would be a calamity for the Church. When the **Archbishop of Bologna** complained that church **tradition** in Europe argued against infallibility, Pius roared, “Tradizione!"La Tradizione son' Io! “*Tradition! I am tradition!*” and reassigned the Archbishop to a monastery.

Throughout Europe, emperors, kings and prime ministers voiced anger at the infallibility doctrine becoming dogma. They feared that if the pope were *infallible*, his authority would conflict with state authority, undermining the allegiance of Catholics to civil authority. Bismarck, for example, responded with *Kulturkampf*, see *infra*.

**Lord Acton** (1834-1902), English nobleman, Catholic liberal and critic of papal infallibility, in a letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton in 1887 wrote his famous “*Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.*” According to historian Thomas Bokenkotter, the increase of spiritual authority that accrued to the papacy from the dogma of papal infallibility more than compensated for its loss of temporal power over the Papal States.

b. “**triumphalism**” is the claim that a particular doctrine, culture, or social system is superior to and should *triumph* over all others. The term is related to the doctrine of **supercessionism**.

c. “**ultramontanism**,” (“beyond the mountains” i.e. looking to the Vatican for guidance), a movement which sought to marginalize *liberal* tendencies within the Church and *centralize* authority within the Vatican,” and, ... as historian **Jacques Kornberg** charges, “*mobilized antisemitism for its campaign against liberalism.*” (Carroll, *ibid.*, p. 445)

3. In August 1870, while **Vatican Council I** was still in session, French troops occupying Rome withdrew to fight in the **Franco-Prussian** war. The next

month, Italian troops under Garibaldi recaptured Rome and once again declared it to be the capital of unified Italy, finally bringing down the curtain on the papacy's 1000 year reign of temporal rule over central Italy.\* Vatican Council I was suspended, without completing its agenda, *sine die*.

\*One historian contends that in September, 1870, the *Middle Ages* finally came to an end for the Church. "...*Europe's last theocratic government was ended and with it a model of government based on a mixture of church law and civil law, of discrimination against those practicing minority religions, of church monopoly over education and social services, and the use of police powers to enforce religious observance.*"

## F. Collapse of the Papal States (1870)

1. With the **collapse** of the Papal States in 1870, the papacy's long standing siege mentality intensified. **Judaism** became *the* primary threat to Christianity, second only to atheistic **communism** (n.b. Hitler railed against "*Judeo-Bolshevism*"). That Jews were among the wealthiest and most influential backers of the revolutionary changes rocking the Church made them especially dangerous. This attitude stoked the fires of nascent modern **anti-Semitism**.

2. Addressing members of a Catholic women's group in August, 1870 Pius IX said: before the time of Jesus, the Jews "*had been children in the House of God.*" But, all this had changed, for "*owing to their obstinacy and their failure to believe, they became dogs.*" Speaking just months after Italian forces freed the Jews of Rome's ghetto, he bemoaned the result: "*We have today in Rome unfortunately too many of these dogs, and we hear them barking in all the streets, and going around molesting people everywhere.*" (Kertzer, *ibid.*, p.130)

3. When Rome fell to the Nationalists, Pius IX, declaring himself a "**prisoner of the Vatican,**" refused to recognize the new Italian state and forbade Catholics, upon penalty of **excommunication**, to vote or otherwise participate in Italian civic life. Charging that "*the ideals of Italian patriots were the work of the devil,*" he *excommunicated* King **Victor Emmanuel II, Garibaldi, Cavour,**\* and anyone else who supported the Italian nationalist movement.

\*No Catholic Nazi, including Hitler himself, was ever excommunicated.

4. Not until *after* World War I, in 1919, some 50 years later, did Pope **Benedict XV** lift Pius IX's ban against Catholics voting in national elections or serving in Italy's parliament. The animosity between the papacy and the Italian government continued until 1929, when **Benito Mussolini** and the Vatican signed a concordat, the **Lateran Treaty,**\* in which the Vatican recognized the legitimacy of Italy's fascist state. In return popes were granted rights of sovereignty over the territory of Vatican City and Roman Catholicism became Italy's *sole* and *official* religion.

