



# The Pope and the Devil

**Directed by:** Max Serio

**Produced by:** Picasso Film, Big Media, SD Cinematografica, Wildbear ent.

**Duration:** 4 Eps. x 52 min.

**Versions:**  

**Format:** HD

The Church is not afraid of history.

With these words Pope Francis opened the Vatican archives on Pope Pius XII in 2019.

Millions of letters, secret dispatches, telegrams, supplications, and countless other types of documents were made public to scholars around the world for the first time.

Today, after decades, we can investigate one of the most controversial figures in contemporary history: Pope Pius XII, the Pope of Silence.

For some, he is the Pope who did not denounce Hitler's murderous madness, becoming almost his accomplice. For others, Pius XII's silence was a weapon to fight the Führer, through despatches and secret actions. Decades of bitter controversy over the actions of this Pope can now be definitively resolved.



- Episodes:**
- The Origins of Evil
  - The Secret Plan
  - The Devil's revenge
  - The rats flee west, a new Devil comes from the east

## Episodes



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### **The Origins of Evil**

Eugenio Pacelli is the Vatican ambassador in Berlin and observes Hitler's political rise. The anti-Semitic ideology of Nazism is unstoppable and within a few years the plight of the Jews in Germany becomes dramatic, for example with the implementation of the racial laws and the Night of the Crystals.

Unpublished documents from the Holy See show that the Vatican tried to fight Hitler by trying to encourage the emigration of German Jews, but to where?

In 1938, the Evian Conference brought together the most important western states, but none of them wanted to accept German Jews, because anti-Semitism was not an exclusively German issue. In March 1939, Eugenio Pacelli was elected Pope with the name Pius XII, while the clouds of the Second World War were gathering.

What will Pope Pius XII do? Will he openly condemn Nazism, or will he remain silent? And why?



### **The Secret Plan**

World War II has begun and millions are dying because of Hitler's madness.

Under St. Peter's Basilica there is an archaeological dig to find the tomb of the holy founder of the Church, but Pius XII exploits this place for secret meetings with the German anti-Nazi resistance. Pacelli obtained information that could change the course of the war, but the Allies did not trust it and Hitler took advantage of this by conquering France.

The whole of Europe is under the control of Hitler who decides to settle the Jewish question once and for all.

Initially the Germans think of a mass deportation to Madagascar, but when they realise that this plan is unfeasible because it involves moving millions of people, Hitler decides to apply the Final Solution, sending the Jews to their death in concentration camps.

What can Pius XII do to counter this madness? And why does he not denounce it publicly?



### **The Devil's revenge**

In 1943 Italy, exhausted by the war, surrenders to the allies and immediately columns of German soldiers occupy it.

Rome itself is invaded by Nazi troops who start laying siege to the Vatican, no one can enter, no one can leave.

Hitler wants revenge on the Pope, because he knows very well that Pius XII is in contact with the Allies.

He therefore hatches a plan to invade the Vatican, capture the Pope and deport him to Germany. Pius XII is aware of this plan and signs his resignation as Pontiff, Hitler will only capture a priest.

Meanwhile, the violence of the war continues and the Nazis deport Roman Jews, without the Pope being able to prevent it, but Pius XII reacts by opening churches, convents and even the catacombs to those persecuted by Hitler.

The clash between the Pope and the Devil is at its climax.



### **The rats flee west, a new Devil comes from the east**

Soviet troops enter Berlin, Hitler commits suicide...the Devil is dead.

With the end of the Second World War, a new chapter in the history of Pius XII opens.

While documents prove that the Pope's silence was the method by which he saved thousands of people from Hitler, there is another silence that needs to be investigated.

At the end of the war, thousands of Nazis were fleeing Europe and some members of the Holy See facilitated this escape.

Why?

And what did the Pope know?

A devil died, but in reality Pius XII was fighting a battle against another devil: Josif Stalin and communism.

Ever since the Revolution of 1917, the Catholic Church had been attacked by communism with very violent repression and Pius XII, being a profound anti-communist, had never withdrawn from this fight against the other Devil.



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