

Gestures

NEWSLETTER OF THE



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Our Gesture – Uncovering the Truth about Pope Pius XII

By Gary L. Krupp, KC*SG OStJ, PTWF Founder

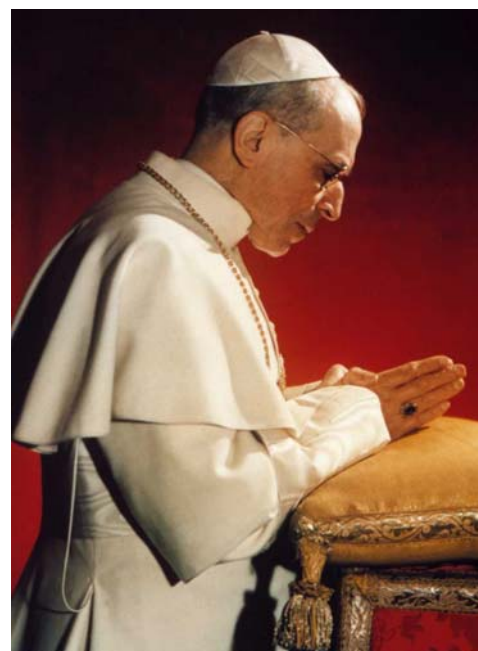
Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII, is one of the most controversial figures in history. Did he support and protect Jews as well as he could, or was he “Hitler’s Pope”, failing to act while lives were lost? Decades of scholarly research has resulted in what can only be described as a “log jam”.

Pave the Way Foundation initiated a project to thoroughly research this subject and break the academic “log jam” in 2007. Why did we take on this controversial and difficult task?

Prior to 2006, Pave the Way Foundation had no plans to look into issue of Pope Pius XII. Through an unexpected series of events, it became obvious that this was a very serious issue affecting the relationship of Catholics and Jews worldwide, that something had to be done about it, and that it had to be done quickly. We decided to confront this controversial subject.

My wife Meredith and I were having lunch with the Apostolic Nuncio to Israel, Archbishop Antonio Franco in 2006. The Nuncio asked if we could intercede to address a very disturbing problem. He told us that the Holocaust Memorial of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem had placed a very hurtful and historically incorrect placard under the portrait of Pope Pius XII in the “room of shame”. He also told us that Archbishop Sambì, the former Nuncio to Israel and current Nuncio to the United States, had sent a strong letter of protest to the Foreign Ministry of Israel.

Initially, we shrugged off this request. Growing up, I hated Pope Pius XII, believing him to be a virulent anti-Semite and Nazi collaborator. So my wife and I felt that we did not want to get involved. After all, why would I want to help



change the historical image of “Hitler’s Pope”?

But then providence intervened.

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Upon our return to New York we received a phone call from our friend, Rabbi Joseph Potasnik. Joe asked if we would help a Jewish author and former Washington Post correspondent, Dan Kurzman, gain access in the Vatican for his research on a book he was writing on Pope Pius XII. I told him that the mission of PTWF is to remove obstacles between the faiths and that I did not want to involve us in any activity that may negatively impact Catholic-Jewish relations. He asked us to meet with Mr. Kurzman anyway and at least hear what he had to say. We agreed.

On April 7, 2006 we met with Dan at a small diner in New York City. He told us that he was writing a book about the secret plot to kidnap Pope Pius XII, to kill the Curia and to seize the Vatican. I asked him how it was possible that a collaborator and ally of Hitler, as I believed Pope Pius XII to be, would ever be the target of such a plan. He explained that the exact opposite was true.

Dan said his information was based on his research and a long private interview with General Karl Freidrich Otto Wolff after his release from prison in 1974. General Wolff served as SS-Obergruppenführer and General of the Waffen-SS, and also as Chief of Personal Staff to the Reichsführer-SS (Heinrich Himmler) and SS Liaison Officer to Adolf Hitler himself. General Wolff had painted a very different picture of Pope Pius XII, not as a Nazi sympathizer but rather as a formidable enemy, someone that Hitler desperately wanted to get rid of.

This information about Pius XII was stunning. We are talking about the person who has been called “Hitler’s Pope”. This is the person about whom so many damning books have been written regarding his silence and cold-hearted lack of concern with the Jewish suffering during World War II. This was what Meredith and I thought to be the truth. We hated to even hear his name.

With this snippet of information I became very curious and called my friend who was then Israel’s Ambassador to the Holy See. I asked him if he had ever heard of this kidnapping plot. He hadn’t, but stated that it would be a huge story if it were true. Then I called a historian at Yad Vashem and was told, “Well, we heard something about this but it only shows that Pacelli (Pius) was simply too frightened to act.” Somehow, through twisted logic, this assumption further supported their firm belief that the Pope supported Hitler. Something was dreadfully wrong here.

I then received a telephone call from the Vatican’s Ambassador to the United Nations and friend, Archbishop Celestino Migliore. The Archbishop had suggested that he thought I should meet with Sister Margherita Marchione in New Jersey.

