

Leo Lehmann

The Catholic Church in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*



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The Catholic Church in Hitler's "Mein Kampf"

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The Catholic Church in Hitler's "Mein Kampf"

By Leo Herbert Lehmann

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Preface by Lutheran Librarian

In republishing this book, we seek to introduce this author to a new generation of those seeking authentic spirituality.

LEO HERBERT LEHMANN (1895-1950) was an Irish Roman Catholic priest who converted to Protestantism. He edited the *Converted Catholic Magazine* and led Christ's Mission in New York.

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The Catholic Church In Hitler's "Mein Kampf"

MEIN KAMPF, the bible and master plan of Nazism, lays bare the secrets and designs of Hitler's mind. In it the Fuehrer has traced his deepest convictions and principles. Those who first scoffed at it as an impossible delusion have been dumbfounded to see how literally it has been turned into reality.

Unfortunately for the facts of the case, a constant barrage of Catholic propaganda in the commercial press has stunned the American public into believing that Hitler despises the Catholic church and is plotting its ruin.

From the very beginning, *The Converted Catholic Magazine* has pointed out that Hitler and the Roman Catholic church agree on the basic principles of fascism and the necessity of ridding national branches of the church of all liberal political elements. Pius XI cleared the way for Hitler's abolishment of democratic government by dissolving the powerful Catholic Center Party in Germany. It should also be noted that, behind the later flimflam of Hitler-Vatican rifts, the present pope has at all times refused to condemn Hitler, much less excommunicate him from the church or renounce the Nazi concordat which he himself negotiated with Hitler when he was papal nuncio to Berlin.

Fritz Thyssen, Catholic steel tycoon, in his book, *I Paid Hitler*,¹ makes the admission that, together with other big industrialists of the Catholic Rhineland, he poured millions of dollars into Hitler's coffers with the understanding that Hitler would prepare the way for a confederation of countries under a Catholic monarch — a modern version of the Holy Roman empire.

In 1933 the Vatican was the first sovereign State to put the stamp of approval on Hitler by entering into a solemn agreement with him right after he established a dictatorship that shocked the sensibilities of the world.

Hitler established his Nazi party in Munich, the most Catholic city in Germany. Goebbels, Himmler, Roehm, Von Papen, Seyss-Inquart, Buerckel

and other pillars of Nazism are Roman Catholics, and are openly listed as such in the official *Wer Ist's* (Who's Who) of Germany. Of Hitler's intense admiration for the Catholic church, of which he is an acknowledged member in good standing (and also listed as such in *Wer Ist's*), there can be no reasonable doubt. Apart from Hitler's own statements on the Catholic church, there is a footnote on page 365 of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* which says: "Rauschnig (cf. his *Revolution des Nihilismus*) has pointed out Hitler's deep respect for the Catholic Church and in particular for the Society of Jesus" (i.e. the Jesuits).

Hitler's enthusiasm for the Roman Catholic church, his sympathy for its aims and world-outlook, his admiration for its principles and plan of organization are reflected throughout *Mein Kampf*. He does not devote a mere chapter to the Roman church as if it were something alien to his ideology; on the contrary, he interweaves it with almost every one of his main analyzes and principles.

The best that can be done here is to place as many of these excerpts from *Mein Kampf* as space will permit under important subject headings to which they belong. These will include: Hitler's Early Catholic Influence; his Admiration of the Church's Organization; Religious Intolerance; Clerical Celibacy; Anti-Semitism; Church-State Relations, and Ultramontanism.

All quotations are from the definitive and unexpurgated English edition published by Reynal & Hitchcock:

Early Catholic Influence

No student of psychology needs to be told of the power of childhood influences in the forming of one's life pattern. The youthful mind of Hitler, with its natural flair for mysticism and art, was deeply and favorably impressed and molded by the ritual and pageantry of the Catholic church. His admiration of the church helped shape his personal ideal of dictatorial power; in early youth he found its perfect embodiment in the monastery abbot, elected for life, with unlimited and uncontested powers. Thus he says (p. 7):

"Inasmuch as I received singing lessons in my spare time in the choir of the Lambach Convent [Monastery], I repeatedly had an excellent opportunity of intoxicating myself with the solemn splendor of the magnificent church festivals.

“It was perfectly natural to me that the position of abbot appeared to me to be the highest ideal obtainable, just as that of being village pastor had appealed to my father.”

Again he says (p. 711):

“In the evening, however, they [the people] succumb more easily to the dominating force of a stronger will... The same purpose serves also the artificially created and yet mysterious dusk of the Catholic churches, the burning candles, incense, censers, etc.”

