"The name of Christ has caused more persecutions, wars, and miseries than any other name has caused."

- John E Remsburg, "The Christ"

On March 23, 2000 the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial published a book on the holocaust to coincide with John Paul's visit to the Holy Land.

Entitled *The Holocaust and the Christian World*, the 271-page volume includes a chapter on Pius XII (1939-58), who has been described as "Hitler's Pope".

Historian Michael R Marrus wrote that as fascism spread across Europe, the Catholic Church remained aloof and rarely spoke out against the persecution of Jews.

"Seeing the institutional church as a supreme value in its own right, those in charge of its fortunes tended unhesitatingly to put these ahead of the victims of Nazis," Marrus wrote.

He said that in the fall of 1943, with Rome under Nazi occupation, the Nazis began rounding up Jews "virtually on
the doorstep of the Papal Palace ..."

Pius XII's detractors said the pope did not condemn the Holocaust because he wanted to protect the Catholic Church at any price.

His admirers, on the other hand, have said the pope's diplomatic silence during World War II helped save thousands of Jewish lives.

Maybe so, but who should be held responsible for the more than 600,000 who were killed by Catholic Church-backed Ustashi who spread terror across Eastern Europe in WWII?

Did Pope Pius XII, as believed in the case of the Holocaust, turn a "blind eye" to this massacre as well ..?

The Ustashi were Christian rebels who took control of parts of Croatia during World War II soon after the territory became occupied by German troops.

Essentially they were armed Catholic fanatics led by the equally fanatical Croatian leader, Dr Ante Pavelic (1889-1959).

Several sources have claimed Dr Pavelic and the Ustashi received their funding directly from the Catholic Church ...

In a few short weeks in 1941 the Ustashi formed a regime whose reign of terror was rivalled only by the Nazis.

All religions except Roman Catholicism were persecuted in a massacre that was surpassed for savagery only by Hitler's extermination of Polish Jews.

Over 600,000 victims died at the hands of Ustashi solders,
including Jews, Muslims, gypsies - but mostly Orthodox Serbs ...

"It was declared that one-third of the Serbian population would be deported," said the Encyclopedia Britannica in 1991.

"One-third (would be) converted to Roman Catholicism, and one third liquidated."

It fell upon Pavelic and his Ustashi to handle the liquidation side of this programme ...

Catholic monks and other priests knowingly participated in what they saw was "a struggle for the purity of the Croatian land".

According to the Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, more than 500,000 Serbs were killed, 250,000 expelled and 200,000 were forcibly converted to Catholicism.

Following the example set by Hitler, the Ustashi gathered non-Catholics into concentration camps for "processing".

The largest Ustashi camp, Jasenovac, was established in August 1941 on the banks of the Sava river, 100 kilometres south of Zagreb.

Among the Jasenovac commanders was a Franciscan friar named Brother Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic, called Brother Death or Brother Devil.

The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust cited Brother Filipovic as one of the camp's cruelest murderers, "who killed scores of prisoners with his own hands".
Atrocities comparable only to Auschwitz occurred at Jasenovac which, according to several accounts, was the third largest concentration camp in occupied Europe.

Like the Nazis, the Ustashi burned their victims, using the old brick kilns of a former factory in which the camp was based.

Unlike the Nazis, who at least gassed their victims first, the Ustashi pushed their victims into the furnaces alive.

Even "crowds of Jewish children" were pushed alive into the brick kilns, said Professor Dr Edmond Paris in his *Genocide in Satellite Croatia*.

Those who were not sent to the ovens were stabbed, shot, starved or brutally hacked to death with axes.

Thousands were hurled from mountain tops while scores were machine-gunned or beaten to death or had their throats cut.

Entire villages were torched, countless women raped and thousands died during freezing winter marches ...

In *The Vatican's Holocaust*, Avro Manhattan described what occurred at Jasenovac on August 29, 1942, when orders were issued for executions.

"Bets were made as to who could liquidate the largest number of inmates," he said.

"Peter Brzica cut the throats of 1360 prisoners with a specially sharp butcher's knife.

"Having been proclaimed the prize-winner of the competition, he was elected King of the Cut-throats.
"A gold watch, a silver service, and a roasted sucking pig and wine were his other rewards ..."

Those who were not immediately killed at the camp were forced into slave-labour where they were often brutally tortured.

According to German war correspondent Dr Jakob Altmeier, the favoured torture among the Ustashi was to gouge out the victim's eyes.

"World history has registered many tyrants and mass killers," Dr Altmeier told a West German Parliament in 1953. "Not a single one of them, however, was so gruesome as to demand that the eyes of his victims be served to him in a basket.

"That was the speciality of Pavelic and his Ustashi ..."

An estimated 600,000 non-Catholics died miserably before Jasenovac was finally dismantled in April 1945 ...

As leader of the Catholics during WWII, one must ask the question of the church: was Pope Pius XII informed of the atrocities that were occurring at Jasenovac?

Surely he must have known what the Ustashi and Pavelic were up to since several sources have claimed they both were funded by Catholic Church money.

If Pius XII was aware of what was going on, then perhaps this "sin" should be added to the list of many for which the church begged forgiveness in March, 2000 ...
"Civilisation will not attain to its perfection until the last stone from the last church falls on the last priest"

(Emile Zola)