

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Issue 121

A historical photograph of a World War I soldier sitting in a foxhole. The soldier is wearing a wide-brimmed campaign hat and a dark, mud-stained uniform. He has his hands pressed against his face in a gesture of despair or exhaustion. The foxhole is dug into a muddy bank, and a shallow trench with muddy water is visible in the background. The overall scene is one of the harsh and desolate conditions of trench warfare.

**Faith in the
Foxholes**
Seeking hope
amidst war's
despair

Special expanded issue
on the World Wars



SHATTERED Private Paul Oglesby stands in front of the damaged altar of a Catholic church in Italy in 1943.

Did you know?

CIGARETTES, CHAPLAINS, AND THE CONFESSING CHURCH

THE VICAR IS A PACIFIST

G. A. Studdert-Kennedy (1883–1929), an English slum vicar who became a World War I chaplain, developed an unusual way to get the attention of troops—distributing Bibles and Woodbine cigarettes, earning him the name “Woodbine Willie.” Once he put up a post with the sign “The Vicarage.” Soldiers walking by commented, “Look—the bloody vicarage.” Studdert-Kennedy poked his head out and said, “And here’s the bloody vicar.” When he died at 46, he was so famous that King George V sent condolences. Some ex-soldiers sent a wreath, with a cigarette packet at the center, to the funeral.

Studdert-Kennedy won a medal for helping injured soldiers out of the line of fire, but the war turned him into a socialist, a pacifist, and a poet. He advocated for workers and penned *Rough Rhymes of a Padre* (1918), *More Rough Rhymes of a Padre* (1919), and *The Unutterable Beauty* (1927). Of his cigarette-dispensing days he wrote, “Their name! Let me hear it—the symbol / Of unpaid, unpayable debt, / For the men to whom I owed God’s Peace, / I put off with a cigarette.”

V FOR VICTORY African Americans in World War II used the “Double V” campaign to fight for rights at home and abroad.

PUT IT IN YOUR PIPE AND SMOKE IT

One surprising World War II Bible use was as cigarette papers for POWs. Gavan Daws, in *Prisoners of the Japanese* (1994), wrote:

A Dutch Jesuit chaplain on Sumatra said the Word of God was sanctified, not the paper, so roll away. Sick men smoked their army-issue Bible after reading it. Or they smoked without reading, and about this the chaplains had nothing to say except that it was better for the men to get the Word in them by inhaling than not at all.

For those who were willing to read before rolling, where should they start?

An English chaplain said Revelation, which no one understood anyway. The Dutch Jesuit said the Old Testament, then the Acts of the Apostles because they were only practicalities, then the Gospels; leave the Sermon on the Mount for last, and learn it before smoking it.

THEY CAME FOR MANY PEOPLE

Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller (1892–1984) is famous for the statement “First they came for the Socialists...” But when Niemöller first used the idea in a 1946 speech, he spoke at more length:

When the concentration camp was opened [in 1933] . . . the people who were put in the camps then were Communists. Who cared about them? We knew it, it was printed in the newspapers. Who raised their voice, maybe the Confessing Church? We thought: Communists, those opponents of religion, those enemies of Christians. . . . Then they got rid of the sick, the



PRIVATE PAUL OGLESBY, 30TH INFANTRY, STANDING IN REVERENCE BEFORE AN ALTAR IN A DAMAGED CATHOLIC CHURCH, ACERNO, ITALY, 1943 / U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEMBERS OF THE NSB / UNIVERSAL HISTORY ARCHIVE/UG / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

CHANGES AT HOME *Right:* A real “Rosie the Riveter” operates a hand drill at a Tennessee factory in 1943.

DOGS OF WAR *Below:* Woodrow Wilson hoped to keep America out of World War I, but he did not succeed.



so-called incurables.—I remember a conversation I had with a person who claimed to be a Christian. He said: “Perhaps it’s right, these incurably sick people just cost the state money, they are just a burden to themselves and to others.” . . . The persecution of the Jews, the way we treated the occupied countries, or the things in Greece, in Poland, in Czechoslovakia or in Holland, that were written in the newspapers. . . . We can talk ourselves out of it with the excuse that it would have cost me my head if I had spoken out.

MORE CHAPLAIN TALES

Writer Lyle Dorsett found in his deceased uncle’s belongings a postcard saying that Private First Class Jack Dorsett “has been true to his Christian profession by participating in our Communion service. Our prayers mingle with yours for his continued devotion and faithfulness.” But not all soldiers kept faith. One Catholic chaplain wrote to an enlisted man’s wife that her husband was skipping Mass and “not attending to his religious duties. There is absolutely no excuse other than laziness or indifference.”



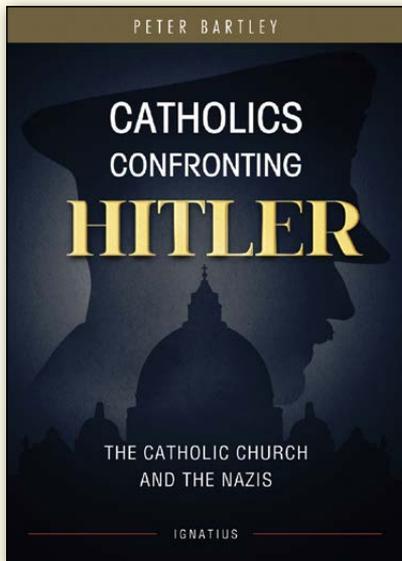
Jewish chaplain Milton Rosenbaum was in a trench in the Pacific when a marine asked for prayer. He began reciting the 23rd Psalm—soon joined by 12 Christian marines. And during the Battle of the Bulge, injured lieutenant Henry Cobb saw a priest racing into the embattled Ardennes forest from which Cobb had just come. “Where in the devil do you think you are going, Father? All hell is breaking loose up there,” Cobb asked. “That is why I need to be there,” the chaplain said. Cobb never saw him again. ☐

Some of the stories of World War II chaplains were found in Lyle Dorsett’s book Serving God and Country. Niemöller’s quote was translated by Harold Marcuse.



BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER Members of the Dutch Resistance arrest Dutch teenagers belonging to the Nazi-friendly organization NSB during World War II (see p. 42).

WWII STORIES OF HEROIC FAITH & COURAGE



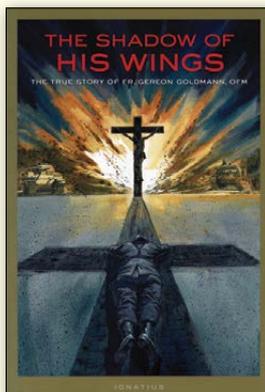
◆ CATHOLICS CONFRONTING HITLER by Peter Bartley

A comprehensive account of the heroic response to the Nazi tyranny by Pope Pius XII, his envoys, and many members of the Church in every country where Nazism existed. Using primary sources—letters, diaries, memoirs, official government reports—he also quotes the works of prominent Nazis, diplomats, churchmen, members of the Resistance, and ordinary Jews and gentiles who left eyewitness accounts of life under the Nazis. The book reveals how resistance to Hitler and rescue work engaged many churchmen and laypeople at all levels, and the high price paid by many for that courageous resistance.

“Illustrates the Church’s strong response to the Nazi regime like no other book, and the enormous amount of heroism displayed.”

— Tim Staples, *Catholic Answers*

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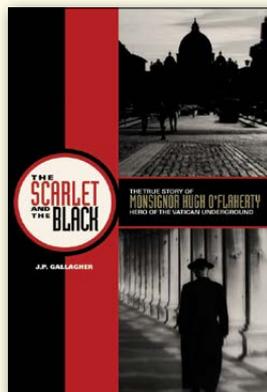


◆ THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS

Fr. Gereon Goldmann

The incredible true story of a young German seminarian drafted into Hitler’s dreaded SS during WWII. Against all odds Goldmann was ordained and secretly ministered to countless German soldiers and civilian victims, often escaping sure death. *Illustrated.*

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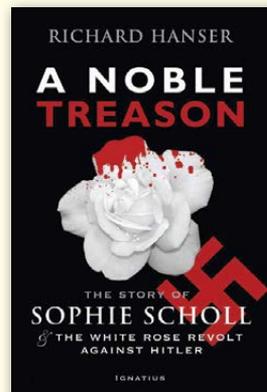


◆ THE SCARLET AND THE BLACK

J. P. Gallagher

The heroic story of Msgr. Hugh O’Flaherty, dubbed “The Scarlet Pimpernel of the Vatican.” When Rome came under the command of the dreaded SS, O’Flaherty, often in disguise, organized dangerous underground efforts to save many Jews and POWs. *Illustrated.*

SB-P . . . Sewn Softcover, \$14.95

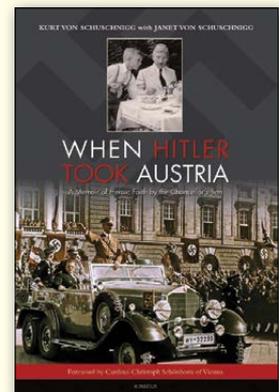


◆ A NOBLE TREASON

Richard Hanser

The moving true story of Sophie Scholl and the White Rose underground group that carried out the first overt resistance to Hitler’s regime. Hanser reveals the great courage of Scholl and White Rose members, and the terrible price they paid for their dissidence. *Illustrated.*

NOT-P . . . Sewn Softcover, \$17.95



◆ WHEN HITLER TOOK AUSTRIA

Kurt von Schuschnigg

After the Nazi takeover of his country, Chancellor von Schuschnigg was arrested and subsequently sent to a concentration camp. This is the gripping story of von Schuschnigg and his family as told by his son, recounting his many harrowing escapes, and the protection of Divine Providence. *Illustrated.*

WHTA-H . . . Hardcover, \$24.95



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Letters to the editor

Readers respond to *Christian History*

TASTE AND SEE

Thank you for your leadership of *Christian History*, which is truly a blessing to me and to many other Christians! The most recent edition—The Wonder of Creation—particularly touched my heart. Your Editor's Letter was insightful and beautiful. . . . Please prayerfully consider a future edition of *Christian History* about food. It would be wonderful to hear the story of how Christians have found Him in food, through the generations.—Edward Joseph James, MD

We've been dreaming of this issue topic for years! The central Christian meal, the Lord's Supper, is of course all about food, and then there are soup kitchens, potlucks, Christian diets, and all sorts of other interesting things. Of course the well of Christian History runs deep and wide, so there are many topics we hope to do one day, but this one is quite appealing . . . or perhaps "appetizing."

AND THE SUGGESTIONS KEEP COMING IN. . . .

I love *Christian History*. Here are some possible suggestions for future issues: Joan of Arc, Amy Carmichael, Liliias Trotter, an issue on miracles, an issue on prophets true & false (although that may be too controversial). Thank you & blessings.—Diana Teasland

All interesting suggestions. Our Torchlighters series features a video on Amy Carmichael. Several nine-year-olds we know love it! Also, check out our documentary for adults on Carmichael, Mother to the Motherless. And while it's not quite "true and false prophets," we hope to one day cover the many "lies and legends" people mistakenly believe about historic Christianity.

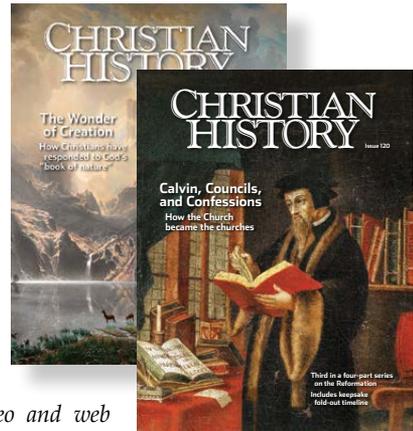
WHY WE DON'T USE FOOTNOTES

I was thrilled to learn of your publication through a recent issue of *Christianity Today* magazine . . . your lively prose, the painstaking illustrations, the variety of topics, all catch and hold interest easily. You are to be congratulated. Still, the history major was trained well. I want to see the sources, please!—M. Jennie McGuire (retired college professor), Asheville, NC

Welcome to Christian History! We are not surprised that you've noticed the scholarly nature of our content, since our articles are written by scholar-experts. However, since we began in the 1980s, Christian History has always been a popular magazine aimed at a lay audience, and as such we choose to keep the footnotes off the final page. We trust our authors to present up-to-date, accurate information and

to handle their sources discerningly. A scholar-advisor oversees the whole process and provides an important cross-check of content.