Admiration Of The Church's Organization

Hitler discounts individual failures within the Catholic church and is impressed by the soundness and success of its organization as a whole. In his eyes the greatest crime of which a priest or bishop can be guilty is activity in the formation of liberal political parties to act independently of centralized Vatican control. He has acted severely against some of the Catholic clergy, in Germany and occupied countries, who persisted in encouraging independent political action after Pope Pius XI had disbanded the Catholic Center Party and the Bavarian Popular Party. Nor did he spare such a high dignity of the church as Cardinal Faulhaber.

The following excerpts will suffice on this point:

"It would be unjust to make religion as such or even the Church responsible for the mistakes of various individuals. One should compare the visible greatness of the organization with the average faultiness of men in general, and one will have to admit that the proportion between good and bad is here perhaps better than anywhere else.

“Even among the priests there are certainly such to whom their sacred office is only the instrument for the gratification of their political ambition, and who, in the political fight, forget in a more than deplorable manner that they should be the guardians of a higher truth and not the promoters of lies and calumnies — but such an unworthy individual is outweighed, on the other hand, by a thousand and more honest pastors, most faithfully devoted to their mission, who stand out like little islands in a communal swamp in our mendacious and demoralized time.” (p. 149)

“He who believes he may arrive at a religious reformation by the roundabout way of a political organization, only shows that he really has not the slightest idea of the way in which religious conceptions or even dogmas originate and their effect upon the Church.” (p. 147)

His ideal organization is similar to that of the Catholic church whose undemocratic head is supreme and absolute, and who, after having been once chosen, cannot be replaced:

“The young movement, according to its structure and its inner organization, is anti-parliamentarian; that means, in general, and in its inner construction, it rejects a principle of a decision by the majority, by which the leader is degraded to the position of the executive of the will and opinion of others. The movement, in small things as well as in big things, represents the principle of a Germanic democracy: choice of the leader, hut absolute authority of the latter.” (p. 478)



Reichsfuehrer Hitler greets the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph Tiso, Slovakian Chief of State, Papal Chamberlain and Roman Catholic priest, at Hitler's field headquarters on the Eastern Front, October, 1941.

Religious Intolerance

The essence of the Catholic church consists in its absolute authority, its claim to be the one and only religion, its fanatic self-assurance, its demand of blind obedience, its dogmatic intolerance, its refusal to compromise even with science. Each of these qualities Hitler noted and admired as the secret

of success. He later paid them that sincerest form of flattery, imitation: he made them the framework of his Nazi party and government.

Among the many repetitious passages in which he stresses this, the following will suffice:

“If religious doctrine and faith are really meant to seize the great masses, then the absolute authority of the contents of this faith is the basis of all effectiveness.” (p. 365)

“The greatness of every powerful organization as the incorporation of an idea in this world, is rooted in the religious fanaticism with which it intolerably enforces itself against everything else, fanatically convinced of its own right.” (p. 487)

“The greatness of Christianity was not rooted in its attempted negotiations of compromise with perhaps similarly constructed philosophical opinions of the old world, but in the inexorably fanatical preaching and representation of its own doctrine.” (p. 487)

“The future of a movement is conditioned by the fanaticism, even more the intolerance, with which its adherents present it as the only right one, and enforce it in the face of other formations of a similar kind.” (p. 485)

"Here, too, one can learn from the Catholic Church. Although its structure of doctrines in many instances collides, quite unnecessarily, with exact science and research, yet it is unwilling to sacrifice even one little syllable of its dogmas. It has rightly recognized that its resistibility does not lie in a more or less great adjustment to the scientific results of the moment, which in reality are always changing, but rather in a strict adherence to dogmas, once laid down, which alone give the entire structure the character of creed.

“Today, therefore, the Catholic Church stands firmer than ever. One can prophesy that in the same measure in which appearances flee, the Church itself, as the resting pole in the flight of appearances, will gain more and more blind adherents.” (page 882)



Hitler greets Serrano Suñer, Chief of the Spanish *Falange* and Head of the Superior Council of Spanish Religious Missions Abroad.

Clerical Celibacy

The Catholic church, in its shrewd, far-sighted planning, finds organizational strength and renewed vigor in the forced celibacy of its clergy and of its many active and contemplative orders of monks and nuns. The resulting sacrifice of individualism and personal morality is counted a small price to pay for a practice that strengthens the organizational structure of the church as a whole, and which rids it of many dependents, obligations and responsibilities.