Meredith and I drove to Sister Margherita’s community in Morristown, NJ. We met with this engaging then 82-year-old nun who has written over 15 books in defense of Pope Pius XII. Through this meeting, my eyes were opened to a reality that was literally shocking. My emotions went from shock to anger. We discovered that we have been deceived by those whom we trusted for historical accuracy, scholars and historians.

Throughout human existence, man has sought retribution from his fellow man by fueled hatred based on what is believed to be historical beliefs. Recording history with accuracy is an awesome responsibility, which literally can mean life and death. The world’s historians have a sacred and moral responsibility to be absolutely accurate. How is it possible that these historians, whom we trust to “get it right,” could have gotten this so wrong?

As we delved further into the history of this papacy and the secret works of Pacelli, examining actual documents and recording eyewitness testimony, we came to the conclusion that this subject had been totally mishandled. How did this happen and who was to blame? Was this intentional?

Throughout the war, and up until his death in 1958, Pope Pius XII was literally adored by every Jewish leader, every Jewish organization and many survivors who were physically helped by the Catholic Church. What could have possibly occurred to cause in international reversal of these positive and genuine sentiments of affection literally overnight. What smoking gun was discovered to accomplish this?

This historical revision began with the international playing of the fictitious play by Rolf Hochhuth called *The Deputy*. We later discovered, as you will read in this book, that this play was a well-crafted Soviet KGB plan called “Seat Twelve,” hatched and implemented by the KGB disinformation bureau. Nikita Khrushchev targeted the Catholic Church, Eugenio Pacelli, personally, and it was intended to isolate the Jewish people from the Catholics. This plot was initiated just after the historical changes between the Jews and Catholics through the Second Ecumenical council declaration *Nostra Aetate*. The play was rewritten by Communist Director Irwin Biscator, translated into 20 languages, and then strategically performed in select theatres worldwide to accomplish its goals. The play was then used as the “historical Basis” for a popular film called *Amen* in 2002.

Soon after, a flurry of books followed supporting negative theories of this papacy and era. These books were not based on documented evidence but speculative uniformed theories, which were further cited and reinforced by more negative books. This change was further flamed by the media's obsession with any controversial news that would negatively impact organized religion. When the defenders, (many of whom were Jewish), tried to re-establish the good name of Pacelli, their words were ignored by the media. They simply could not fight the surge of negative press. To date literally no one has read the books that defend Pius XII and so, the "black legend" began and has been the standard belief since 1963.

The negativity was further fueled by one nagging question: Why won't the Vatican open the archives of the war years and the papacy of Pope Pius XII? What are they hiding? In 2003, Pope John Paul II ordered the early opening of the archives of Pope Pius XI. Then again in 2006 Pope Benedict XVI ordered all sections to be opened of this era. Now scholars and historians could come and study at least 65% of Pacelli's life as Nuncio to Germany and as Secretary of State under Pius XI, his predecessor.

Our interview in Rome with the Prefect of the Vatican Secret Archives, Bishop Sergio Pagano, fully answered this question. The cataloguing of over 31 million documents is simply not finished. Pope Benedict XVI has added over 20 trained library experts in order to speed up the cataloguing efforts.

To my shock I learned (through the sign in sheets in the archives) that literally none of the critics or institutions had bothered to come to the open archives to try to get to the truth. This fact is very telling about those who consider themselves archival historians and scholars. There simply does not seem to be any of them who are interested in finding the truth which has impacted the relations of over one billion people worldwide.

Sadly, based on the response from these "scholars" of today, we believe that when the archive cataloging is complete and fully opened, many of the revisionist who support the negative theories, will simply say that the Vatican sanitized or destroyed the damning documents.

The official position of the Holocaust Memorials is that they will wait for the Vatican Archives of the war years to open before rendering a decision on Pius XII. If this is the case, why then have none of the institutions or critics come to Rome to study the archives that have already been opened prior to the war years? In addition the Vatican published over 5000 documents from the war years in the Acts and Documents of the Holy See during the Second World War in 1981 together with the open archives, the vast majority of information is readily available to come to a consensus. One by one, the critics declined our invitation to participate in our symposium. We even offered to pay for their travel to Rome.

In the end, the critics said they would not attend because it was not a "scholarly investigation" and accused us of having a "one-sided symposium." They also did not like the idea of such a presentation of historical evidence in front of "everyday" people.

In spite of these actions, on September 15 we convened our symposium. We were honored to have as panelists Jesuit Historian Father Peter Gumpel, Professor Ronald Rychlak, William Doyno, Sister Margherita Marchione, Dan Kurzman, Andrea Tornielli, Dr. Eugene Fisher, Father Dennis McManus and George Blumenthal.

For three days, we poured over hundreds of documents and listened to eyewitness testimonies and comments from various experts. At the end of the symposium we videotaped interviews with many of the attendees. One hundred percent of the attendees changed their minds about the negative opinions they had held of Pius XII.