In our Recommended Resources pages we list sources used and commended by our scholars, along with others we've become aware of through our study. We even include relevant video and web resources. We feel that in the past 30 years, our loyal readers have come to trust the CHI "brand" as providing accurate history in everyday language.



THIS MAKES IT ALL WORTH IT

I am writing to say thank you for the *Christian History* subscription. I am a prisoner in Texas and having your magazine to look forward to means more than you can know. I love reading about church history and seeing the work of God through the ages. He truly is a loving God who keeps His promises. Your magazine gives me hope that despite my "history" God is able to work on my life and has a place, even for me, in His plan and His love. Again, thank you so much. May God continue to bless your work as you bless others. *Christos Anesti!* ["Christ is risen"] —Stephanos Robert Rosseau

Thank you for writing! It is our distinct pleasure to send Christian History to many prisoners, regardless of their ability to donate. In the near future, we'll release an issue on Christianity and prisons. Meanwhile, please check out captivefaith.org, where we have compiled writings by and about Christians imprisoned throughout the ages.

THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE SMART KID

Three small corrections for issue 120: Calvin's birth date, correct as 1509 elsewhere in the issue, was misprinted as 1519 on p. 8 (which would have made him a precocious teenager when he published the Institutes!) On our timeline, Thomas Cranmer's death date should have been listed as 1556 and the publication of the Westminster Confession as 1648.

We thank the many readers who faithfully support Christian History magazine. Use the envelope in the center of this issue or visit christianhistoryinstitute.org to make your next donation.

Editor's note



WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II, for me at least, have often presented themselves as a series of names: Woodrow Wilson, Alvin York, Corrie ten Boom, Anne Frank, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. We all know heroic stories; some of us remember the sagas of specific battles.

Even more than 70 years after the end of World War II, these wars still form us. Many of our print readers are from the United States, and many online readers hail from other nations that fought in these conflicts. As *world* wars, they transformed the face of the globe politically and socially.

They also formed us as Christians. World War I erupted amid the tensions of what some have called the “long nineteenth century”—a time of technological and economic progress and of optimism about humanity’s future, but also a time of questioning, revolt, and doubt. The issues it raised remained so unresolved that only two decades after the end of the “war to end all wars,” another one followed. As a whole the wars can be seen as part of a decades-long crisis in the twentieth century that was not just political, but spiritual.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In both wars, Christians had to wrestle with daunting questions. Can Christians kill? What happens when they kill each other? How far do we collaborate with governments we see as unjust, and how much do we defy them? Is deception—such as hiding Jews in the basement from the Nazis—acceptable in a greater cause? If we are ultimately citizens of another, heavenly country, how does that shape how we act in wartime in our earthly homes?

Many heroic, fascinating, and even troubling stories arise from both wars. Some come from those who fought bravely, and some come from those who resisted fighting at all. Some people escaped unimaginable suffering to spend the rest of their lives testifying about it. Others went to their deaths bravely and are now counted martyrs. Some even transformed wartime experiences into great art (we’ve got a surprise visit from a couple of Inklings in this issue).

Some soldiers found God on the battlefield, and some lost faith in him there. Some on the home front supported the wars, and some opposed them. When faced with the choice between country and God, some made their choice, while others were confused as to which choice was really which.

All these stories are in this issue, and they serve as guidance to us as we face the political and social issues of our own day. The words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer on the eve of World War II have been repeated many times, but they are no less valuable to keep before us today: “Costly grace is the hidden treasure in the field, for the sake of which people go and sell with joy everything they have. It is the costly pearl, for whose price the merchant sells all that he has; it is Christ’s sovereignty, for the sake of which you tear out an eye if it causes you to stumble. It is the call of Jesus Christ which causes a disciple to leave his nets and follow him.”



Jennifer Woodruff Tait
Managing editor, *Christian History*

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Don’t miss our next issue, the final installment of our Reformation series, where we’ll learn about reforming Catholics from Ignatius of Loyola to the Council of Trent, and consider the way the Reformation still shapes us today.

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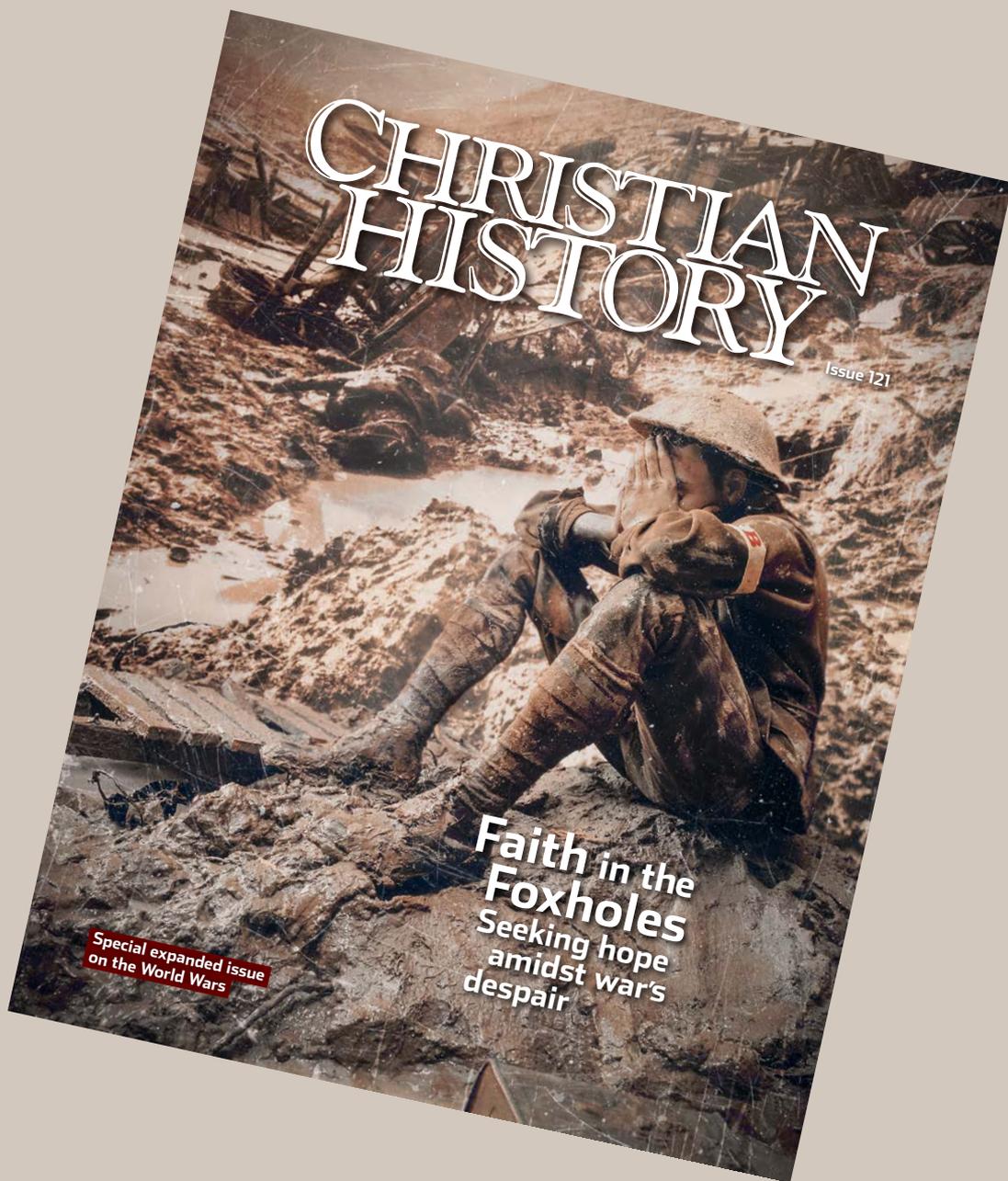
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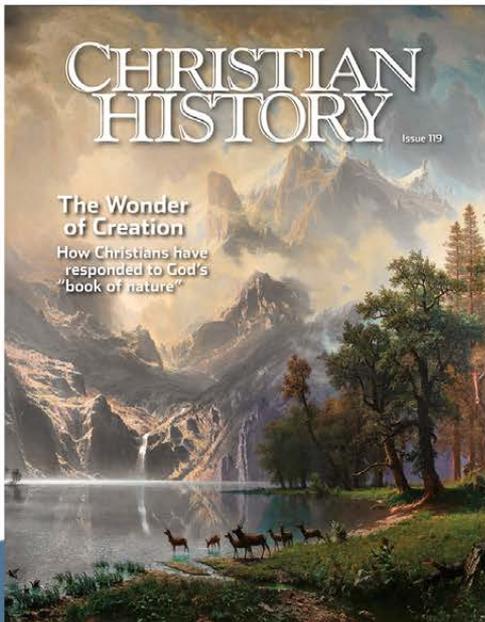
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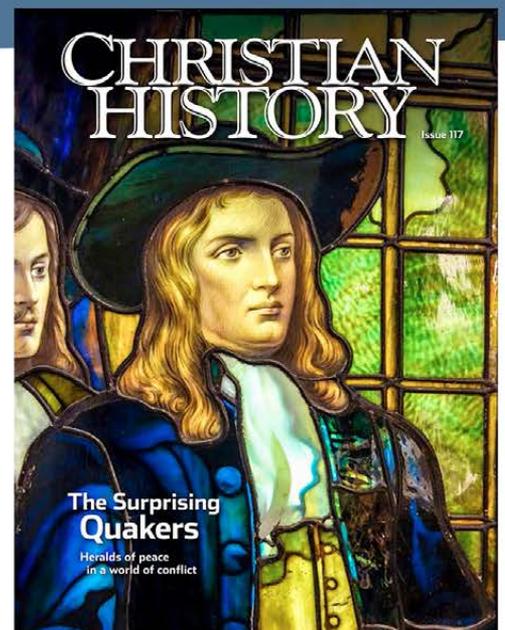
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The crisis of the West

WORLD WARS I AND II PROVED TO BE MORE THAN A POLITICAL CRISIS: THEY WERE A SPIRITUAL ONE

Jeffrey B. Webb

A WRONG TURN ON JUNE 28, 1914, plunged the world into war.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and his wife, Sophie, rode through the streets of Sarajevo in Bosnia, a province Austria-Hungary had taken from the Serbs just six years earlier. Unbeknownst to him, seven Serbian nationalists were hiding in the crowd to attempt an assassination. The first try—a bomb—missed, injuring an officer. The rattled archduke kept his scheduled appointments, but chose a different route back, intending to go to the hospital to visit his injured officer. But no one told the driver.

When the royal motorcade began to retrace its steps, the archduke asked his driver to reverse direction. The driver turned around right in front of the café where discouraged conspirator Gavrilo Princip was having a sandwich and a drink. Princip looked up, spotted his target, fired his gun, and in a flash everything changed.

FINDING AND LOSING FAITH

The wars to come transformed the Western world. The catastrophic events of 1914–1945 would play out on a global scale, wreak appalling human devastation—and present a challenge to Christian faith.

DEAD HOURS LATER Royal protocol normally prevented Sophie (*left*), a commoner, from riding with her husband (*center*), but on June 28 they were far from home, attending a minor event on their wedding anniversary.

As the twentieth century dawned, the world seemed to be getting better—and worse. European and American technological and industrial growth had improved living standards, but with troubling side effects. Millions abandoned rural towns to work in industrial cities; traditional craftspeople found themselves out of work. Terrible working conditions and deteriorating relations between bosses and workers sparked socialism, syndicalism (a movement that wanted to give more power to unions), and Communism.

Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924), who would one day lead the revolution that brought Communists to power in Russia, wrote in 1903, “We want to achieve a new and better order of society: in this new and better society . . . [n]ot a handful of rich people, but all the working people must enjoy the fruits of their common labor.” Reformists in Russia sparked a democratic uprising against Tsar Nicholas II in



THINGS FALL APART Ironically, one of Franz Joseph's personal mottos was *Viribus Unitis*, "With United Forces."

FURTHERING THE FIT

The unification movements in Central Europe had another dark side: they energized ethnic and racial nationalism. Many respectable intellectuals argued that the white race possessed superior traits, while non-whites were biologically disadvantaged and doomed to be servants and slaves. Francis Galton, a half-cousin of Charles Darwin, wrote of the new "science" of eugenics, "Its first object is to check the birth-rate of the Unfit." Tragically, these ideas fueled clashes between nations and racial repression: Russia and France both began campaigns against Jews around 1900.

Realpolitik, a new style of diplomacy, set aside morality for national self-interest. Belligerent nations edged closer to the brink of open hostility. Prussia's Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) commented in 1862, "It is not by speeches and majority resolutions that the great questions of the time are decided . . . but by iron and blood." The ensuing Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and colonial rivalry between France and Italy in North Africa brought Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy into the Triple Alliance in 1882.

The Triple Alliance raised fears and anxieties in neighboring France, Russia, and Great Britain. Under the name of the Triple Entente, they began to coordinate their responses to German expansionism. Germany's ambition to become a great power reached its height under Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941), and the Entente strengthened its resolve to contain it.

The Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente created prospects for a conflict of greater intensity and scope. In 1912 Austria's Emperor Franz Joseph grew alarmed by rising Serbian saber-rattling—encouraged by

1905. Nicholas responded with constitutional measures but cracked down on striking workers.

Democratic movements in the nineteenth century had opened the political process to previously oppressed people; millions now enjoyed basic civil liberties like freedom of speech and assembly. Initially, political unification movements in the Italian and German states promised even greater gains. Governments became more centralized and powerful. But they also developed destructive power, equipped with formidable weapons manufactured on an industrial scale.

Franz Joseph (1830–1916)

Roman Catholic Franz Joseph served as the emperor of Austria; the king of Hungary, Croatia, and Bohemia; and the president of the German Federation . . . all at once. He ruled most of his territories for 68 years. Coming to the throne in 1848 following the abdication of his uncle, he spent his reign fighting wars with Italy and Prussia.

Franz Joseph's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 fueled tensions that eventually led to the assassination of his nephew and heir, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Princip and his conspirators only dealt the latest blow in a long-

standing Serbian movement against the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Franz Joseph, 84 when the war broke out, died two years later of pneumonia. The Austro-Hungarian Empire outlived him by only two years; his great-

nephew Charles succeeded him but relinquished power the same day the armistice ending World War I was signed. (Charles spent the next few years trying to restore the monarchy, but he didn't succeed.)

In the emperor's personal life, tragedy



followed him even before his nephew's assassination. His brother Maximilian declared himself emperor of Mexico and was executed by the Mexican Republic in 1867; his 31-year-old son, Rudolph, had an affair with a 17-year-old baroness, and then apparently murdered her and committed suicide in 1889; and his wife,

Empress Elisabeth, was tragically assassinated in 1898 by an Italian anarchist who wanted to kill *some* royal person and had failed to kill the French duke of Orléans. —Jennifer Woodruff Tait, *managing editor*, Christian History



REALITY SETS IN Left: Ernest Jünger, a young German soldier, wrote of the war's early days: "We were enraptured by war. We had set out in a rain of flowers, in a drunken atmosphere of blood and roses." At the front, the soldiers found trenches instead.

A CLEAN SWEEP Right: Lenin's 1917 coup is shown toppling world leaders across the globe.

Russia—on the Balkan Peninsula. Ottoman forces and Balkan armies clashed, seeking to redraw the region's boundaries. It was into this context that Gavrilo Princip fired his gun.

LIKE FALLING DOMINOES

The assassination set in motion a flurry of diplomatic moves and countermoves. Austria-Hungary declared war against Serbia; and Russia, Germany, and France mobilized for conflict. Patriotic fervor swept Europe.

Armies collided in September 1914. Great Britain entered the war to halt German advances into France through neutral Belgium. War raged from the English Channel to the Vosges Mountains in France—the Western Front—and in the east from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Italy's King Victor Emmanuel III pulled his nation out of the Triple Alliance and joined the Entente powers in May 1915, with the promise of getting the Austrian-ruled territory of Tyrol in the Alps and the Adriatic port city of Trieste in return.

Bulgaria entered the war in October 1915, and Romania in August 1916. Military campaigns unfolded in Turkey, Palestine, the Sinai, the Tigris-Euphrates valley, and the Caucasus region. In April 1917 the United States declared war on Germany. American forces tipped the balance on the Western Front and helped to bring an end to the long military stalemate.

This industrial-sized war took a huge toll. Estimates of combatants killed range from 8,500,000 to 10,000,000. Civilian deaths added untold millions. Tens of millions of veterans came home psychologically scarred and physically maimed. Young poet Wilfred Owen (1893–1918), killed only seven days before the war ended, wrote of a fellow soldier's death: "If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood / Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs. . . / My friend, you would not tell with such high zest / To children ardent for some desperate glory, / The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori* [It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country]."

Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924)

Devout Presbyterian preacher's son Thomas Woodrow Wilson was born in Virginia. He held a PhD in political science from Johns Hopkins, and his distinguished scholarly career led to his becoming president of Princeton University, governor of New Jersey, and finally the nation's twenty-eighth president, elected in 1912.

Wilson presided over the passage of socially progressive legislation, including the establishment of the Federal Trade Commission and the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. He also helped

reintroduce federal income tax and oversaw the beginnings of Prohibition. But he is most closely associated today with America's entry into World War I.

During Wilson's first term, he tried to keep the US out of European entanglements, and ran for re-election under the slogan "He kept us out of war." But German actions early in 1917 led him to ask Congress to declare war. After the war concluded, Wilson was one of those who proposed a League of Nations



to help keep the peace. Ironically, though the league was formed in 1920 and he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts, the US refused to join, despite Wilson's plea to the Senate, "Dare we reject it and break the heart of the world?"

After Wilson's first wife, Ellen, died during his presidency, he married widow Edith Bolling Galt. Edith Wilson essentially served as de facto president after Woodrow was incapacitated by a stroke in 1919. He was defeated by Warren G. Harding in 1920, the first election when women voted nationwide.—JWT



People were not the only casualties; imperial governments in Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire fell. Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire were divided up along ethnic lines. In Germany the last days of the war brought the abdication of the ruling kaiser and the declaration of a German republic, while in Russia a Communist coup led by Lenin in October 1917 overcame a weak provisional government.

Social, political, and economic devastation now plagued Europe. The war-ending Treaty of Versailles required Germany to admit guilt and pay reparations;

Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

Young Winston's parents were a British lord (Lord Randolph Churchill, chancellor of the exchequer) and beautiful Brooklyn socialite Jennie Jerome. He fought in the British Army as a young man and, in his early thirties, married Clementine Hozier, an affectionate union producing five children. Churchill was officially Anglican, but attended religious services only occasionally.



Churchill served in various government posts in World War I, but briefly resigned and commanded a battalion on the Western Front following his involvement in planning the Battle of Gallipoli (one of the Allies' worst defeats by the Ottoman Empire). In the 1930s his resistance to the abdication of Edward VIII and other views made him unpopular, but in 1940 he became prime minister when Neville Chamberlain, who had sought peace with Hitler, resigned. Churchill was defeated for re-election in 1945, shortly after V-E Day, but returned for a second term in the 1950s.

Churchill's speeches encouraging the British people as they were repeatedly bombed by Hitler have become the stuff of legend, none more so than this one: "We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender." —JWT

Josef Stalin (1878–1953)

Ioſif (Josef) Vissarionovich Dzhughashvili came from the working class; his mother sent him to a school that trained Russian Orthodox priests, and he later went to seminary on a scholarship, but his studies appear to have led him to question and abandon his faith. He discovered the writings of Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924) around 1900 and joined the Bolshevik group within the larger Marxist movement.

Exiled to Siberia several times, the young revolutionary was drafted into, then rejected by, the Russian Army during World War I. He helped Lenin, Leon

Trotsky (1879–1940), and others with their October 1917 coup. Then, sometime around 1920 he began using the name Stalin ("steel"). Stalin's first wife, Kato Svanidze, died after only 18 months (it was reported that he said at her funeral, "With her died my last warm feelings for humanity"), and he married again to Nadezhda Alliluyeva, who committed suicide in 1932.

Stalin became general secretary of his nation's Communist Party shortly



before Lenin's death, and afterward he emerged victorious in a power struggle to lead the party. His rule included a brutal move toward industrialization, the imprisonment of thousands in labor camps, and a purge of "enemies of the working class" from the party. He at first entered a nonaggression pact with

Hitler's Germany but violated it in 1940; Hitler retaliated with a 1941 invasion. Stalin fought on the side of the Allies in World War II, but established Communist governments in most of the places that his army freed from the Germans.—JWT

in addition, German boundaries were redrawn, resulting in lost territory. Most Germans disliked the treaty. The leader of the German delegation to Versailles remarked, "Those who sign this treaty will sign the death sentence of many millions of German men, women and children." And a German newspaper wrote, "The disgraceful treaty is being signed today. Don't forget it! We will never stop until we win back what we deserve."

ENTER THE FÜRHER

Amid political deterioration and economic collapse, Germans sought national redemption from an unlikely source: Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Throughout the 1930s Hitler and Soviet dictator Stalin suspended individual rights and freedoms and implemented authoritarian controls. Both looked for opportunities to settle old scores with neighboring nations while also expanding their territorial boundaries.

Their policies created havoc, but they appealed to the national pride of those in search of life's meaning, offering companionship, a cause to fight for, a sense of moral clarity, and belief in a final reckoning with enemies. Nazi Robert Ley declared Hitler in 1937 to be Germany's savior: "The people nearly perished. Catastrophe was only narrowly averted. It was all due to the faith of one man! Yes, you who called us godless, we found our faith in Adolf Hitler, and through him found God once again."

Hitler took measures to address lingering grievances against the Treaty of Versailles. In rapid succession, he remilitarized the Rhineland,



WHAT HAPPENS NOW? Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin (from left) meet at Yalta to discuss the postwar world.

annexed Austria, and occupied the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile another European dictator, Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) of Italy, sent invasion forces to Ethiopia and Albania. In East Asia Japan's rulers cast a vision for imperial expansion. They had gained Korea and Formosa in earlier wars and now occupied Manchuria and invaded mainland China. Great Britain, the United States, France, and other Western powers attempted to thwart this aggression through diplomacy, but ultimately failed. Germany, Italy, and Japan and their allies became known as the Axis Powers.

Hitler and Stalin's nonaggression pact to divide Poland removed Hitler's final obstacle to his designs on Europe. On September 1, 1939, Nazi armored divisions poured across the Polish frontier and inaugurated World

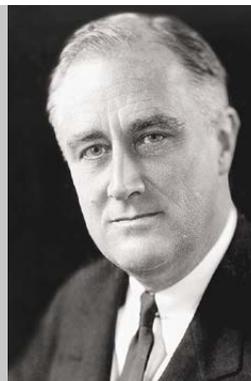
Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945)

Roosevelt, an Episcopalian, came from a wealthy New York family and rose quickly to political prominence. He served as assistant secretary of the navy under President Wilson, ran unsuccessfully for vice president in 1920, and then withdrew from politics while battling polio.

Undeterred by his illness, Roosevelt eventually reentered the political fray by winning the governorship of New York in 1929 and then the presidency in 1932. He married his fifth cousin, Eleanor

Roosevelt, in 1905; despite several documented affairs on his part, the marriage produced six children, and Eleanor gave her attention to social and humanitarian causes.