Hitler, too, is an advocate of the principle that “the end justifies the means,” and is superlative in his admiration of this ruthless practice because it is successful. He says (p. 643):

“Here the Catholic Church can be looked upon as a model example. In the celibacy of its priests roots the compulsion to draw the future generation of the clergy, instead of from its own ranks, again and again from the broad masses of the people. But this particular significance of celibacy is not recognized by most people. It is the origin of the incredibly vigorous power that inhabits this age-old institution. This gigantic host of clerical dignitaries, by uninterruptedly supplementing itself from the lowest layers of the nations, preserves not only its instinctive bond with the people’s world of sentiment, but it also assures itself of a sum of energy and active force which in such a form will forever be present only in the broad masses of the people. From this results the astounding youthfulness of this giant organism, its spiritual pliability and its steel-like will power.”

He also glorifies the basic principle of Jesuit education, the training of the will:

“Of highest importance is the training of will power and determination, as well as the cultivation of joy in taking responsibility.” (p. 623)

Anti-Semitism

Before Hitler came to Vienna and made contact with the Catholic anti-Semitic leader, Dr. Karl Lueger, Mayor of Vienna, he knew nothing of organized anti-Semitism. He says (p. 67):

“I had no idea at all that organized hostility against the Jews existed.”

Editor’s footnote in reference to the above on page 69 says:

“Hitler did not, therefore, share the prevailing Catholic feeling that Jewish intellectuals and journalists were undermining the rights of the Church. He was a ‘liberal’ in the sense that he, though born a Catholic, refused to commit himself seriously to one side of a religious discussion.”

He soon learned to admire and imitate this Catholic leader, a protege of the Vatican, who knew the political value and mob-appeal of anti-Semitism:

“At any rate and because of this, I gradually learned to know the man and the movement who ruled Vienna’s destiny: Doktor Karl Lueger and the Christian Socialist Party.” (p. 71)

Editor’s footnote to this says:

“Karl Lueger (1844-1910) founded the Christian-Social Party (to which Dr. Engelbert Dollfuss and Dr. Kurt von Schussnigg belonged) on the basis of a program that combined a good deal of progressive municipal legislation and a shrewd awareness of the political values latent in popular anti-Semitism... Cardinal Rampolla, then Papal Secretary of State, held a protecting hand over Lueger...”

Hitler says further of Lueger (p. 128):

“His infinitely clever policy towards the Catholic church won for him in a short time the younger clergy to such an extent that the old Clerical Party was either forced to leave the battlefield or, more wisely still, to join the new party in order thus slowly to regain one position after another.”

He makes it clear that Protestantism, unlike Catholicism, is opposed to anti-Semitism and lacks in general the religious intolerance he idolizes. He says:

“Thus Protestantism will always interest itself in the promotion of all things German as such, whenever it is a matter of inner purity or increasing national sentiment — the defense of German life, the German language and German liberty,— as all this is also rooted firmly in Protestantism; but it will immediately and sharply fight every attempt at saving the nation from the grip of its most deadly enemy, as its attitude towards Judaism is fixed more or less by dogma. But this involves a question without the solution of which all attempts at a German renaissance or a national revival are and will remain absurd and impossible.” (pp. 144-5)

“The most believing Protestant could stand in the ranks next to the most believing Catholic, without ever having to come into the slightest conflict of conscience with his religious convictions.” (p. 829)

“Positive Christianity,” the Jesuit name for aggressive Catholicism in its most fascist and anti-liberal form, was adopted by Hitler’s National Socialist Party as its official viewpoint and policy. Hitler quotes it in Article 24 as follows (p. 694):

“Art. 24: The Party professes the viewpoint of ‘Positive Christianity.’”

He repeats the anti-Jewish arguments of “Positive Christianity” widely preached at that time throughout Germany by the Jesuit Fathers Pachtler, Overmanns, Hugger, Loeffler and Muckermann, and in this country by Father Coughlin and his followers:

“The Jewish doctrine of Marxism rejects the aristocratic principle in nature; instead of the eternal privilege of force and strength, it places the mass of numbers and its dead-weight.”

He then adds:

“Therefore, I believe that I am acting in the sense of the Almighty Creator: By warding off the Jews I am fighting for the Lord’s work.” (p. 84)

Church-State Relations

In the following quotations Hitler expressed his conviction that the authoritarian state and the dogmatic church are mutually complementary and dependent; that the lower clergy, for the church's benefit, must shun politics, and that the wise politician leaves the church as such alone.