\*The Lateran Treaty with Mussolini in 1929 became the model for the **Reich Concordat** with Hitler in 1933, which, as noted previously, one historian has termed “*a foundation stone of the Shoah.*”

## G. Kulturkampf (1871-78)

1. **Kulturkampf** ("culture struggle") refers to anti-Catholic legislation enacted under the leadership of Otto von **Bismarck**, chancellor of Germany, unified in 1871, one year after Italy. Despite losing temporal power over the Papal States, popes still retained considerable influence in the secular affairs of European countries. Catholics made up approximately one third of Germany's population, residing, for the part, in Bavaria, in the south. After Vatican I's declaration of *papal infallibility* as dogma, Bismarck and others began to view Catholics in Germany as the “enemy within,” a potential “divisive” force in the newly formed **Second Reich**. Allegiance to the pope called into question their allegiance to the state. By imposing controls over church activities, Bismarck sought to neutralize church influence and bolster state power. In particular, Bismarck feared the influence the **Catholic Center Party**, formed in 1870, which 63 later would be disbanded after Vatican Secretary of State **Eugenio Pacelli**, the future **Pius XII**, negotiated and signed the **Reich Concordat** with Nazi Germany. In the Reich Concordat, the Church agreed not to interfere in state affairs and Hitler agreed not to interfere in church affairs.\*

\*Historians view the Church's agreement not to interfere in German state affairs as a *constraint* against Catholic opposition to Nazi racist policies against Jews.

2. Kulturkampf started with a series of laws that sought to curb “abuse” of the pulpit for political ends. Subsequent measures included control of religious education; power to dismiss pastors; confiscation of church property, and withdrawal of state subsidies from priests who refused to cooperate with the regime. In 1872, priests and nuns were banned from teaching posts and all Jesuit priests were ordered out of Germany.

3. In May of 1873 the German legislature passed two laws, one conferring authority on the state to oversee the training and assignments of priests, and, the other, placing bishops under state control. When most of the clergy *resisted*, hundreds of clerics, including bishops, were either jailed or exiled. Lay Catholics supported their clergy and in many towns spontaneous rallies erupted when angry demonstrators gathered as police arrested priests.

4. In 1875, Pius IX issued an encyclical declaring the May 1873 laws null and void, stating “...and since they are completely contrary to the God-given institution of the Church,” he urged, German Catholics to “**passively resist**” them. He decreed that priests who cooperated with state implementation of anti-church

policies were **excommunicated**. As Pius IX ratcheted up his response, becoming more and more of a political headache, Bismarck moderated his anti-church policies. After Pius IX 's death on February 7, 1878, Bismarck reconciled with Pius' successor, **Leo XIII**, lifting most of the onerous sanctions\*.

\* James Carroll contends that “*Pius IX was able to get Bismarck to back down in his attempt to limit church authority in Germany, demonstrating the kind of resistance the Roman Catholic Church could mount, both locally and from the Vatican, when confronted with a ruthless, calculated and systematic attempt to destroy it. The Church response to Bismarck, in that sense, sets a standard against which its later behavior, in response to Hitler, must be measured.*”(Ibid., p.487)

## H. Beatification of Pius IX (2000)

1. In September, 2000, **Pope John Paul II**, despite considerable opposition,\* **beatified** Pius IX, the last step before canonization for sainthood. The announcement shocked many admirers of Pope John Paul's historic fence-mending with Jews, including his prayer at the Western Wall in Jerusalem (see *supra*). “*It hit like a thunderbolt from heaven,*” said **Elena Mortara**, professor of American literature at the University of Rome and great-great-granddaughter of **Edgardo Mortara's** sister. *Pius IX's repression of Jews' civil rights*, she added, “*is in itself serious enough to stop this beatification.*”

\*see online: [ww.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,53415,00.html](http://ww.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,53415,00.html).