Roosevelt was elected to a record-breaking four terms as America's thirty-second president, prompting after his death the passage of the Twenty-Second Amendment to the Constitution which limits presidential terms to two.



He entered office during the Great Depression and remains famed for his "New Deal," a set of social programs aiming to restore American prosperity.

Roosevelt originally remained officially neutral in World War II while serving as a supplier of armaments to the Allied powers, but the attack on

Pearl Harbor by Japan in December 1941 changed that. The US entered the war and helped turn the tide in favor of the Allies; many historians and economists argue that the war finally brought the US economy out of the depression. —JWT

THE BIG THREE AT THE YALTA CONFERENCE. PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL, PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, AND GENERALISSIMUS STALIN. FEBRUARY 1945 (BW PHOTO). ENGLISH PHOTOGRAPHER, (20TH CENTURY) / PRIVATE COLLECTION / THE STAPLETON COLLECTION / GEMARAWANGS
FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT—WIKIMEDIA

INDUSTRIOUS MEN Hitler told his followers, "Just as we think with shame of the years 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, and so on, so posterity will think with pride and joy of the age we are fashioning at present."

War II in the West. Hitler had visions of *Lebensraum* (living space) for Germans in Slavic lands. In a 1940 speech to young Nazi cadets, he explained, "Truly, this earth is a trophy cup for the industrious man."

"MEMBERS OF OUR OWN NATION"

Hitler's invasion offered cover for another, equally sinister policy. In a 1939 speech on the "Jewish Question," Hitler told the Reichstag that "German culture . . . is German and not Jewish, and therefore its management and care will be entrusted to members of our own nation." Jews and other groups (homosexuals, the disabled, gypsies) deemed threats to German racial purity were registered, concentrated in labor camps, and ultimately starved and murdered.

By the end of 1941, Axis troops controlled France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, and most of eastern and southeastern Europe. Frustrated at his failure to conquer Britain, Hitler set out to subdue Stalin and by 1942 held large portions of Ukraine and European Russia. In the East, Japanese forces held parts of China, Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and Indonesia, plus far-flung islands in the western Pacific Ocean.

But Germany's gambit in the Soviet Union failed miserably in the face of determined Soviet opposition; Allied forces achieved a breakthrough at Normandy in western France on D-Day, June 6, 1944; and intense warfare weakened the Empire of Japan. Germany surrendered in May 1945, and following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, the Japanese government capitulated.



Now the West was forced to reckon with more human catastrophe: double or even triple the casualties of World War I; battlefield horrors at Stalingrad, the Hürtgen Forest, and Okinawa; and ghastly civilian parallels in places like Auschwitz and Lidice in Czechoslovakia—where Hitler's forces had murdered an entire noncombatant village to teach the resistance a "lesson." As Christians in uniform struggled with ultimate questions of life, death, and eternity amid bombs and bullets, countless others tried to understand how God was present in the deaths of so many innocent millions around the world. Answers about God's ultimate purposes were elusive. The world wars distilled for Christian faith the challenges of the modern age. ❏

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Adolf Hitler (1889–1945)

The Austrian-born Hitler, baptized Roman Catholic, served in the German Army in World War I. After the war he entered politics alongside other disillusioned veterans. He became interested in a German nationalist organization, and his skills as an orator and organizer earned him the leadership of what he renamed the National Socialist German Workers' (Nazi) Party.

Nazi involvement in a failed 1923 coup led to Hitler's brief imprisonment, where he wrote his autobiography *Mein Kampf*, or *My Struggle* (1925). In it he wrote of the Jews in World War I, "If . . . twelve

or fifteen thousand of these Hebrew corrupters of the nation had been subjected to poison gas, such as had to be endured in the field by hundreds of thousands of our very best German workers of all classes and professions, then the sacrifice of millions at the front would not have been in vain."

In 1933 the Nazi Party reached a majority in the German parliament, and Hitler became chancellor. Laws turned the German Republic into a one-party



dictatorship; Hitler's success in reviving the economy and annexing former German territories taken in World War I brought him widespread German support.

His invasion of Poland in 1939 triggered World War II. Hitler is most famous—or infamous—today for his policy of German racial cleansing, which led to over 5,000,000 Jews and other "undesirables" being gassed in concentration camps. As Germany was going down to its final defeat in 1945, he married his longtime mistress, Eva Braun. Less than two days later, the pair committed suicide.—JWT



A sacred conflict or an unfortunate necessity?

FIRING SCRIPTURAL “GRENADES” OVER WAR ON THE HOME FRONT

Barry Hankins

IN 1940, the year before the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, America was already inching, if not striding, toward involvement in the war that was raging in Europe. That January *Fortune*, a major secular magazine, published a scathing editorial against America’s clergy for their failure to support the war.

Fortune editors pointed out that before World War I, preachers had opposed the evil of war; but during that war they had exhibited a holy war mentality in their anti-German propaganda. Then, after World War I, the editors claimed, clergy recoiled into pacifism, ashamed of their behavior during the war. The end result? When war erupted again in Europe in 1939, American clergy were back where they started in 1914—opposed to war even in the face of, this time, real evil.

“The values used by the Church in reaching its decisions,” the editors charged, “could not have been absolute spiritual values because by no spiritual logic is it possible to get from one of these positions to the other.” But the *Fortune* editors may have had it

THE WORLD BEFORE THE WARS A preacher addresses an evangelistic meeting in New York in 1914.

backward. Church leaders had learned from their mistakes in World War I in buying into American nationalism lock, stock, and barrel. Faced with another war, they were, in scholar Gerald Sittser’s words, “trying to make a definite statement by refusing to endorse in absolute and unequivocal terms either holy war or absolute pacifism.”

WHICH WAS THE HOLY WAR?

Here is the irony: when fighting a broadly Christian nation in World War I, with issues far from clear, American Christians portrayed the Germans as evil Huns, almost beyond the pale of humanity. But, in World War II, fighting against perhaps the most evil menace in human history, American Christians were cautious in their patriotism. Why?



In November 1915 at New York’s Manhattan Club, President Woodrow Wilson gave “An Address on Preparedness,” as the *New York Times* called it. Wilson, arguably America’s most publicly devout Christian president before Jimmy Carter, had previously called on the United States as a nation, as well as private companies and citizens, to exercise “strict neutrality” with regard to the war in Europe. But now he asked for “armed neutrality” and military preparedness.

Politician William Jennings Bryan reacted immediately and predictably. Bryan had resigned as secretary of state the previous spring when the president sent notes to Germany protesting the sinking of the *Lusitania*, but no similar notes to Britain for transporting munitions on a passenger ship. Though both men were committed Presbyterians, Bryan was the more theologically conservative of the two and the more decidedly pacifist.

Speaking to reporters the day after Wilson’s speech, Bryan called the president’s new stance not only a departure from American traditions and a reversal of policy, but also “a challenge to the spirit of Christianity, which teaches us to influence others by example rather than exciting fear.” For good measure Bryan referred to the elite Manhattan Club as the place where the “mammon-worshipping portion of the Democratic Party meets to exchange compliments.”

What ensued could be called “The Great Ezekiel War of 1915.” In response to Bryan, Wilson’s administration released a private letter in which the president said he had been thinking a lot lately about Ezekiel 33:2-6.

LIFE IN A WARRING WORLD Above: Baptist children worship in Sunday school in 1916. By the time of World War II, they would have been young adults.

“LOVE LIVES FOREVER” Left: On a postcard that may have been sent overseas, a woman prays for the return of a soldier.

That passage instructs the people of Israel to “take a man . . . and set him for their watchman.” The prophet then says that if the people fail to listen to their watchman, and war comes, their blood is on their own heads. But if the watchman fails to issue the warning, the blood of the people is on him.

Wilson’s meaning was clear: the people of the United States had elected him, he was their watchman, and he was warning America to be prepared.

“EZEKIEL AT THE HELM”

This passage was haunting Wilson’s mind because the previous August former president Theodore Roosevelt had used it in an article titled, “Peace Insurance by Preparedness against War.” TR stood as far to the militaristic side of Wilson as Bryan did to the side of so-called pacifism.

In an editorial titled “Ezekiel at the Helm,” the *New York Times* commended Wilson for following Roosevelt’s lead in preparing for war. “If the president has taken the Colonel for his Bartlett, his concordance,” the editors wrote, “it is at least an improvement over relying on Bryan for that purpose.” (*Bartlett’s Concordance* was a common reference book of the day.) The editors called Bryan the watchman who would end up with the blood of the people on his hands, concluding, “Ezekiel is a much better guide for these times than Mr. Bryan.”



GERMANY, "YER OUT!" *Left:* Baseball-player-turned-evangelist Billy Sunday demonstrates his fielding range. Sunday helped promote anti-German sentiment.

But the battle over war was just getting started. On November 10, 1915, Bryan responded with his own exegesis of Ezekiel: the watchman should issue the warning only when an attack was imminent—and the US was not threatened.

"It is not surprising that Mr. Roosevelt should consult the Old Testament rather than the New," Bryan said, "because he would class Christ with the mollycoddles. But, why should the president, a Presbyterian Elder, pass over the new Gospel in which love is the chief cornerstone, and build his defense on a passage in the Old Testament, written at a time when the children of Israel were surrounded by enemies?"

As the Great Ezekiel War continued, others jumped into the fray. Former speaker of the house "Uncle" Joe Cannon (as he was affectionately called) urged Wilson to turn, not to Ezekiel, but to ancient Roman statesman Tacitus. But the Republican Cannon had a biblical reference of his own. Just as the Prodigal Son dissipated his inheritance on riotous living, he argued, so the Democrats had squandered the surplus left them by the Republicans and now lacked funds to properly defend the nation.

By the end of 1915, the Great Ezekiel War was all but over. It turned out to be a comic prelude to more serious theological attitudes. Wilson would go on to call World War I a "righteous war," fought for the "salvation of

nations," in which soldiers shed "sacred blood." It was, in short, "the final war for human liberty."

Once the United States entered the conflict, the declaration of war was followed by a raging torrent of anti-German sentiment. America's most famous evangelist at the time, Billy Sunday, liked to quip that if you turned hell upside down, you'd find "Made in Germany" stamped on the bottom. Sunday was hardly alone. Other preachers called the Germans "mad dogs, insane men, hyenas, and rattlesnakes."

HOW FAR TO PLUNGE THE BAYONET?

It wasn't just avowed fundamentalists like Sunday who spoke this way. Liberal preacher and scholar Henry Van Dyke, a former Princeton classmate of Wilson's, said that any American who "endeavors to impede America's efficiency in this righteous war should be judged by the law, and, if convicted, promptly executed."

Congregationalist Lyman Abbott urged churches to become recruiting stations for the military. "In this hour every Christian Church should be a recruiting office," he said. "The Christian ministry should hear the voice of the Master saying, 'I have come not to send peace but a sword.'" Abbott titled one of his many war-time articles, "To Love Is to Hate," arguing it was the Christian's duty to hate Germany.

One clergyman said he would have happily gone "over the top" (out of the trenches and into the no-man's land in between) and stabbed a Hun in the eye or throat, "and my conscience would not have bothered me in the least." A northern Baptist preacher reportedly instructed listeners just how far a bayonet should be plunged to avoid wasting time that could be used to kill another German: "Three inches are not enough, seven are too many,"

In fairness to Wilson, nothing he said was quite as violent as that. But still he portrayed the German leaders as singularly evil—forgetting how his own denomination's *Westminster Confession* states the depravity and sinfulness of all human beings.

American attitudes were hardly unique. Preachers and laypeople in all the combatant nations engaged in such rhetoric about what they called a "great and holy war." Some Christians attempted more moderate views; Pope Benedict XV lamented the "suicide of civilized Europe" and offered peace proposals as late as 1917. Still the high price of resistance was instructive. Quakers in Boston, for example, were arrested for distributing copies of the Sermon on the Mount.

By contrast the Christian response to World War II was cautious—sometimes too cautious, if one were to ask President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Once



HITLER HAS FALLEN Above: A synagogue celebrates D-Day.