On September 18, 2009, our delegation of 80 participants traveled to the summer residence of the Pope Benedict XVI, where I delivered a statement to His Holiness on our findings and a promise to continue to search out documents and seek the truth. Pope Benedict XVI then made a statement to us, which was a dynamic public defense of his predecessor. News of this event traveled around the world and opened this historical "infection" to begin the healing power of public scrutiny.

We have come to discover that literally all of the historians and the institutions will agree that Pope Pius XII was not an anti-Semite, he was not a Nazi collaborator and he was certainly not "Hitler's Pope." Why then does the entire world not know this? Why do these experts and institutions remain silent when there are constant accusations against Pacelli? This is what we call the intellectual "gap" which must be bridged in order to bring better relations between the faiths.

Since garnering international attention to this debate, multiple filmmakers have become interested in these events, some even beginning work on documentaries and movies based on the facts we presented. We have also posted to date over 46,000 pages of documents on our website, news articles and studies, in order to educate as many people as possible. We

are proud to have been named the worldwide spearhead of the effort to begin this process. We believe our work will begin a healing of the malevolence and anger between the faiths.



What is Pave the Way Foundation?

Our Mission

Pave the Way Foundation is dedicated to achieving peace by bridging the gap in tolerance and understanding between religions through cultural, technological and intellectual exchanges. We strive to eliminate the use of religion as a tool which, historically, has been used by some to achieve personal agendas and to cause conflicts.

Through our projects and our concrete gestures of good will, we hope to pave the way towards global education directed to the everyday "grass roots" person. We must now all recognize the dangers of apathy and silence.

Embrace our Similarities; Savor our Differences

The meaning of our slogan is simple. We must embody the messages of charity, love and responsibility for every human being, common to all of our faiths, our beliefs and to the code of human behavior. We focus on our similarities and savor our differences by learning, through the positive and practical appreciation of the World's diverse religions and beliefs. We must not allow the differences to poison us with bigotry, hatred and intolerance. Instead, we wish to learn, enhance our own beliefs and in turn savor our differences.

Symposium on Pope Pius XII Held in Rome

"We hope to establish an open line of communication with historians worldwide and to present new documentation that has never been revealed before", said Elliot Hershberg, Pave the Way Foundation Chairman. In September 2008, PTWF held a symposium in Rome, in order to present the historical evidence that had been gathered on the papacy of Pope Pius XII and to provide an open forum for experts and scholars to share information on the subject.

Authorities on the subject and interested parties from all over the world were invited to participate, including the historians of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. Attendees included Sr. Margherita Marchione, Prof. Ron Rychlak, William Doyno, Fr. Peter Gumpel, Andrea Tornielli, Eugene Fisher, Dan Kurzman, Fr. Dennis McManus, George Blumenthal, and many others, who have devoted years to research this period of history. The event was a huge success based on interviews of the participants and the tremendous amount of worldwide reporting which drew more attention to this important cause.



Each attendee received a copy of the 200-page book, "Examining the Papacy of Pope Pius XII", a collection of articles, letters and other documents, representing over three years of Gary Krupp's tireless work and research. An updated version of the book, now published as ***Pope Pius XII and World War II - THE DOCUMENTED TRUTH***, can be purchased online at http://www.ptwf.org/Pope_Pius-google.html.

Several PTWF board members, staff and volunteers helped with making sure everything ran smoothly, especially Rolando Clementoni, Linda Simpson, Harry Epstein, Elliot and Karen Hershberg, Richard Kandel and his son JJ, Stanley and Eva Browne, Bill Cox and his son John Paul, David and Diane Hauser, Jay and Rachel Parker, Doyle Mills and Jarrett Krupp (Gary and Merry's son, on his first trip to Europe) and Marc Nadelman.

The symposium's first speaker, George Blumenthal, expressed the gratitude of the Jewish people for the positive things Pope Pius XII did to save the lives of many Jews and some reflection on the changing Jewish Sentiment toward the subject.

Professor Ronald Rychlak of the University of Mississippi School Of Law gave an enlightening talk on “A fair approach to History”, educating attendees on how to make factual determinations based on the sound, logical approach of law.

Fr. Peter Gumpel, Professor Emeritus of the Gregorian University (Rome) and presently the relator in Pius XII’s cause for beatification, spoke about precise events of the direct intervention of Pope Pius XII to save lives of the Italian Jewish Communities.

For many, the highlights of the symposium were the presentation of video interviews, the eyewitness reports from those who were directly involved with the churches efforts during World War II. This has been an important part of PTWF’s line of research into this matter. No other historian or group has taken the extraordinary effort to travel the world and capture these stories before the sources are gone. For example, Msgr. Giovanni Ferrofino spoke of his direct involvement with Pope Pius XII’s personal intervention to ask Gen. Rafael Trujillo to help Jews escape to the Dominican Republic from Europe from 1939-1945. And there were the riveting testimonies of Ursula Selig, a German Jew whose family was saved by Msgr. Scivo in Italy and Juraj Adam, a Hungarian Jew who was saved by the church and continued to work directly with the Nuncio to save Jews.