## Unit III: Birth of Modern Anti-Semitism (1870-1914)

“*For centuries the Catholic Church...harbored anti-Semitism at its core, as an integral part of its doctrine, its theology, and its liturgy. It did so with the divine justification of the Christian Bible that Jews were Christ-killers, minions of the devil.*” **Daniel Jonah Goldhagen**

Scope: Historians trace the beginning of modern anti-Semitism from the collapse of the Papal States in 1870. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, traditional *blood* accusations leveled against Jews merged with new pseudo-scientific theories of **Charles Darwin** (Darwinism); **Herbert Spencer** (Social Darwinism) and **Frederic Nietzsche** (“will to power”) and resulted in **anti-Judaism** based on *religion*, the Church's traditional hostility toward Jews, spawning **anti-Semitism\*** based on *race*. Up to that time, Christians viewed Jews as *religious* inferiors, stricken with an infirmity that *conversion* to the true faith could remedy. With the rise of **Nazism** in the 1930's and its “*eliminationalist*” racial policy, however, Jews, even those who converted to Christianity, were viewed as **subhuman** (*Untermenschen*), condemned to annihilation by their DNA.

\*The word “anti-Semitism” was first penned in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr, himself an *anti-Semite*.

## A. Fanning the Flames of Anti-Semitism.

### 1. The Catholic Press

a. The Edgardo Mortara forced baptism case in 1858 demonstrated the power of the **popular press** to shape public opinion *against* the Church. To counter this trend, Pius IX encouraged the Catholic press to redouble efforts to *promote* church positions. One influential Catholic periodical, founded in 1850, was the biweekly, “**La Civiltà Cattolica**,” regarded as the papacy’s unofficial voice. Every article was cleared before publication by the papal secretary of state. In December 1880, it kicked off a long **anti-Jewish** campaign with a series of 36 articles.

b. The articles, which perpetuated **medieval myths**, sought to explain reasons behind outbreaks of anti-Jewish violence in Germany. In one, the author wrote that because Jews were obligated by their religion to hate non-Jews, Christians despised them. Societies, therefore, had to protect themselves, and so, he concluded, “*governments would be well advised to introduce “exceptional laws for a **race** that is so exceptionally and profoundly perverse.”* These special laws, the articles argued, would benefit Jews as well, for it was only by restoring such restrictions that popular violence against them could be prevented.

c. Another article attempted to prove that **ritual murder** was an integral element of Judaic ritual which occurred at Purim rather than Passover. “*It is in vain that Jews seek to slough off the weight of argument against them: the mystery has become known to all.*”

d. All 36 articles were written by a Jesuit priest, **Giuseppe di Santo Stefano**, one of the journal’s founders. Certain themes were repeated continuously. Jews had always benefited from the *kindness* of the Church, especially the popes. They had lived happily in the ghettos and Christians had also been able to live in peace protected from them. That Jews were prevented from owning property or practicing any but the most menial occupations in the Papal States, these restrictions were beneficial because they not only prevented Jews from becoming wealthy, but “*also prevented them from being too despised.*” ....As history had shown...”*if this foreign Jewish **race** is left too free, it immediately becomes the persecutor, oppressor, tyrant, thief, and devastator of the countries where it lives.*” **Special laws\*** must be introduced to keep the Jews in their place and to protect Christian society from the hostility that the Jews harbored “*against all human society not belonging to their **race**.*”

*Far from persecuting the Jews, such legislation served to prevent the Jews from persecuting the Christians. (Kertzer, ibid., p.136)*