ROSIE THE . . . AMMUNITIONS MAKER Left: World War II brought many women into the workforce to replace absent soldiers and even to manufacture weapons.

America entered World War II, FDR portrayed the fascist aggressors as “implacable foes of every principle by which Christian nations live. . . strangers alike to the love of God and of man, [knowing] no Christian impulse—neither mercy, justice, nor compassion.”

PUTTING ON SPIRITUAL ARMOR

This time such charges were accurate. The irony, of course, is that when similar things were said about the kaiser in 1918, they were not true. The Germany of World War I was not bent on domination of all of Europe, let alone the extermination of the Jews.

Throughout the war FDR continued to speak passionately about the need for “spiritual armor” and a “revival of religion” that would strengthen the nation in the fight. In contrast to Wilson’s vision of war as a righteous and sacred activity, the nominally Episcopalian FDR professed the traditional Christian posture of “just war”: that war is an unfortunate necessity to stop naked aggression in a fallen world.

What can we make of all this? On the one hand, we could argue that American Christians in both wars merely mirrored the larger culture. Long ago, in *Christianity, Diplomacy and War* (1953), Christian historian Herbert Butterfield argued that these secular wars of the twentieth century were like the holy wars of the Middle Ages. Each side sought to convince its people

“that our enemy is worse than the rest of human nature and that his wickedness demands utter destruction,” Butterfield wrote. And Christians joined right in and led the way: only a small minority stood up and said, “Wait a minute.”

But it is also true that many American Christians did something rare after World War I. They learned from history. In the 1920s and 1930s, the majority of Americans became strongly isolationist and some actually pressured Congress to pass Neutrality Acts so that the United States could not get involved in another European war.

Nationally famous liberal preacher Harry Emerson Fosdick was as gung-ho for war as anyone the first time around. But a chastened Fosdick sounded very different in 1941. In his appropriately titled book, *Living under Tension*, he wrote, “This present world, war-torn and terrible, denies everything that Christ taught and stood for.” Most American Christians may not have been that reflective and eloquent. But they were cautious patriots the second time around, recognizing the tension between this fallen world and the kingdom of God. ☐

Barry Hankins is professor of history at Baylor University and author of Woodrow Wilson: Ruling Elder, Spiritual President.

“The world must be made safe for democracy”

When President Woodrow Wilson ran for re-election in 1916, one of his campaign slogans was “He kept us out of war.” But his inaugural address on March 5, 1917, acknowledged wartime reality.

The tragic events of the thirty months of vital turmoil through which we have just passed have made us citizens of the world. There can be no turning back...

We are being forged into a new unity amidst the fires that now blaze throughout the world. In their ardent heat we shall, in God’s Providence, let us hope, be purged of faction and division, purified of the errant humors of party and of private interest, and shall stand forth in the days to come with a new dignity of national pride and spirit. Let each man see to it that the dedication is in his own heart, the high purpose of the nation in his own mind, ruler of his own will and desire.

I stand here and have taken the high and solemn oath to which you have been audience because the people of the United States have chosen me for this august delegation of power and have by their gracious judgment named me their leader in affairs.

I know now what the task means. I realize to the full the responsibility which it involves. I pray God I may be given the wisdom and the prudence to do my duty in the true spirit of this great people. I am their servant and can succeed only as they sustain and guide me by their confidence and their counsel.

The thing I shall count upon, the thing without which neither counsel nor action will avail, is the unity of America—an America united in feeling, in purpose and in its vision of duty, of opportunity and of service. We are to beware of all men who would turn the tasks and the necessities of the nation to their own private profit or use them for the building up of private power.

United alike in the conception of our duty and in the high resolve to perform it in the face of all men, let us dedicate ourselves to the great task to which we must now set our hand. For myself I beg your tolerance, your countenance and your united aid.

The shadows that now lie dark upon our path will soon be dispelled, and we shall walk with the light all about us if we be but true to ourselves—to ourselves as we have wished to be known in the counsels of the world and in the thought of all those who love liberty and justice and the right exalted.

Less than a month later, on April 2, 1917, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war in these words:



WE'RE IN; NO, WAIT, WE'RE OUT Woodrow Wilson won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919 for his role in assembling the League of Nations, but the US Senate would not ratify American membership without changes.

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them...

But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.



Inklings at war

J. R. R. TOLKIEN, C. S. LEWIS, AND THE CRUCIBLE OF WORLD WAR I

Paul E. Michelson

IN MARCH 1916 a young British battalion signaling officer graduated from Oxford University, married his childhood sweetheart, and shipped across the English Channel just in time to participate in the hellish Battle of the Somme (July 1–November 18). The very first day of this battle was the greatest bloodbath in English military history: 9,000 British soldiers killed; 36,000 wounded; and 2,000 missing.

DEAD FACES IN THE WATER

Later the young soldier wrote about a scene eerily similar to the devastated no-man's lands of northern France:

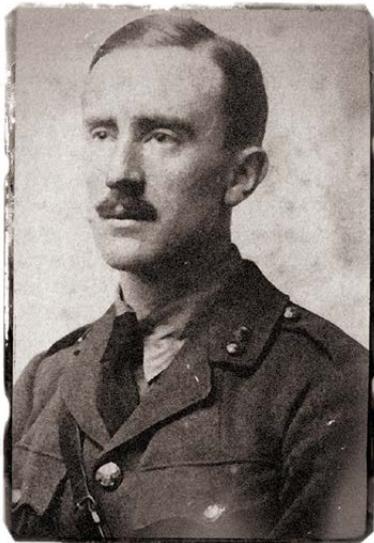
Mists curled and smoked from dark and noisome pools. The reek of them hung stifling in the still air. . . . The only green was the scum of livid weed on the dark greasy surfaces of the sullen waters. . . . He fell and came heavily on his hands, which sank deep into sticky ooze, so that his face was brought close to the surface of the dark mere. . . . Wrenching his hands out of the bog, he sprang back with a cry. "There are dead things, dead faces in the water," he said with horror. "Dead faces!"

THE FIRST INDUSTRIAL WAR German shells burst around British tanks on the Western Front.

That youthful second lieutenant was J. R. R. Tolkien (1892–1973), later professor at Oxford University and author of *The Lord of the Rings*, the second best-selling novel ever written, from which these words come.

Because of their task, Tolkien and his signalers were usually in harm's way. He went into action at the Somme in the third week of July and fought for nearly the entire battle until he was transferred home to England with pyrexia ("trench fever," see p. 24) on October 28, 1916. His illness saved his life. After a lengthy recovery period, he was still judged too sick for foreign service and returned to the Home Service for the rest of the war.

The final toll at the Somme was over a million casualties. Some 73,000 British and South African soldiers were never found—stark testimony to the brutality of trench and artillery warfare. Two of Tolkien's three best friends fell at the Somme; his entire unit was wiped out in May of 1918; and by the end of the war, nearly all of his friends had been killed. Yet he spent his free moments



in recovery writing poetry and parts of an epic about a new secondary world we now know as Middle-earth.

The following year in late April 1917, another young man, this time from Northern Ireland, entered Oxford University. He was not subject to the British draft, but in May 1917 he voluntarily enlisted in the University Officers' Training Corps. In September 1917 he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and reached the front lines in France on his nineteenth birthday in November.

"THIS IS WAR"

As he went into battle, he thought to himself, "This is War. This is what Homer wrote about." But subsequently he remembered instead "the frights, the cold, the smell of H. E. [high explosives], the horribly smashed men still moving like half-crushed beetles, the sitting or standing corpses, the landscape of sheer earth without a blade of grass, the boots worn day and night till they seemed to grow to your feet."

That young officer was Clive Staples (C. S.) Lewis (1898–1963), later to become a professor at Oxford and Cambridge and the author of the *Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Screwtape Letters*, and *Mere Christianity*. Lewis's first few months were spent in trench duty near the Belgian border. This involved mortar battles with the Germans, whose fortifications were as close as 50 yards away; exchanges of gas and artillery fire; and coping with the cold of winter in the trenches.

In February 1918 Lewis was behind the lines with trench fever, but returned to the front at the end of the month. In March 1918 the Germans began their last major attempt to end the war. During the bloodiest fighting between March 21 and early May, over a million artillery shells battered British troops in five hours (the largest bombardment of the entire war) killing 20,000 and wounding 35,000 on the first day. Lewis's battalion was in the thick of the fighting, including a comical episode in which he captured "about sixty

INTO THE WEST Tolkien (in uniform at left) rests today in Wolvercote Cemetery in Oxford (above) along with his wife and oldest son, John, born during World War I.

prisoners—that is, discovered to my great relief that the crowd of field-gray figures who suddenly appeared from nowhere all had their hands up."

At Arras on April 15, 1918, Lewis was wounded in the back by "friendly fire"—shell fragments from a British barrage—that killed one of his best friends as well as his sergeant. Two fragments entered his left chest and fractured a rib. Lewis's war was over. He was evacuated on May 22 to England, where he spent the rest of the war convalescing.

Removing the fragments from his chest was judged too dangerous; they remained embedded for several decades. By 1918 nearly all of his friends were dead. Like Tolkien he had survived when many others hadn't. And like Tolkien he spent his recuperation writing poetry. Both men had lived out what Lewis would later argue: that art is worth doing in wartime if it is worth doing at all.

MUD AND FLOOD AND BLOOD

These two different men were deeply influenced personally, philosophically, and literarily by their experiences in the "animal horror" of the trenches. Tolkien wrote in 1940: "At any minute it is what we are and are doing, not what we plan to be and do, that counts. But I cannot pretend that I found that idea much comfort against the waste of time and militarization of the army. It isn't the tough stuff one minds so much. I was pitched into it all, just when I was full of stuff to write, and of things to learn; and never picked it all up again."

In *Pilgrim's Regress* (1933) Lewis claimed, "We lost our ideals when there was a war in this country. They were ground out of us in the mud and the flood and the blood." He later displayed a curiously detached attitude



IN ASLAN'S COUNTRY Lewis (shortly after discharge, at left) shares a grave (above) at Holy Trinity Church with his brother Warnie, also a veteran haunted by memories.

toward the war, writing in *Surprised by Joy* (1955) that the Great War “often seems to have happened to someone else.” It seems likely that Lewis suffered from what is now called post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He had nightmares about the war and wondered why he survived when none of his mates did. This may account for some of his odd behaviors, which can be explained as coping strategies.

The combat brotherhood of war reinforced the value of friendship for both Tolkien and Lewis. It is no accident that the first part of *The Lord of the Rings* is entitled *The Fellowship of the Ring*; and in *The Four Loves* (1960), Lewis wrote, “To the Ancients, Friendship seemed the happiest and most fully human of all loves; the crown of life and the school of virtue. The modern world, in comparison, ignores it.” The Inklings literary group that came to be central for both men was predominantly composed of World War I veterans.

FINDING GUNS AND FINDING GOD

As a result of the war, Tolkien’s Catholicism deepened. Lewis’s atheism appeared initially stronger, though during his 1918 convalescence, he made a surprising admission that “the conviction is gaining ground on me that after all Spirit does exist.” His conversion to Christianity after 1930 had wartime roots.

Despite their wartime hopes, neither man achieved fame as a poet. However, this failure as epic poets resulted in later success as epic prose writers. Both came to share an “anti-modern” worldview and a lack of faith in humanity’s goodness—learned in the

striking brutality and impersonality of guns that could kill from well over a hundred miles away; poison gas, barbed wire, machine guns, and tanks; and aircraft and U-boats that dealt destruction to hapless and faceless victims from above or below.

But the war was also a school of duty, honor, heroic deeds, and courage—traditional values and themes critical in Middle-earth and Narnia. Tolkien, John Garth has written, “did not simply preserve the traditions that the war threatened, but reinvigorated them for his own era.” Lewis did the same with Narnia.

Neither was eager for war, but when the time came, they carried out what they considered to be their duty. “I wish it need not have happened in my time,” said Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings* about his own wartime task. “So do I,” said Gandalf, “and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time given us.”