Hitler here refers to liberal political parties that abounded in Germany after it became a republic in 1918, especially the Catholic Center Party and the Bavarian Popular Party. The Vatican dissolved these, contrary to the wishes of many priests and prelates, and made a concordat with Hitler in 1933. It had previously done the same in Italy to clear the way for Mussolini. Under the new arrangement, all political settlements become a matter of personal dealing between the dictator and the pope, without interference by organized groups of local clergy and laymen.

This is as Hitler wanted and as he laid it down in the following passages:

“Organic laws are for the State and dogma is for religion. Only by this is the wavering and infinitely interpretable, purely spiritual idea definitely limited and brought into shape, without which it could never become faith. The attack upon dogma in itself resembles, therefore, very strongly also the fight against the general legal fundamentals of the State, and, just as the latter would find its end in a complete anarchy of the State, thus the other in a worthless religious nihilism.” (p. 366)

"But worse than all are the devastations which are brought about by the abuse of religious convictions for political purposes.

"If in pre-War Germany the religious life had for many an after-taste, this was attributable to the misuse which was inflicted on Christianity on the part of a so-called 'Christian' party, as well as to the imprudence with which one tried to identify the Catholic faith with a political party.

"This substitution was a fatality which perhaps brought parliamentary seats to a number of good-for-nothings, but injury to the Church.

“The result, however, had to be borne by the whole nation, as the consequences of the loosening of religious life caused by this occurred just at a time when everything began to give way and to change, anyhow, and when the traditional fundamentals of behavior and morality threatened to collapse.” (p. 367).

"Political parties have nothing to do with religious problems, as long as these are not hostile to the nation, and do not undermine the ethics and morality of their own race; just as religion is not to be combined with the absurdity of political parties.

"Whenever ecclesiastical dignitaries make use of religious institutions or doctrines in order to harm their nationality, one should not follow them and fight them with the same weapons.

"To the political leader the religious doctrines and institutions of his people should always be inviolable, or else he ought not to be a politician but should become a reformer, provided he is made of the right stuff." (p. 150)

Ultramontanism

Hitler speaks deprecatingly of the Austrian *Kulturkampf*, a pan-German movement of the late nineteenth century, which was hostile to *Ultramontanism*, that is, the reactionary policies of the Jesuit-Vatican element of the Catholic church.

Of the *Kulturkampf* he says (p. 151):

"It made itself impossible in numerous small and medium circles through its fight against the Catholic church, thus robbing itself of innumerable of the best elements which the nation can call its own.

"One succeeded in tearing away from the Church almost one hundred thousand members [the *Los vom Rome* movement], but she did not suffer any particular loss because of this. She really did not have to shed any tears for the lost 'lambs'; for the Church lost only what for a long time had not fully belonged to her internally.

"This was the difference between the new reformation and the old one [that of Martin Luther]: that once, many of the best of the Church turned away from it because of their inner conviction, while now, only those went who were not only lukewarm, but for 'considerations' of a political nature."

In contrast, however, to such anti-Catholic politics was the pro-Catholic, anti-Semitic policy of Dr. Lueger's clerical party, of which Hitler approvingly says (p. 154):

"It avoided all fights against a religious institution, thus securing the support of such a mighty organization as the Church represents. Thus it had only one really great chief adversary [the Jews].

In Germany during the 1920's, opposition started to arise once more against Ultramontanism because of greater freedom of speech and political action under the Republic. Hitler blames the Jews for this anti-Catholic movement — though General Ludendorff participated in it:

"As the situation was then, the only chance of occupying public attention with other problems and thus stemming the concentrated assault on Jewry lay in opening up the Ultramontane question, and in the mutual clash of Catholicism and Protestantism arising from it." (p. 825)

He also is convinced that it is futile as well as unwise to fight against Jesuit Ultramontanism:

"The gentlemen who suddenly discovered in the year 1924 that the supreme mission of the folkish movement is the fight against 'Ultramontanism' have not crushed Ultramontanism, but they have torn open the folkish movement." (p. 829)

It is impossible that Hitler could ever have favored a hostile attitude toward Ultramontane Catholicism. His entire "new order" is based upon control of the world by a combination of the forces of religious and political intolerance. Previously, on page 675, he makes this clear:

"For, the view of life [Weltanschauung, 'a world-policy'] is intolerant and cannot be content with the role of a 'party among others,' but demands dictatorially that it be acknowledged exclusively and completely, and that the entire public life be completely readjusted according to its own views."