Dan Kurzman, award-winning author of over 16 books and former overseas correspondent for the Washington Post spoke of his personal meeting with General Karl Wolff, Himmler’s Deputy, who had been ordered by Hitler to plan the kidnapping and murder of Pope Pius XII and to seize the Vatican . His book, A Special Mission: Hitler's Secret Plot to Seize the Vatican and Kidnap Pope Pius XII, was given to symposium attendees and Mr. Kurzman graciously autographed copies upon request.

Throughout the next three days, numerous other authorities spoke and presented evidence and additional videos were shown. Sr. Margherita Marchione, author of numerous books about Pius XII, spoke about the personal interviews she had conducted. William Doyno spoke about the people who worked directly with Pope Pius to save Jewish lives and delivered a special presentation entitled “The Genesis of the Change in Opinion on Pius XII”. Andrea Tornielli presented new discoveries about Pope Pius XII and the Jews from the Vatican Archives. Sir Martin Gilbert, Jewish Historian, spoke of the Pope’s efforts during the war. Dr. Eugene Fisher discussed Pope Pius XII, the International Catholic-Jewish Historical Panel and Catholic-Jewish relations.

On the final day of the symposium, Professor Rychlak and Gary Krupp reviewed the evidence presented in the book, “Examining the Papacy of Pope Pius XII”, given to each participant at the beginning of this symposium. This was followed by a full panel discussion of the unfounded negative comments on the placard next to the picture of Pope Pius XII at Yad Vashem, and suggestions for change based on historical accuracy.

On the third day, the symposium participants were interviewed to find out their impressions of the event and whether the information presented had changed their viewpoint in any way. The videos can be seen on Pave the Way Foundations YouTube site: <http://www.youtube.com/user/pavethewayfoundation>.

The overwhelming consensus of opinion was that the complete program clearly showed that Pope Pius XII was (1) definitely not anti-Semitic and (2) was not a Nazi sympathizer or collaborator and (3) was directly responsible for saving thousands of Jewish lives during the War. Some who came to the symposium critical of the Pope were leaving with a completely different point of view. Many expressed the urgency for Yad Vashem to remove the critical placard about Pius XII.



News of the symposium was carried on international media in print, radio, television and the Internet.

On the day after the symposium, all attendees were invited to attend a private audience with Pope Benedict XVI, at Castel Gandolfi, his summer residence. The attendees listened while Gary Krupp addressed the Pope, informing him on the positive results of our symposium. In response, the Pope praised Gary and the work of Pave the

Way Foundation and commended our courage and conviction in taking on such a controversial but important subject. This was a significant historical moment, the first time that he, as Pope, had spoken out about his great and controversial predecessor. Next the PTWF board members in attendance and some of our esteemed panelists personally met the Pope and presented him with the books and DVDs from the symposium. The Pope then allowed the photographers to take a large group photo.

Gary's speech to Pope Benedict XVI (excerpted)

You Holiness, The mission of Pave the Way Foundation is to end the malevolent and the illegal use of religion. We begin this process by establishing credible and trusted relationships through our historic gestures of good will and with the identification and elimination of obstacles between the faiths.



In the furtherance of our mission, Pave the Way has identified the papacy of Pope Pius XII as a source of friction and misunderstanding. Accordingly, we have undertaken an independent investigation to identify significant documents and to video record eyewitness testimony. I wish to report to you that results of this investigation are stunning, and directly contradict the negative perception of the Pope's wartime activities.

All of the documented material that we have gathered, including the transcript of our just completed three-day symposium, will be turned over to your pontifical institutions and to the internationally recognized Holocaust centers for further study. Based on their review of these new materials, and in the interest of maintaining their historical integrity and accuracy, we call upon these institutions to carefully review this new information in order

to redefine the current perception on this papacy.

This year, for Catholics, Oct. 9, 2008, will be the commemoration the 50th anniversary of the death of Pope Pius XII, for Jews that date is also significant as it is our holiest Jewish holiday Yom Kippur, our Day of Atonement. May this providential date usher in a new effort to correct the historical record and bring to light the truth of this papacy.

I wish to close with a passage from a book written by Ambassador Pinchas Lapide, a former Israeli consul general in Italy, and a Jewish theologian: "No Pope in history has been thanked more heartily by Jews upon his death in 1958. Several suggested in open letters that a Pope Pius XII forest of 860,000 trees be planted on the hills of Judea in order to fittingly honor the memory of the late Pontiff, because the Catholic Church under the pontificate of Pius XII was instrumental in saving the lives of as many as 860,000 Jews from certain death at Nazi hands."