\*c.f. Hitler's **Nuremberg Laws** of 1935 and Mussolini's **Manifesto of Italian Racism** of 1938)

e. Another founding editor, **Fr. Giuseppe Oreglia S.J.** wrote in an article: ....*"The Jews – eternal insolent children, obstinate, dirty, thieves, liars, ignoramuses, pests and the scourge of those near and far...managed to lay their hands on...all public wealth...and virtually alone they took control not only of all the money...but of the law itself in those countries where they have been allowed to hold public offices...(yet they complain) at the first shout by anyone who dares raise his voice against this barbarian invasion by an enemy race, hostile to Christianity and to society in general"*

f. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were approximately 500 Catholic periodicals in Italy, including 30 daily newspapers. What marked the most important and influential of these periodicals was their fierce loyalty to the pope and their pioneering role in developing a new more strident form of anti-Semitism. (Kertzer, ibid., p.134).

g. "**L'Osservatore Romano**," the Vatican daily newspaper, was even closer to the pope than "La Civiltà Cattolica." In 1892, with anti-Semitic movements gaining force in Europe, "L'Osservatore" devoted a series of articles to the Jewish question. One article argued that the reason recent pogroms in Russia (as depicted in the Broadway play "**Fiddler on the Roof**") had stirred up so much sympathy showed that they could only have been **engineered by the Jews themselves\***. *"We would not stray far from the truth if we said that the rather heavy-handed blow that the Muscovite Empire has aimed at the children of Judah has played into the hands of Judaism, for it has engendered compassion for the Jews, against whom the Christian and civil world has, for good reason, begun to rebel."* The article went on to argue, on similar grounds, that much of the French, Russian, and Austrian anti-Semitic movements were the work of *"cosmopolitan Judaism."*

\* **Blaming the victim** continues to the present day. (E.g. the **Arun Gandhi** controversy in 2007 at the University of Rochester's M.K.Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence.)

h. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some Catholic reporters were using the term "anti-Semitism" with approbation. *"In its original form, anti-Semitism is nothing but the absolutely necessary and natural reaction to the Jews' arrogance,"* the Vienna correspondent for "La Civiltà Cattolica," wrote in 1922, adding, *"Catholic anti-Semitism -- while never going beyond the*

*limits of moral law -- adopts all necessary means to emancipate the Christian people from the abuse they suffer from their sworn enemy."*

## 2. Pulpit and Liturgy

a. Anti-Jewish animus expressed in the Catholic press was also routinely sounded in Catholic **homilies**, particularly during the Easter season.

b. Passion plays, like the famous **Oberammergau** passion play in Germany often vilified Jews in their portrayal. (cf. Mel Gibson's movie – **"The Passion of the Christ."**)

c. Until **Vatican II** ended the practice in 1965, the Good Friday gospel reading from **Matthew 27:25**, in which the congregation participated with responses spoken aloud, included language put in the mouths of the Jewish crowd at Jesus' trial before Pontius Pilate, saying: *His blood be upon us and upon our children.*"\*

\*It was not uncommon for riots against Jews to break out following the Good Friday liturgy in various Christian countries.

### d. Prayer for Conversion of the Jews.

What follows is a prayer that was recited in Catholic liturgies until 1955:

*Let us pray also for the **perfidious\* Jews**: that Almighty God may remove the veil from their hearts (2 Corinthians 3:13-16) so that they too may acknowledge Jesus Christ our Lord. Almighty and eternal God, who dost not exclude from thy mercy even **Jewish perfidiousness**: hear our prayers, which we offer for the **blindness** of that people; that acknowledging the light of thy Truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their **darkness**. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

\*the Greek word in the original biblical text is more properly translated "*faithless*."

## B. Theoretical Underpinnings of Anti-Semitism

### 1. Jews Defined by Race

During the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a **racist** perception of Jews emerged, resulting, in part, from technological progress and scientific

advancements in the fields of biology, psychology, anthropology, genetics, and evolution. This perception developed within a broader racist view of the world, based on notions of *inequality* of races and the alleged *superiority* of the *white race* over other races.

## 2. The German Voelkisch (Volk) Movement

In Germany, The 19th century xenophobic **voelkisch** movement (“people’s movement”), an expression of romantic German *nationalism*, made up of philosophers, scholars, and artists (e.g. **Richard Wagner**) viewed Jews as *non-German*, an obstacle to the fulfillment of the nation’s destiny.