In the end Tolkien wrote, “One must face the fact: the power of Evil in the world is not finally resistible by incarnate creatures, however ‘good,’”—lines echoed by Lewis in *The Last Battle*: “Remember that all worlds draw to an end and that noble death is a treasure which no one is too poor to buy.” Both maintained that the eucatastrophe of God’s grace will prevail, no matter how our earthly sojourn plays out. We will find consolation and redemption, mingled with joy and grief. ☒

Paul E. Michelson is distinguished professor emeritus of history at Huntington University.



No atheists in the foxholes?

SOME PEOPLE FOUND RELIGION IN THE EXPERIENCE OF WARTIME,
BUT OTHERS LOST IT

Kevin L. Walters

IN GERMAN prisoner-of-war (POW) camp Stalag 4c, a small group of imprisoned US troops gathered for an improvised Christmas Eve worship service in 1944. Since they lacked a chaplain, a young man reluctantly volunteered to lead them in prayer.

Clarence Swope, who was present at the service, recalled, "It was the most moving religious experience I ever had." Though they prayed for the safety and comfort of their families rather than their own, Swope described leaving the gathering with an exhilarating feeling of complete faith that all would be well.

Swope's experience raises significant questions about how other troops interacted with the Christian faith during World War II. Overall the war left a mixed religious legacy for the 16,000,000 Americans who served in the US military. Most considered themselves to be Christians both before and after the war, but few returned unchanged. For some the challenges of war deepened their Christian faith. Others, however, struggled to reconcile their experience of war with their

ETERNAL FATHER, STRONG TO SAVE A Czech artist painted this solemn, haunting military funeral in 1915.

understanding of Christian teachings. In both cases the war challenged how they understood both God and humanity.

WELCOME TO THE ARMY

Upon entering the military, young men and women encountered a different world. Each branch buried recruits' individual identities beneath a new shared identity with a shared purpose—winning the war. And while before the war recruits may have defined themselves religiously as Methodist, Baptist, or Pentecostal, to the US government, these groups were all simply "Protestant." This simplification frustrated some, but most understood the need for flexibility.

The government invested a great deal to provide religious services for soldiers and sailors for at least

A WWI sermon on the nature of God

I want that each one of us shall see that God has larger meanings in life than we are now able to read, that God has larger answers to our prayers than we are able to anticipate, that God has a thousand ways of fulfilling His promise in human lives that trust Him; that so, forewarned by this knowledge of God's wondrous greatness and transcendence, we may be forearmed against the perils of disappointment, forearmed against that disheartening of soul which makes our hearts the ground, the fruitful ground, for the most noxious seed the devil can ever sow there.—
"But If Not..." by J. Stuart Holden (1874–1934), vicar of St. Paul's in London, preached in 1914 shortly before England entered World War I

two reasons. First, the religious services assured civilians that their sons and daughters were being cared for.

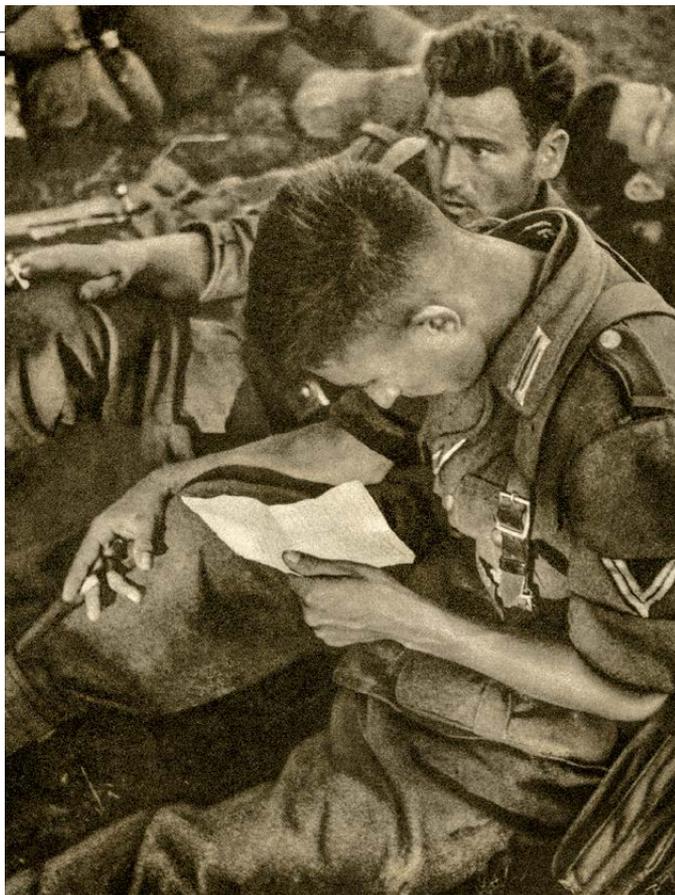
Second, religion contributed to military effectiveness by reducing fear, drunkenness, and sexually transmitted disease. In World War II, the military employed over 12,000 chaplains from about 70 traditions. The army alone spent more than 31,000,000 dollars to build chapels stateside and overseas. In addition the government published and distributed more than 11,000,000 pocket Bibles.

These investments were heralded in promotional and training materials and in the broader press. "Even though your soldier daughter may be far from home, you need not worry about her spiritual life," stated a Women's Army Corps pamphlet for parents of prospective recruits. "The Army has taken special pains to see that, no matter where she goes, she is never without the comfort, guidance, and protection of the church."

A booklet distributed to World War II army recruits also explained the usefulness of religion. "Religion is always most strengthening and helpful to people whose lives are troubled, and whose realization is greatest that forces beyond their own control may alter their lives." Alluding to darker days ahead, it continued, "As a soldier in a savage and brutalizing war, you can find peace and comfort in religion."

Once assigned to training camps, soldiers and sailors attempted to adapt to a new way of life, where the lack of privacy and regimented scheduling proved especially challenging. Reading a Bible on a bunk became a public display. Some evangelistically minded men used this as an opportunity to provide a silent testimony with the hope of starting conversations.

Others feared that their religion would be seen as a sign of weakness. Some troops reported being required to attend chapel during training, though requiring this was against military policy. Frank Wiswall described



MOMENTS OF COMFORT A German soldier on the Eastern Front in World War II reads a letter from home.

being marched in formation to chapel at Fort Jackson in South Carolina. Most of the men, however, kept right on marching—out the back door!

Training and work sometimes conflicted with chapel services. Military policy encouraged commanders to accommodate religious soldiers, but preparing for war remained the highest priority. Some recruits realized that they could avoid work by attending chapel. Navy cadet Keith Willison avoided chapel during training at Camp Farragut until a friend pointed out that it was better than KP (kitchen) duty. He soon became quite active in religious life and reflected that his time in the navy was spiritually transformative.

INTO THE UNKNOWN

Departing for overseas duty increased soldiers' and sailors' anxieties about the future. Most realized that they had little individual control over what would happen. As they put their worldly affairs in order, some reflected on eternal matters too. Most troop transports had a chaplain assigned who was often kept quite busy (see "Services in leaky tents," p. 25).

In New York the port chaplain's office created a form letter that recorded baptisms at sea and could be sent to a local church pastor. Chaplains also led regular worship services. Marine lieutenant Jim



THOU SHALT NOT KILL? Marines fight at the Battle of Okinawa.

logs, palm fronds, and lumber from shipping crates. Some used empty brass shell casings to make candleholders, vases, and Communion cups. Through craftsmanship even troops who chafed against sitting and listening in church could express themselves religiously.

“HELP, LORD!”

For some facing imminent battle, faith provided a measure of comfort as the future seemed out of their control. As an infantry scout in the Pacific, Chuck Holsinger prayed and read his Bible before and during multiday patrols. He recalled praying simply “Help, Lord!” before one particularly worrisome mission. “In that moment I sensed the Lord’s presence,” he recorded in his memoir. “There was horrendous fear, but I knew that whether I lived or died, I belonged to the Lord.”

Combat correspondent Robert Sherrod witnessed a Mass held for Marines on an attack transport as they prepared to invade Tarawa. “Some five hundred men knelt in the dripping room or in the passageways leading to the room,” wrote Sherrod. “The heat and the stench from the bodies of so many sweltering men hit one in the face like a bucket of dishwater.”

Among the most terrifying battle experiences was attack by enemy artillery. Troops could do little but find a low spot and wait it out. Former infantryman Paul Casey described praying fervently as shells exploded around his hastily dug trench in a German forest. Fearful of a tree burst, against which his shallow hole would provide no protection, Casey prayed with such intensity that he actually fell asleep, alarming his buddies who thought he was dead.

On Iwo Jima Marine Pat Braden had taken a position in a shell hole when a Japanese gun started walking shells in his direction. “I assumed the prayer position, and asked the Lord to have my life spared,” he recalled. “Sweat began pouring down my face. Fear was with me.” Braden survived, and he believed that the event shaped his life.

Others were not so fortunate. Jesse Beazley, once a combat rifleman in the D-Day invasion force, commented, “I thought how good it would be if I could lay down one night without thinking somebody’s trying to kill me, if I could just go to sleep one night and sleep in peace, I could just rest.” He reflected on prayers and calls for help he heard from wounded men stranded on a battlefield in Europe. “You hear

Lucas described one service led by “a frightened young chaplain who dwelt at length on the prospect of sudden death for all of us.” Lucas concluded, “I did not find him comforting.”

As they arrived overseas, troops’ experiences with combat varied widely depending on their location and role. But all faced the prospect of danger. (In World War I, one soldier described war as “months of boredom punctuated by moments of terror.”) As the situation allowed, some men sought to reestablish familiar patterns of worship.

In the Pacific soldiers creatively constructed and outfitted chapels from available materials, such as

A WWII sermon on the nature of man

When God made us so that we could love and help one another, he exposed his family to the possibility that they would hate and harm one another. Necessarily. The one goes with the other. And sin came in, with its long entail of sorrow and suffering, and we can be hurt at any time by the folly, carelessness, or crime of another. But would you rather live in a world in which that couldn’t happen? Do you wish God had so made us that we could never influence each other, never be friends, never guide, comfort, or help each other . . . never love? —“*What if Calamity Comes?*” by Methodist pastor W. E. Sangster (1900–1960), preached at Methodist Central Hall during World War II

Wittgenstein's war: A philosopher finds God in the trenches

The Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) served an eventful tour of duty on the Eastern Front in World War I. He fought bravely, won medals, wrote a philosophical masterpiece—and met God.

Wittgenstein came from an aristocratic family of Jewish ancestry in Vienna. Tragedy dogged him and his siblings: three of his four brothers committed suicide, two in the early 1900s and one as a soldier on the Eastern Front in 1918. Ludwig and his surviving brother, Paul, who lost his right arm in battle against the Russians in 1914, both considered suicide as well. Just before World War II, his sisters would escape Nazi persecution by making a financial deal with Hitler.

In the early 1910s, Wittgenstein studied mathematics and logic at the University of Cambridge under Bertrand Russell, where, though baptized Catholic, he practiced no particular faith. When the war began, the young man enlisted in the Austrian army and was assigned to an artillery regiment. He never really fit in, however, since he was meticulous and bookish and considered the others to be “a pack of rogues.”

In late August 1914, Wittgenstein's regiment moved to the front to help counteract the Russian drive to the Austrian border. While on a free day in Tarnów, Galicia, the young man found a shabby bookstore and came across a copy of Leo Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief*, the novelist's unorthodox retelling of the life of Christ—it removed the miracles and focused on the ethics of Jesus.

“HOW SHOULD I LIVE?”

Wittgenstein's secret wartime diary reveals how intensely he engaged Tolstoy's *Gospel*, which he judged a “magnificent work. But it's not what I expected.” Tolstoy's words helped him to cope with the terrors of battle. He wrote: “I always carry Tolstoy's ‘Statements of the Gospel’ around with me like a talisman.” (Some other soldiers even called him “the man with the gospels.”) And Tolstoy's depiction of God helped the young soldier to plumb deeper understandings of existence and meaning. In September 1914 he wrote in his diary, “Again and again I say in my mind the words of Tolstoy ‘Man is powerless in the flesh but free by the Spirit.’”