Your Holiness, we humbly ask you to keep the mission of Pave the Way Foundation and its vital work to end the malevolent use of religion in your prayers, and thank you for allowing us this time today. —*Gary L. Krupp*

Pope Benedict's Response

Dear Mr Krupp, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am happy to meet with you at the conclusion of the important symposium organized by the Pave the Way Foundation. I know that many eminent scholars have participated in this reflection on the numerous works of my beloved predecessor - the Servant of God Pope Pius XII - accomplished during the difficult period around the time of the Second World War. I warmly welcome each of you especially Mr Gary Krupp, President of the Foundation, whom I thank for the kind words expressed on your behalf.

I am grateful to him for informing me how your work has been undertaken during the symposium. You have analyzed without bias the events of history and concerned yourselves only with seeking the truth. I also greet those accompanying you on this visit, as well as your family members and loved ones at home. The focus of your study has been the person and the tireless pastoral and humanitarian work of Pius XII, Pastor Angelicus. Fifty years have passed since his pious death here at Castel Gandolfo early on the ninth of October 1958, after a debilitating disease. This anniversary provides an

important opportunity to deepen our knowledge of him, to meditate on his rich teaching and to analyze thoroughly his activities. So much has been written and said of him during these last five decades and not all of the genuine facets of his diverse pastoral activity have been examined in a just light. The aim of your symposium has been precisely to address some of these deficiencies, conducting a careful and documented examination of many of his interventions, especially those in favour of the Jews who in those years were being targeted all over Europe, in accordance with the criminal plan of those who wanted to eliminate them from the face of the earth. When one draws close to this noble Pope, free from ideological prejudices, in addition to being struck by his lofty spiritual and human character one is also captivated by the example of his life and the extraordinary richness of his teaching. One can also come to appreciate the human wisdom and pastoral intensity which guided him in his long years of ministry, especially in providing organized assistance to the Jewish people.

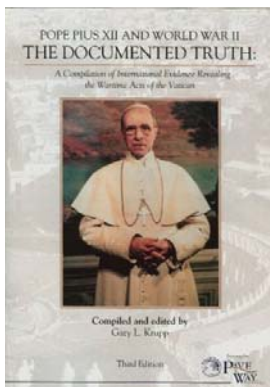


Thanks to the vast quantity of documented material which you have gathered, supported by many authoritative testimonies, your symposium offers to the public forum the possibility of knowing more fully what Pius XII achieved for the Jews persecuted by the Nazi and fascist regimes. One understands, then, that wherever possible he spared no effort in intervening in their favour either directly or through instructions given to other individuals or to institutions of the Catholic Church. In the

proceedings of your convention you have also drawn attention to his many interventions, made secretly and silently, precisely because, given the concrete Address at the conclusion of the symposium organized by the "Pave the Way Foundation" situation of that difficult historical moment, only in this way was it possible to avoid the worst and save the greatest number of Jews. This courageous and paternal dedication was recognized and appreciated during and after the terrible world conflict by Jewish communities and individuals who showed their gratitude for what the Pope had done for them. One need only recall Pius XII's meeting on the 29th of November 1945 with eighty delegates of German concentration camps who during a special Audience granted to them at the Vatican, wished to thank him personally for his generosity to them during the terrible period of Nazi-fascist persecution.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your visit and for the research you have undertaken. Thanks also to the Pave the Way Foundation for its ongoing activity in promoting relationships and dialogue between religions, as witnesses of peace, charity and reconciliation. It is my great hope that this year, which marks the fiftieth-anniversary of my venerated predecessor's death, will provide the opportunity to promote in-depth studies of various aspects of his life and his works in order to come to know the historical truth, overcoming every remaining prejudice. With these sentiments I invoke upon you and the proceedings of your symposium an abundance of divine blessings." *—Pope Benedict XVI*

Read and See the Evidence for Yourself



You can now purchase your own copy of Pope Pius XII and WWII, given to all symposium attendees. The new, updated edition now includes even more documented evidence, including:

- Hundreds of photographs
- Images of original documents
- Sworn affidavits
- Incontrovertible evidence proving that reports about Pius XII have been deliberately distorted.

Order your copy of this historic book from Amazon at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/piusXII>