## 3. Social Darwinism

“**Social Darwinism**,” Herbert **Spencer**’s adaptation of Charles **Darwin**’s theory of evolution, postulated that human beings were not one species, but several different *races* biologically driven to struggle against one another for living space to ensure survival of the fittest. Only those races with superior qualities could win this eternal struggle which was carried out by force and warfare. In this worldview, Jews were a lower and *racially* defective form of life, albeit immensely powerful and dangerous.

## 4. Nietzscheism.

A great influence on Hitler’s worldview was German philosopher Frederic **Nietzsche** whose ideas included: death of God; master-slave mentality; herd instinct; and the future ascendancy of a **master race**, a **superman** (*Uebermensch*), and the existence of **subhuman** life forms (*Untermenschen*).

## 5. “Mein Kampf” (1925) Sets Forth Hitler’s Virulent Racist Views

Hitler’s **Mein Kampf** (“My Struggle”) first published in 1925, called for *elimination* of Jews from Germany to prevent defilement of Aryan blood and corruption of European culture. Referring to Jews as *vermin, parasites, maggots, polluters and destroyers of Aryan humanity*, his virulent anti-Semitism was apparent for all to see.

The form of anti-Semitism Hitler embraced\* denied the humanity of Jews, not just to the point of viewing them as inhuman or subhuman, but “*anti-human*”. To the anti-Semitic mind, Jews were the root cause of all that was evil in the world. They killed Christ in “Satan’s service.” Every Jew, therefore, was innately a criminal. **Joseph Goebbels**’

Propaganda Ministry gave the official Nazi position in 1944 by saying, “*The annihilation of Jewry is no loss to humanity, but just as useful as capital punishment or protective custody against other criminals.*”

\* Swedish writer **Sven Lindqvist** has written, “*We want genocide to have begun and ended with Nazism. But it didn't. Hitler was less the beneficiary than the product of religious and racial assumptions that had their origins, perhaps, in the Jew-hating sermons of (Church Fathers) St. John Chrysostom or St. Ambrose, and certainly in the blood purity obsession of (Grand Inquisitor) Torquemada.*”

## 6. Anti-Judaism Cultivates the Soil of Anti-Semitism

Many scholars and historians contend that two thousand years of Christian *anti-Judaism* based on religion, which dehumanized and demonized Jews, pre-conditioned the receptivity of 20<sup>th</sup> century Europeans to Nazi *anti-Semitism*.\*

\*”**Auschwitz**, when seen in the links of causality, reveals that the hatred of Jews has been...a central action of Christian history, reaching to the core of Christian character...Because the hatred of Jews had been made holy, it became lethal...However modern Nazism was, it planted its roots in the soil of age-old Church attitudes and a nearly unbroken chain of Church-sponsored acts of Jew-hatred. However pagan Nazism was, it drew its sustenance from groundwater poisoned by the Church's most solemnly held ideology—its theology.” Carroll, *ibid.* p.22

\*”The Nazis found the teachings of the Church to be such **fertile soil** that they naturally and routinely drew on Christian anti-Semitic motifs to facilitate, politically and culturally, the spreading and reinforcing of their own anti-Semitism. **Julius Streicher** (founder and publisher of Der Stürmer newspaper) in a 1936 Christmas address to two thousand children in Nuremberg effortlessly mobilized the Christian knowledge that the children already possessed: ‘Do you know who the Devil is? he asked...’The Jew, the Jew,’ resounded from a thousand children’s voices.” Goldhagen, A Moral Awakening, p. 139

## 7. An Italian Fascist’s View

In 1939, **Roberto Farinacci**, a member of Mussolini’s Fascist Grand Council, while speaking on “The Church and the Jews” said: “*We fascist Catholics consider the Jewish problem from a strictly political point of view...But it comforts our souls to know that if, as Catholics, we*