“HORRIBLE TORTURES” In World War I, Wittgenstein (*left*) tried to make sense of war. In World War II, soldiers like artist Robert Blyth (self-portrait, *above*) were still trying.



Wittgenstein's new commitments proved to be critical in October 1914 when he found himself on the ship *Goplana* patrolling the Vistula River under heavy Russian fire. He wrote in his diary, “I can die in an hour, I can die in two hours, I can die in a month or only in a few years. I can't know or help or do anything about it: that's how life is. How should I live so as to be able to die at any moment?”

As the war dragged on, Wittgenstein suffered inner torment, describing one day as “An assortment of horrible tortures. An exhausting march, one night spent coughing, a party of drunks, a society of common and stupid people. Do good and be pleased with your virtue. I'm sick and have had a bad life.” But prayer and reflection brought a measure of comfort: he concluded the entry, “God help me. I'm a poor unhappy man. God hear me and grant me your peace! Amen.”

In June 1916 Wittgenstein stood his post amid heavy shelling during Russia's Brusilov Offensive, for which he earned the Bronze Medal of Valor; later he received another decoration, the Silver Medal for Valor, 2nd Class. Wittgenstein's war ended in late 1918 when he was taken prisoner on the Italian front. He spent nine months as a POW and returned to his family in 1919. In 1921 his battlefield notes on logic were published as *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, a book that profoundly impacted philosophy and established him as one of the twentieth-century's greatest intellectuals.—Jeffrey B. Webb



EIGHTY MILLION GONE Soldiers ended up in hospitals by the scores in both wars.

During war, troops debated how to best interpret the Ten Commandments' stern proscription against killing as murder. Helen Brown reported that her brother Robert Wintermote's interpretation resulted in guilt and nightmares long after the war. She concluded, "He didn't need this."

some of them that don't know how to pray," he recalled. "Maybe all they know is the Lord's Prayer." Some wounded soldiers could not be reached. "Their voice goes weaker and weaker and weaker, and it gets to be a grunt," Beazley explained. "Then you don't hear it no more."

DECOMPRESSION

After veterans returned home, the effects of their wartime experiences rippled through the rest of their lives. The war infused some with a new sense of purpose and thankfulness as they considered their own survival. Some desired to stay true to promises they made to God under duress (see "Christmas miracles," pp. 56–57). Others simply wanted to live faithfully to honor those who died.

Holsinger, for example, believed that God had spared him for a purpose. He eventually returned to the Philippines as a missionary and attributed the postwar missionary boom in Asia (see "Christ and the remaking of the Orient," pp. 47–51) to the experiences of troops in the region.

In contrast some veterans struggled to reconcile their experiences with their Christian beliefs.

For Clarence Swope the Christmas Eve service he spent as a prisoner of war marked a high point of his faith journey—a religious experience he never found again. "I hate to admit it, but I've never been able to go to a church and feel that feeling," he reflected in a 1977 interview with his son, as he explained why he was not a regular church participant. He maintained faith in a higher power but found organized religion to be largely uninspiring: "So I don't go to church, but I think I got a reason to believe that there's somebody somewhere that when you need him, he's there."

The experience of war and military service shaped the Christian faith of two wartime generations but not in easy and consistent ways. The wars forced young people to address questions about God and humanity that most of us only brush against in abstract terms. Some found deeper faith, while others floundered. In either case, war undercut easy answers. ■

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Suffering in the trenches

Trench fever was one of the most common afflictions suffered by soldiers during World War I, infecting over 1,000,000 victims in that war's filthy trenches. Also known as "pyrexia of unknown origin" or PUO, it was transmitted by human body lice. Bathing and cleanliness were uncommon in the trenches and might have been among the least of soldiers' concerns. The actual bacterial cause of

the infection was not identified until the 1960s.

The illness was not known to be fatal in World War I, but could be severely debilitating. Symptoms included fever up to 104° F, chills and sweats, loss of strength and balance, headache, abdominal pain, bone pain (especially in the shins), neuropsychiatric weakness and depression, and even heart symptoms.

Bedrest and cleanliness usually cured it in several weeks, but many cases persisted for three months or longer. J. R. R. Tolkien (see "Inklings at War," pp. 17–19) was incapacitated by trench fever for the better part of two years.

Trench fever was rare after the First World War, but reappeared on the Eastern Front in the Second World War. It is now treatable with antibiotics, but exists today as "urban trench fever" among homeless, and the poor.—Paul E. Michelson



Services in leaky tents: chaplains in the Great War

For Baptist minister C. C. Bateman, serving as a military chaplain turned him into “a spiritual sportsman [who] could use fishing tackle or exercise his use of the Gospel gun as a wing shot.” While chaplains did not carry weapons, Bateman’s metaphor was apt, for military clergy had to adapt to new circumstances quickly. World War I forced the military chaplaincy to refashion itself into a new organization: larger, more mobile, and more diverse than ever before.

In April 1917 American military chaplains numbered only 146 (army) and 40 (navy). The army chaplaincy expanded to 2,230 men (including 63 African Americans), and the navy quintupled to 201 over 18 months of war. The ministers who donned Uncle Sam’s uniform in the Great War had to fulfill three specific duties: lead worship services, bury the dead according to the soldiers’ religious traditions, and provide language and literacy instruction.

BIBLE CLASSES UNDER THE SKY

Ministry in combat, most new chaplains learned, was quite different from preaching at home. First there was physical hardship. Chaplain G. W. Weldon mused, “We used tallow candles when we could get them, carried our own water, waded through mud, held services in a leaky tent, taught Bible classes in their company streets with the sky for shelter.” Those same obstacles could bring pleasure too—unit camaraderie after an exhausting day and stargazing during quiet nights.

Second, the war was unnerving; church services in the field often amplified the terror. One chaplain

BATTLEFIELD SCARS A World War I chaplain conducts a funeral.

reported huddling with a handful of soldiers while conducting worship as an aerial dogfight—a new technique of close-range airplane-to-airplane combat—raged overhead. No matter the circumstances, chaplains provided spiritual nourishment in hard times.

For many chaplains religious cooperation endured as one of the greatest pleasures and accomplishments of wartime service. Unlike the denominationally segregated home front, chaplains ministered to multifaith and multidenominational units. This invigorated many and became the stuff of wartime lore. “So there you have it,” Chaplain Frank Wilson concluded one report, “the Jewish Feast of Purim, celebrated by American soldiers in Italy, in a Young Men’s Christian Association hut, addressed by an Episcopalian chaplain, refreshments being furnished by the Red Cross society, and cigarettes donated by the Roman Catholic Knights of Columbus.”

Over and over again, chaplains repeated tales of accomplishment in war’s wilderness: crafting novel worship services in strange venues, discovering how to pastor men of many different backgrounds, and welcoming the opportunity to encourage faith through rituals other than their own.—Ronit Y. Stahl, fellow in the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the University of Pennsylvania and author of *Enlisting Faith: How the Military Chaplaincy Shaped Religion and State in Modern America*.



Service for peace

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS RESISTED A WORLD AT WAR

Steven M. Nolt

"WHAT'S THE MATTER, Burkholder? Why don't you answer the judge?" the army major snapped at 22-year-old Paul Burkholder. Perched on a small chair, the young man sat in a semicircle of officers and lawyers sent to Fort Mead, Maryland, in 1918 to question those who refused to don uniforms as soldiers.

The major kept roughing Burkholder up, "until he got me in a position that I couldn't scarcely talk [and] my voice trembled." Finally the young man explained that he wasn't afraid of fighting, but "if I have to take the uniform, I'm identified as one of the war-machine." Citing "the Word of God," he said, "When you accept the uniform, you've sworn your allegiance . . . to a military machine." With only "a common school education," facing an array of "learned men," Burkholder remembered Jesus' words (Luke 12:11) that "my Spirit shall reveal to you what you should say." Later he reflected: "One thing I had when I left home, I had a congregation that was back of me, praying for me, and I also had a praying mother."

ARGUING FOR PEACE

Burkholder was one of several thousand World War I draftees in the United States and Canada who refused

TRADING THE WAR MACHINE FOR VEGETABLES At a camp in Kansas, Mennonite COs peel potatoes in 1918.

military service because of Christian peace convictions. Some conscientious objectors (COs) were mainline Protestants, believers in an optimistic theology that emphasized worldwide progress toward peace. Others (Jehovah's Witnesses and some Plymouth Brethren) refused to fight due to their views on when Christ was coming back. A few nonreligious men refused service based on secular arguments for peace.

Most COs, however, were members of the so-called historic peace churches: Burkholder's Mennonite tradition, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Church of the Brethren, and smaller related groups, such as the Amish and the Old German Baptists. These churches oppose violence, even in self-defense, and ground their stance in the teachings of Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount. For Mennonites, who trace their roots to the Reformation's Anabaptist movement, and Brethren, who emerged from 1700s radical Pietism, nonresistance is an essential aspect of following Jesus in everyday life. Quakers tend to focus on the individual conscience and have a history of working with and



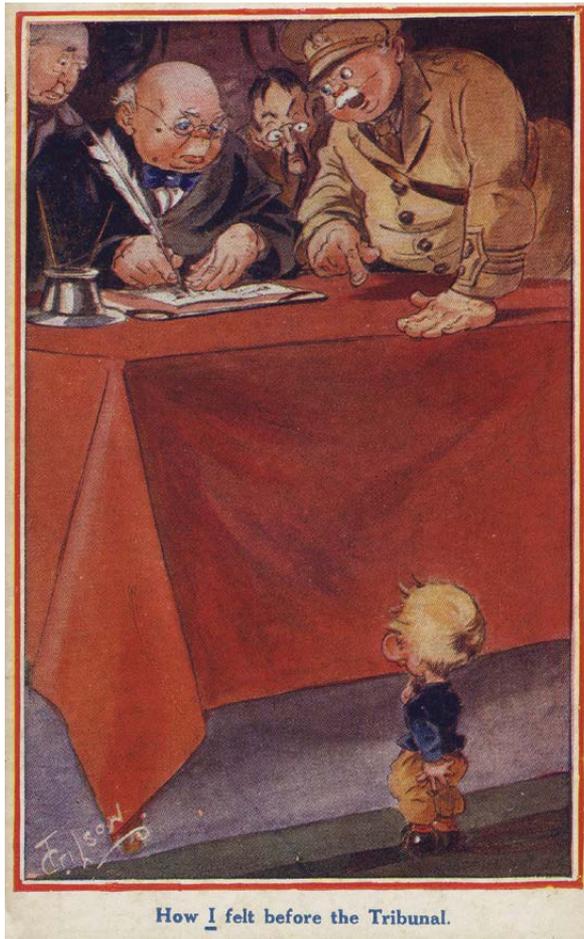
within political systems; the Quaker saying “there is that of God in every person” led them to connect pacifism with broader issues of social reform.

CONSCRIPTION OF CONSCIENCE

In the nineteenth century, authorities in the United States and Canada generally allowed COs to pay a sum of money to get out of the draft, or to hire a substitute. Although such arrangements strike us today as ethically dubious, they had a long tradition in Europe and were widely accepted by both pacifists and nonpacifists.

By the twentieth century, however, legal and religious ideas had changed. As Canada and the United States lurched toward “total war,” COs became highly unpopular—especially because some historic peace church members worshiped in German. Canada ended up excusing most COs in practice but subjected them to withering public criticism. In the United States, the government assumed—mistakenly—that all COs would accept noncombatant assignments within the military. They ordered draftees with religious scruples about fighting to report to military camps and await word on their status from the War Department.