Why Religion Needs a Dialogue, by Daniel P. Buttafuoco

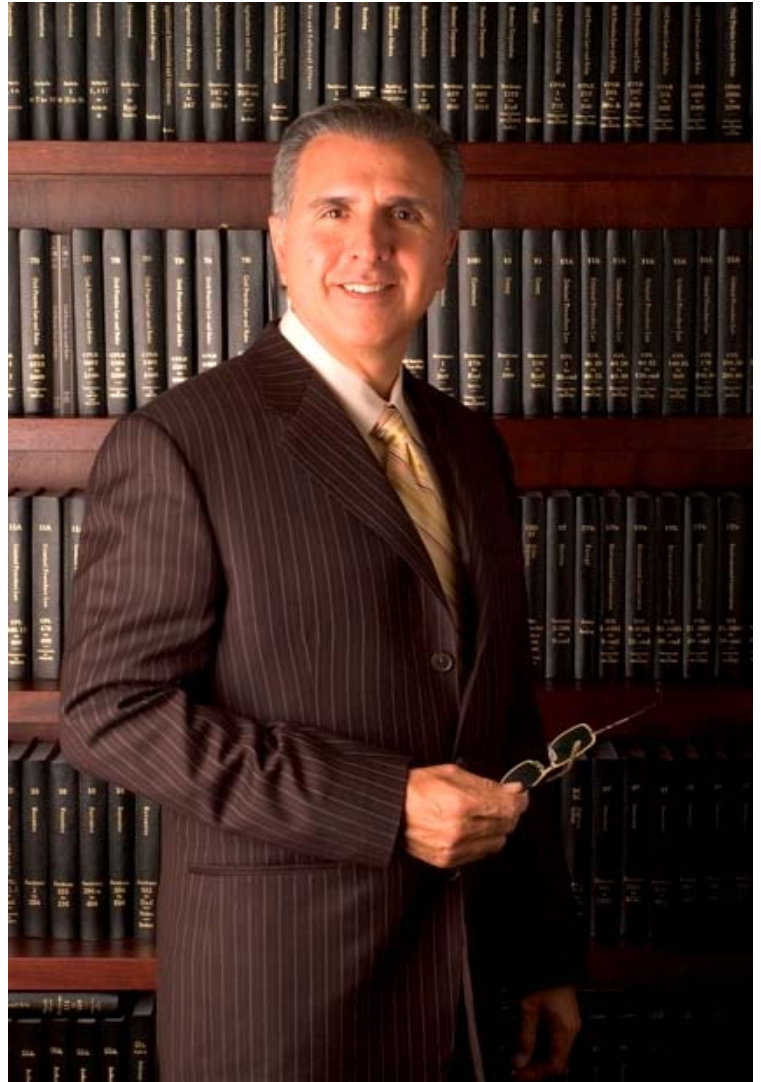
In each issue of Gestures Newsletter, we focus on one Pave the Way Foundation supporter to find out the reason why he or she chooses to contribute time, money or both to this cause. This month, we have a very interesting reflection from board member Dan Buttafuoco, distinguished Founder and Senior Partner of Dan P. Buttafuoco and Associates PLLC. Dan hosts a weekly radio show entitled "Christian Legal Concepts" and is active in many charity and social betterment activities.

It is said that two topics to be avoided in polite conversation are religion and politics. I could never actually understand this since, at least to me, these are two of the most important topics to be discussed. As we all know, there is far too much misunderstanding and suspicion between the great religions of the world. This lack of understanding is a fertile breeding ground for distrust, condemnation and hatred. It seems to me that if we spent more time intelligently discussing religion in a sincere effort to understand the other person's faith then surely we would be less inclined to hurt one another. This is a small price to pay in relative terms. I mean, would you rather confront someone with an opinion or someone with a bomb?

I realize, of course, that many people cannot discuss religion (even their own) rationally and intelligently enough without getting upset and perhaps even violent. I suppose that is the basis behind the maxim that one should not engage in such discussions (why spoil the dinner party?). But is this right? It constantly amazes me that most people do not really know what they believe concerning G-d and even less know why they believe what they claim to believe. How are such people in a position to debate intelligently their views on religion in general or their own religion in particular? The Bible, though still the world's greatest bestseller year after year, is not read by even those who claim to be intellectual and informed. Yet, this book (or collection of ancient books) has shaped the thinking of the entire world for many centuries. This is "required reading" for everyone, not just believers. At a minimum, should not we know what it says and what its essential claims are and the reason why those claims merit at least some consideration? And shouldn't we do this which each of the major world religions?

Among the three major world religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam-listed here in historical chronological order) there exist a great many similarities. At Pave the Way Foundation we seek to "embrace the similarities and savor the differences". It is necessary, therefore, to understand something about each of these three great Faiths in order to do just that. It is important to know at least some of the basics of these religions and the areas of similarity and difference.

The first major area of agreement among these three major world religions is the shared belief in a single creator Deity who is transcendent, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. That, by itself, is huge common ground and separates these three religions from Hinduism, Paganism, Buddhism, Animism and other polytheistic religions. Additionally, all three of these great Faiths hold a special reverence for Abraham who has been called "the father of monotheism". It is interesting to note that Abraham is given such a special designation in each of these religions, in light of the biblical reference that Abraham was told that he would someday be the "father of many nations" (Genesis 17:4). Indeed the name



Dan Buttafuoco

Abraham (Ibrahim in Arabic) means exactly that. Talk about a literal fulfillment of prophecy! Each of the three major religions discussed herein claim Abraham as a “father”.