This is in perfect accord with all the encyclicals of the popes for the past two hundred years, and is to be found in its newest form in the noted encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) of the late Pope Pius XI who made concordats with both Mussolini and Hitler. The sub-title of this well-known encyclical is "Catholic Reconstruction of the Social Order." It is further substantiated by other encyclicals of this same pope claiming complete and dictatorial control of education and marriage.

FACSIMILE OF INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICIAL GERMAN TEXT OF THE CONCORDAT BETWEEN THE HOLY SEE AND HITLER'S REICH—SIGNED ON JULY 20, 1933, BY EUGENE CARDINAL PACELLI (NOW POPE PIUS XII) AND FRANZ VON PAPEN.



The text ends as above: "Signed in duplicate in Vatican City on July 20, 1933. EUGENIO CARDINAL PACELLI FRANZ von PAPPEN."

Pope Pius XII Brought Hitler To Power

Article 16 of the above concordat between Hitler and the Vatican gives the wording of the oath that all German bishops are obliged to take before the *Reichsstatthalter*, as follows:

"I swear before God and upon the Holy Gospels and promise, as becomes a bishop, to be loyal to the German Reich and the State. I swear and promise to respect the constitutional Government and to have it respected by my clergy."

Shortly after the concordat was signed by Cardinal Pacelli and Catholic Franz von Papen, Cardinal Bertram of Berlin wrote to Hitler as follows:

“The Episcopate of all the German dioceses, as is shown by its statements to the public, was glad to express, as soon as it was possible after the recent, change in the political situation through the declarations of Your Excellency, its sincere readiness to cooperate to the best of its ability with the new government which has proclaimed as its goal to promote Christian education, to wage war against Godlessness and immorality, to strengthen the spirit of sacrifice for the common good, and to protect the rights of the Church.” (From the *Catholic* [London] *Universe*, August 18, 1933.)

Whatever the Catholic church may now think about Hitler and the whole scheme of the Nazi-fascist Axis, there is no doubt that the Vatican was Hitler’s ally from the beginning. Fritz Thyssen, rich Catholic steel magnate who financed Hitler,² testifies to this. After he went to Switzerland in 1940, Thyssen wrote an article in the Swiss *Arbeiterzeitung* entitled: “PIUS XII, AS NUNCIO, BROUGHT HITLER TO POWER.” In this article he states plainly what the aim of the Hitler-Vatican plan was. He says:

“The idea was to have a sort of Christian Corporate State organized according to the classes, which would be supported by the Churches — in the West by the Catholic, and in the East by the Protestant — and by the Army.”

Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* embodies all the aims and principles against liberal democratic processes reiterated in all the important papal encyclicals of post-Reformation Catholicism. It should not be surprising that the Vatican in our time, in exchange for benefits promised to the Catholic church, betrayed the forces of democracy, both inside and outside the church, and used its influence and power to foster allegiance to Fascism and Nazism throughout the world.

**RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF THE NAZI AND FASCIST DICTATORS,
THEIR PUPPETS, QUISLINGS AND COLLABORATORS**

The following facts have been checked with official publications and bureaus of information:

Adolf Hitler—Nazi Fuehrer.....	Roman Catholic
Benito Mussolini—Italian Duce	Roman Catholic
Francisco Franco—Spanish Caudillo.....	Roman Catholic
Antonio Salazar—Portuguese Dictator.....	Roman Catholic
Henri P. Pétain—Vichy Chief of State	Roman Catholic
Pierre Laval—Vichy Chief of Government.....	Roman Catholic
Joseph Tiso—Slovakian Chief of State.....	Roman Catholic Priest
Vidkun Quisling—Premier of Occupied Norway.....	Protestant
Anton A. Mussert—"Quisling" of Occupied Holland	Protestant
Emil Hacha—Nazi President of Bohemia-Moravia	Roman Catholic
Konrad Henlein—"Quisling" of Sudetenland.....	Roman Catholic
Léon M. Degrelle—Belgian Rexist Leader.....	Roman Catholic
Ante Pavelich—Croatian Poglavar (Leader).....	Roman Catholic
Darquier de Pellepoix—Vichy Jew-hating Commissioner of Jewish Affairs.....	Roman Catholic

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1. Reviewed in *The Converted Catholic Magazine* for May 1942, p. 138.↵
 2. See Thyssen's book, *I Paid Hitler*, published in this country in 1941.↵

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How Can You Find Peace With God?

The most important thing to grasp is that no one is made right with God by the good things he or she might do. Justification is by faith only, and that faith resting on what Jesus Christ did. It is by believing and trusting in His one-time *substitutionary* death for your sins.

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Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)

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