*became anti-Semites, we owe it to the teachings that the Church has promulgated over the past twenty centuries.”*

### C. Ritual Murder /Blood Libel in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

1. Although the first known instance of **blood libel** is found in the writings of **Apion**, an early 1<sup>st</sup> century Greco-Egyptian who claimed that Jews sacrificed Greek victims in the Temple, no further incidents are recorded until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when blood libel accusations began to proliferate in Christian Europe.\*

\*Anti-Semitism has been termed the “*world’s longest hatred.*”

2. Blood libel accusations, as noted previously, were based on assertions that the blood of Christian children is especially coveted for use in Jewish religious rituals, and historically blood libel claims have been made to account for otherwise *unexplained* deaths of children.

3. In some cases, the alleged victim of human sacrifice has become venerated, i.e. a martyr cult has arisen, e.g. **Lorenzino of Marastica** who died in 1485 (see *supra*). A few have been even canonized as saints. Many Jews have been killed as a result of false blood libels, which continued into the 20th century, as reflected in the Menachem Mendel **Beilis Trial** in Russia (see **Bernard Malamud**’s book *The Fixer*). Although discredited, these libels persist today, particularly in Muslim countries.

4. In 1928 when a four year old girl went missing during Yom Kippur in the upstate New York community of **Messina**, a town resident suggested it could be a blood libel kidnapping. Even though the little girl turned up unharmed after wandering into the woods, there was speculation that she was only released because the plot was discovered. Accordingly the mayor organized a boycott of Massena’s Jewish owned businesses.

### D. Conspiracy Theory

1. The **Protocols of the Elders of Zion**, first published in 1903 in Russia, alleged a Jewish conspiracy to achieve world domination and/or destroy civilization. Best known example of a literary *forgery* and *hoax*,\* it was re-published in 1905 by a Russian Orthodox priest, **Sergius Nilus**, in a book about the coming of the **Antichrist**. It was promoted as the record of “**secret rabbinical conferences**” whose aim was to subjugate and exterminate Christians. *Protocols* takes the form of a speech outlining how to accomplish world domination, including taking control of media and finance.

\* The Protocols are still being circulated. They appear from time to time in **Muslim** media.

2. The text was popularized by opponents of the **Russian revolutionary movement**, gaining worldwide circulation after the October 1917 Revolution. The rise of Nazism was fueled by the *Protocols* as Nazi propaganda *characterized* the turbulent post **World War I** period in Europe as a “*war between the Jews and humanity*,” with Aryan Germany the only nation willing and able to stand up against them.

## E. The Dreyfus Affair

1. The anti-Semitic campaign against **Alfred Dreyfus**, the French military officer convicted of treason in 1894 on forged documents, was largely driven by Catholics denouncing Dreyfus for his “*perfidious Jewishness*.” The Order of **Assumptionist Fathers** made this a special mission of its daily newspaper, “**La Croix**.” **Owen Chadwick**, author of *History of the Popes: 1830-1914* says of this campaign that it “*was the most powerful and extreme journalism ever conducted by an otherworldly religious order during the history of Christendom*.”

2. **L’Osservatore Romano**, the Vatican daily newspaper, defended anti-Semitic mobs resisting a reversal of Dreyfus’ rigged conviction by saying: “*The Jewish race, the deicide people, wanderer throughout the world, brings with it everywhere the pestiferous breath of treason*.”

## F. Pius X (1903-1914)

### 1. Pius X Continues “War” on Modernism

**Pius X** (1903-14) vigorously prosecuted the papacy’s campaign against “Modernism,” declaring that “*modernism constituted not a heresy, but the compendium and poison of all the heresies*.” He condemned “rebels” who rejected Catholic theology and urged the Church to adapt to modern times. Like his predecessors, he refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Italian republic.