It is interesting to note that both Judaism and Christianity are rooted in virtually identical historical facts, yet the interpretations and meanings of the events are different. We can and should discuss these different interpretations in a civil and even cordial manner. Both Judaism and Christianity share a great deal in terms of scripture (the entire Hebrew Tanach, or Tanakh, is identical, for all intents and purposes, to the Christian Old Testament). All of the Apostles used the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Tanach) as their Holy Scripture. John 10:35 says “the scripture can not be broken”. Thus, there is huge common ground in the scripture between Christians and Jews on which to build mutual trust and understanding, even if there are disagreements on the meaning and interpretation of the shared historical facts. Such differences should be intelligently explored and debated.

Islam, on the other hand, has its own scripture in the Koran (written by Mohammed around the end of the Sixth century A.D.) which presents an elevated view of Jesus and contains actually more written material on Jesus (“Isa” or “Isah”) than it does about Mohammed. While Christians may disagree with many of the written “facts” about Jesus in the Koran they would, at least, share with Muslims an elevated view of Jesus as a prophet. And a prophet, in all three religions, must be one hundred percent accurate when speaking the Word of the Lord. Accordingly, the words of Jesus would hold great weight for both Muslims and Christians. There are moral similarities, as well. In all three religions dishonoring G-d or your parents is wrong. Stealing and adultery are wrong. Almsgiving (charity) is good. Helping others is good; selfishness is evil. Kindness, benevolence, justice and goodness are universal virtues in all of these three religions. These foundational principles are so ingrained in us that it is almost hard to believe they had to be taught to us. Yet, taught to us they were and we have religion to thank for it.

When religion is tossed out of society altogether (as some would have it) the result is moral depravity and mass murder on a scale witnessed under the G-dless regimes of atheistic communism or Nazi Germany with its thinking rooted in the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Simply put, without G-d and without rules for society grounded in religion (obedience to a “good” G-d) anything goes and evil-doing is not only possible but probable. It should seem obvious to anyone that the killing of innocent people and causing needless suffering in the name of any religion is contra to its own foundational principles. Unfortunately, this is not always obvious to some. As a result, many evil acts are committed in the name of G-d by people claiming to be “religious”.

Religion is not the cause of such twisted behavior, however, as some would argue but rather it is the misuse of religion to one’s own evil ends that result in all manner of evil behavior. It has been said that the devil is the most religious person of all and that “Satan himself masquerades as a angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14). The problem is, therefore, not religion but the misuse of it. The same argument that applies to cars and guns applies to religion. The NRA is quick to point out that “guns do not kill people; people kill people”. Now, without necessarily debating the regulation of handguns in society we can all, at least, agree that anything, including automobiles, can be turned into an agent of death and mayhem when used improperly. So it is with religion. I suppose the same can even be said for parenting as the misuse of one’s authority as a parent can also produce some pretty devastating results. The bottom line is this: religion is not going to go away despite the vehement wishes of a handful of bitter atheists.

Humanity is, at its heart, deeply religious. It is not a question of whether you will worship but rather a question of what you will worship. Mankind is designed in such a way that we will usually “deify” something in our lives, even if it is not the G-d who made us. As Dostoyevsky has stated so well, “so long as man remains free he strives for nothing so incessantly and so painfully as to find someone to worship”. “Someone” can also refer to some “thing”. Men and women have been known to worship possessions, children, money, power, sex, fame, pleasure or even rockstars and political figures. Ever hear the term “idol” applied to some super celebrity? Mankind will simply not give up its idols. Human beings have not essentially changed their nature since the beginning of time but have just become more sophisticated and increased in knowledge and, as a result, our idolatry is more complicated. A good number of people even worship themselves. “Thou shalt have no other G-ds before me” (Exodus 20:3) surely takes on a different meaning after considering the other possible objects of worship in our lives, does it not?

It is clear to me that the worship of a single creator Deity as a supreme being who is all-powerful and all-knowing is far superior to any of the above alternatives, even if it is difficult to obey “him” at times. Far too many people have “opted out” of religion altogether simply because they want to create their own rules to live by. But what other alternative really exists? I leave that for your consideration.

We may differ on exactly what the Almighty desires from us from time to time. That's why the New Testament writer admonishes us to "find out what pleases the Lord" (Ephesians 5:10). That is part of our job, I believe – to discern exactly what it is that G-d wants from us. In fact, what that is exactly may be vastly different depending on who you are and the purpose for which you have been designed. Some things are a "no brainer", however. We should and must agree that indiscriminate killing, hatred and violence towards innocent people, simply because they disagree with us, is wrong by any standard. The major religions of the world need to unite on this simple but powerful issue. By so doing, religious leaders give increased validity and relevance to their own beliefs. We can and should debate the details in the never ending quest for truth but we must never harm another human being simply because they disagree with us.



What Can I Do?

Volunteer

The first and best way to support any endeavor is to look within yourself and provide that gift that only you can give – time. Each of you reading this has special talents that you can bring in support of PTWF's mission. Please contact us and donate your time and talent in support of peace.