In April, 1907, Pius X issued “**Pascendi**,” his encyclical opposing **Modernism**. Building on the work of his predecessors, it reinforced much of the dogmatic and authoritarian tone of church teaching. It reiterated the supreme authority of the papacy, demanded obedience of the faithful\*, and made clear that intellectual questions within the Catholic were not matters for scholarly peer-group discussion but *moral* matters to be resolved by papal authority. This continued church policy discouraging “independent” thinking by lay Catholics.

\*The laity's role, as noted previously, was said, derisively, to be: **“pay, pray, and obey.”**

## 2. The Anti-Modernist Oath (1910)

In 1910, Pius X issued a directive obliging priests to swear an oath denouncing Modernism. Known as the **Anti-Modernist Oath**, it required unequivocal acceptance of all papal teachings and acquiescence, at all times, to the meaning and sense of such teachings as decreed by the Pope, which author John Cornwell termed *“a form of thought control unrivalled even under fascist and communist regimes.”* Priests were required to take the Anti-Modernist Oath until it was abolished by Vatican Council II in 1967.

## 3. Catholic Scholarship Discouraged

Pius X's aggressive stance against modernism adversely affected the Church. Although only about forty priests refused to take the oath, Catholic scholarship with *modernistic* or *liberal* tendencies was discouraged. Theologians who sought to pursue lines of inquiry *“tainted”* with secularism, modernism, or relativism had to stop or face possible excommunication. Some of these theologians who were viewed with *suspicion* by the Vatican became the *periti*, i.e. theological experts, of Vatican II. A fundamentalist/literalist view of Scripture continued prevailed. “Modern” biblical scholarship; *new* approaches to biblical interpretation were discouraged.

## 4. Pius X Supports Jewish Conspiracy Theory

Pius X favored a high official in his secretariat of state, **Monsignor Umberto Benigni**, who became one of the two principal distributors of the **Protocols of the Elders of Zion** in Italy. In 1913, Pius refused to intervene in the Beilis trial, see *supra*, the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most famous trial of a Jew accused of ritual murder.. After a Catholic priest testified that such murders were an established fact of history, Jews in Great Britain asked the Duke of Norfolk, a Catholic, to request from the pope a denial of the libel. Pius X's secretary of state, on the former's behalf, refused to deny the myth, nor send information to the presiding judge about its false use. David Kertzer writes: *“by not taking this step, the pope allowed the Catholic press, including that part of it viewed inside and outside the church as communicating the pope's true sentiment, to continue to tar the Jews with the ritual murder charge.”*

## 5. Reform of Canon Law (1917)

Prior to 1917, the Church's Code of Canon Law varied from region to region, lacking overall uniformity. On March 19, 1904, **Pius X** named a commission to draft a universal set of laws for the twentieth century. Two of his successors worked in the commission, G. **della Chiesa** who became **Pope Benedict XV** and **Eugenio Pacelli**, who became **Pope Pius XII**. The new Code of Canon Law was decreed after **Pius X's** death by Benedict XV in 1917.\*

\* Canon 218 of the new Code defined the pope's authority as "*the supreme and most complete jurisdiction throughout the Church, both in matters of faith and morals and in those that affect discipline and Church government throughout the world.*"

## 6. Pius X Canonized a Saint

Pius X was **canonized** a saint by **Pius XII** in 1954. He is the only pope elevated to sainthood by the Church in modern history

## G. Two Conclusions on the Shoah

1. "*The Shoah was the work of a thoroughly modern neo-pagan regime. Its anti-Semitism had its roots outside of Christianity...*"

Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with Jews, "**We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah**" (1998)

2. "*Christian anti-Judaism did lay the ground work for racial, genocidal anti-Semitism by stigmatizing not only Judaism but Jews themselves for opprobrium and contempt. So the Nazi theories tragically found fertile soil in which to plant the horror of an unprecedented attempt at genocide.*"

U.S. Catholic Conference, "**Catholic Teaching on the Shoah: Implementing the Holy See's 'We Remember.'**" (2001)

February 1, 2010

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