Matching Gifts

Many companies offer matching gift programs that compound employee charitable contributions. Check the directory of matching gift companies to find out if your company will match your Pave the Way gift. If they do match, remember to follow your organization's matching gift process.

Donate

PTWF is a public charity under IRS Code 501C3. Your donations are tax deductible. Pay by credit card through PayPal by clicking on www.ptwf.org/Contribute or send a check to 253 West 35th Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001-1907.

Do You Have Frequent Flyer Miles?

Through the generosity of several major airlines, PTWF can receive donations of frequent flyer miles. Call the individual airlines to find out how to donate your unused frequent flyer miles to PTWF in support of our mission.

Start a Local Chapter

Gestures of good will can also be done in a local area. Is it your passion to bring together the diverse groups in your community to achieve peace and harmony? Go to www.ptwf.com/chapters to find out how you can help pave the way to peace in your own area.



Special Note of Remembrance

We are saddened to note that Archbishop Pietro Sambì, one of our dearest friends and a true man of peace, recently passed away. He served the Vatican for many years as nuncio to Israel and then as nuncio to the United States. We will miss his simple but effective approach towards diplomacy in difficult areas.

We are comforted in the fact that the increased cooperation and understanding that he accomplished is helping to pave the way to true world peace.

-Gary and Merry Krupp

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What Others Say About Us

"It is with affection that I greet the members of the Pave the Way Foundation and I thank Mr. Krupp for the kind words which he has addressed to me on your behalf"

Pope John Paul II

"I think he (Gary Krupp) is one of the greatest people I have met in my life and I am 80. He has me 100 percent convinced he will succeed."

Dott. Rolando Clementoni- Senior Papal Chamberlain- Protocol Officer of the Apostolic Palace, Vatican

"Mr. and Mrs. Krupp formed Pave the Way Foundation to effect his vision of the commonality that exists between the world's religions. They use the common message of the true benevolence of each faith, to affect the overall goal that the religions, universally, must act to remove incorrect use as a tool of religious dogma and the intentional misinterpretations of holy text, to justify acts of violence, hatred and bigotry, within each religion. This, Mr. Krupp believes, is the cause of every major conflict on earth. How can such a monumental task be accomplished? Well sometimes the easiest and the simplest way will accomplish great things. Gary has proven this and, if his methodology becomes a format for dealing with the world's problems, I'm convinced that solutions to some of the international problems would be achieved."

Dr. Faroque Khan – Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Islamic Center of Long Island

"The efforts of tonight's honorees are a tribute to the Pave the Way Foundation's mission to unify people of all religions and improve the quality of life in communities throughout the world"

Michael R. Bloomberg – Mayor, City of New York

"It is my pleasure to send you this letter congratulating you on the important initiative to produce a documentary program on the Alexandria Summit and its Declaration, as well as the ongoing effort to ensure that religion is a force for peace in the Middle East and in our world, rather than a tool for violence and destruction. This message and this initiative are of urgent and crucial importance and I am grateful to you and for your commitment to bring them to as wide an audience as possible."

Rabbi David Rosen – Signatory to the Alexandria Declaration and International Director and Chief Rabbi of the American Jewish Committee

"Please keep up the good work of Pave the Way Foundation in your quest to end the use of religion for justifying acts of violence"

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin- Chief Rabbi of Efrat, Israel

"Once more I feel impelled by events- this time happily positive developments-to express my profound gratitude and appreciation for the unique contribution you have been making with the Pave the Way Foundation, to securing onward progress in building up the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Jewish People.

There are, of course, many organizations devoted to advancing Catholic Jewish dialogue and friendship. None, however,

Pave the Way Foundation's Gestures of Good Will:

Completed Projects:

- Organized the largest Jewish audience in history, simply to thank Pope JohnPaul II for his enormous gestures to improve Catholic-Jewish relations
- Arranged a historical mission of scholars to the Vatican Library to view original manuscripts of Maimonides
- Initiated historic First-ever exhibit of manuscripts of Maimonides and others from the Vatican Library to the State of Israel
- Identified the availability and donor, enabling the Vatican Library to acquire the Bodmer Papyrus for worldwide study
- Improved Judeo-Christian tourism to Israel and the Holy Land, eliminating travel restrictions and airport difficulties, benefitting all the people of the region
- Sponsored an international symposium on the papacy of Pope Pius XII to educate and inform and bring together all concerned parties to discuss their historical differences

See more completed projects at www.ptwf.org/projects

Ongoing Projects:

- Uncovering the truth about Pope Pius XII
- Digitizing the Vatican Library and the manuscripts of the Franciscans in Israel
- Finalizing the fundamental agreements between the state of Israel and The Holy See
- Moving to get the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem affirmed
- Sponsoring Project Baby
- Working to Implement Peace and Prosperity Plan for the Palestinian areas
- Placing twin life-size monuments of Pope John Paul II in Krakow and Jerusalem to be created by renowned artist and Pave the Way Foundation Advisor, Sam Philipe

See more ongoing projects at www.ptwf.org/projects

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