Then the real troubles began. In some places COs were relegated to a corner of the camp in tedious, intolerable limbo and forgotten. But in other camps, if they so much as prepared their own meals, they were told they had voluntarily participated in the war effort and must now don a uniform. Those who refused to lift a finger risked court-martial for insubordination; dozens



THIS LITTLE PIG? *Left:* COs were subject to much public criticism in World War I and, like Burkholder, often felt up against the whole military machine (*right*).

were convicted and sentenced to lengthy terms of hard labor, although virtually all of the verdicts were overturned after the war ended.

Camp commanders, saddled with responsibility for men whose beliefs they did not share and whose position the War Department refused to clarify, sometimes took their frustrations out on the COs. Objectors were beaten, denied medical treatment, and threatened with death. A few were even “baptized” in camp latrines in mockery of their beliefs. In the most dramatic case, four Hutterites (Jacob Wipf and the brothers Joseph, Michael, and David Hofer) were sent to Alcatraz and spent weeks hung by their wrists in unlit, underground cells. When that torture did not break their commitment, they were dispatched to Fort Leavenworth prison, where Joseph and Michael died. In a final insult, their bodies were shipped home in full military dress.

THE PACIFIST IS THE NORMAL MAN

The experience of COs in World War I made no one happy. Army brass did not want the responsibility, and



WHAT ABOUT THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS? On this magazine cover, FDR is shown pondering the global situation that was on everyone's mind in World War II—including how those who would not fight might contribute to the war effort.

participants, and members of the secular War Resisters League. In Canada Mennonites made up about 65 percent of the 10,000 men in ASW. Almost all Jehovah's Witnesses, and some others, chose to go to prison instead. Quaker CO Harry Wright-Johnson recalled, "One of my friends was sent to prison for refusing to serve. Later my friend was pardoned by President Roosevelt."

WORK OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Canadian COs helped build the Trans-Canada Highway, planted tens of thousands of seedlings on Vancouver Island, and maintained national parks. American participants worked for agencies like the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Reclamation, and the Public Health Service. A few volunteered to be medical guinea pigs for doctors' experiments. Some, like Wright-Johnson, took on dangerous, glamorous assignments as "smoke jumpers" who parachuted into remote areas to battle forest fires.

Hundreds of COs in the United States and a small number in Canada worked in understaffed public psychiatric hospitals. They found conditions there unspeakable, sparking a postwar movement to reform mental health care. Although women were not liable for the draft, some expressed peace convictions by volunteering as nurses or dieticians in CPS or ASW camps.

CO camps were placed in rural, out-of-the-way places (like Lagro, Indiana, and Coshocton, Ohio) where they would attract little attention. Some COs wanted a more public witness, such as working with refugees in war zones. One US group trained to go to China, but Congress banned any COs from leaving the country. Some Canadians were allowed to go to Britain and care for children evacuated from London.

Like soldiers and sailors, COs served "for the duration," but after the war, they were not eligible for their countries' respective veterans' benefits. In some cases churches developed systems of mutual aid to support men who had not received meaningful wages for years.

In 2002 Harry Wright-Johnson reflected on his war experience: "I think I could not have done anything but become a CO. I do not think it necessarily made me better. I think that is who I was." He spoke for thousands who, like Burkholder decades before, had decided to step away from the war machine. ■

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historic peace church leaders desired a plan for alternative service: direct, nonviolent contributions to society modeling a different type of Christian patriotism. In 1940 a novel experiment in church-state relations unfolded on both sides of the border. Known as Alternative Service Work (ASW) in Canada and Civilian Public Service (CPS) in the United States, the programs put COs to work performing "work of national importance" under civilian direction.

Participants lived in church-run work camps complete with barracks and mess halls. Governments provided facilities, while churches financed administration, food, health care, and small living stipends. Each camp was operated by a denomination (usually one of the historic peace churches) but open to participants from other churches. Eventually there were 151 CPS units across 34 states and 31 ASW camps in five provinces. George Baird wrote to a friend about his experience at a camp in New Hampshire: "They want to show that the Pacifist is the normal man, doing a normal job, receiving a normal wage, and living naturally and normally among people."

About 12,000 men participated in CPS. The largest number, 40 percent, were Mennonites, followed by Brethren, Quakers, Methodists, smaller numbers from over 70 other Christian denominations, 60 Jewish

During World War I, an American battalion moved through the wooded terrain of Argonne in northeast France. Charged with capturing the Decauville Railroad from the Germans, they attempted to cross a valley north of Chatel-Chéhéry on October 8, 1918, but were pinned down by German machine-gun fire.

Seventeen men under the command of Sergeant Bernard Early were assigned to take out the machine guns positioned on a nearby hill. One of those 17 was Corporal Alvin York.

Born on December 13, 1887, in Pall Mall, Tennessee, Alvin Cullum York was the third of 11 children. His mother belonged to a church that promoted Christian pacifism, and though he was reportedly fond of drinking and a good scrap, he often attended church.

When York registered for the draft at the start of World War I, he allegedly requested an exemption as a conscientious objector. His request was denied. (He later denied registering as a conscientious objector, and his refusal to sign papers provided by his pastor that would have made his case stronger seems to support his denial.) Eventually he came around to a reading of the Bible that justified his participation in the war. In a diary published after the war, York wrote of his experience in the Ardennes:

God would never be cruel enough to create a cyclone as terrible as that Argonne battle. Only man would ever think of doing an awful thing like that. It looked like [what] "the abomination of desolation" must look like. . . .

And, oh my, we had to pass the wounded. And some of them were on stretchers going back to the dressing stations, and some of them were lying around, moaning and twitching. And the dead were all along the road. And it was wet and cold. And it all made me think of the Bible and the story of the Anti-Christ and Armageddon. And I'm telling you the little log cabin in Wolf Valley in old Tennessee seemed a long long way off.

THIRTY AGAINST ONE

After working their way behind the Germans, York and his companions captured the unit's headquarters. That success was cut short when machine-gun fire erupted



Alvin York: The Christian pacifist who went to war

from a nearby ridge, killing six Americans and wounding three others. This left York as the highest ranking soldier of the group.

The skirmish that followed has become the stuff of legend. Caught off guard York didn't have time to seek cover: "As soon as the machine guns opened fire on me, I began to exchange shots with them. There were over thirty of them in continuous action, and all I could do was touch the Germans off just as fast as I could."

At one point, six enemy soldiers leaped from a trench and charged York with their bayonets. With no rounds left in his rifle, he shot each of them with his pistol before they could reach him.

During the melee the German commander, First Lieutenant Paul Jürgen Vollmer, emptied his pistol at York. Every shot missed. He eventually surrendered, and York and his seven men returned to the American lines with 132 German prisoners.

The victory itself was relatively small amid the colossal events of World War I, but the story of York took on a life of its own. York was soon promoted to sergeant. Later he received the Medal of Honor and became a bona fide American hero.

In 1941 Gary Cooper played York in the patriotic film *Sergeant York*, which appeared in theaters just months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. But after the war, York rarely spoke of his battlefield experience, preferring rather to promote both Christian education and vocational education in rural Tennessee. He died on September 2, 1964, in Nashville at the age of 76. His farm is now the Sgt. Alvin C. York State Historic Park.—Matt Forster

X MARKS THE SPOT Above: In a picture taken shortly after World War I ended, Alvin York displays the hill on which his heroics took place.

THIRTY-ONE YEARS OF CRISIS

THE POLITICAL BACKDROP OF THIS ISSUE

THE RELIGIOUS STORIES IN THIS ISSUE



The Red Baron (replica)

1914

June 28 Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife, Duchess Sophie, are assassinated by Serbian activist Gavrilo Princip.

July 28 Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia, officially launching World War I.

1915

April 24 Genocide against Armenians begins in Turkey.

May 7 German U-boat sinks British liner *Lusitania*.

1916

May 16 Sykes-Picot Agreement divides the Middle

East between Britain and France.

July 1 Battle of the Somme begins.

1917

April 2 Wilson asks the US Congress to declare war.

June 25 First American troops land in France. The first US soldiers will be killed in combat in October.

November 7 Bolsheviks seize power in Russia.

1918

July 17 Bolsheviks execute the tsar and his family.

November 9 Germany and Austria become republics.

November 11 World War I ends on the Western Front.

1919

January 25 League of Nations is created. It will meet for the first time in 1920.

June 28 Combatants sign Treaty of Versailles ending WWI. In November the US Congress will refuse to ratify it.

1923

October 29 Turkey officially becomes a republic; Ottoman Empire is dissolved.

1925

July 18 Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is published.

1927

April 12 Chinese Civil War begins.



1928

August 27 Major powers sign Kellogg-Briand Pact in Paris outlawing aggressive warfare.

1929

October 29 The Great Depression begins.

1933

January 30 German president Paul von Hindenburg appoints Hitler chancellor. In the next six months, Hitler consolidates his power.

1935

August 31 United States passes a neutrality act.

September 15 Germany passes anti-Jewish Nuremberg Race Laws.

1936

March 7 Germany reoccupies the Rhineland.

July 17 Spanish Civil War begins.

1914

September 1 Ludwig Wittgenstein begins reading Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief*.

December 24 Soldiers observe an unofficial Christmas truce.

1915

November 5 William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson tangle in the "Great Ezekiel War."

1915

Early July J. R. R. Tolkien arrives in France to fight at the Somme.

1916

April US Army and Navy begin multiplying chaplains.

November Nationalization of Russian land deprives the Orthodox Church of property.



1917

November 29 C. S. Lewis reaches the front lines in France on his birthday.

1918

October 8 Alvin York commits his battlefield heroics.

1920

September 27 Mennonite Central Committee is founded.

1921

May 15 Danish missionary Karen Jeppe takes role in Armenian relief work.

1937

March 14 Pope Pius XI issues *Mit brennender sorge*.

1938

November 9 Nazis destroy Jewish property on Kristallnacht.

1939

March 2 Pius XII becomes pope.

1940

April 26 Methodists establish the first of many famous relief organizations founded during World War II.

RED BARON—NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO
UNCLE SAM, WIKIPEDIA

JOE LOUIS POSTER—WIKIPEDIA

In the space of just over three decades, large portions of the world were plunged into life-changing and faith-changing conflict.

—Compiled by Jennifer Woodruff Tait

—October “Great Purge” of accused political opponents of Stalin begins in the Soviet Union.

1937

—January 27 Chinese Nationalists and Communists cooperate against Japanese aggression. In July war begins between China and Japan.

1938

—March 13 Germany bloodlessly takes over Austria.

1939

—March 28 Spanish Civil War ends with the establishment



Hitler visits Paris, 1940

of a dictatorship headed by Francisco Franco.

—September 1 Germany invades Poland, officially beginning World War II in Europe.

—October 21 United States begins atomic experiments.

—November 23 Germany orders Polish Jews to begin wearing yellow stars.

1940

—March 30 Japan establishes a puppet government in China.

—June 14 German forces occupy Paris.

—July 10 Battle of Britain begins, culminating in the “London Blitz” on August 30.

—September 19 Germany orders its Jews to wear yellow stars.

1941

—June 22 Germany invades the Soviet Union.

1941

—December 7 Mitsuo Fuchida helps attack Pearl Harbor.

1942

—August 9 Nazis execute Edith Stein.

1943

—September 8 Sergius of Moscow, leader of the Russian Orthodox Church since 1927, is finally allowed to become patriarch.

1944

—February 23 For Lent the people of Park Street Church



Iwo Jima, 1945

—December 7 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor as part of invasions throughout the Pacific.

1942

—February 19 Roosevelt signs an executive order interning Japanese Americans and Italian Americans in camps.

—June 3 Battle of Midway begins. It will result in a turn of the tide in the Pacific.

—July 17 Battle of Stalingrad begins. Germany expects easy victory but will be defeated in February 1943.

forgo one meal a week and donate to war relief.

—December 25 Clarence Swope and Ben Vegors have very different religious experiences.

—Late December Nazis release Corrie ten Boom from a concentration camp by mistake.

1945

—April 9 Nazis execute Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

—August 25 Chinese Communists kill John Birch. By 1953

1943

—September 3 Italian government surrenders to the Allies.

1944

—June 6 D-Day begins major Allied offensive.

—August 23 Romania surrenders to the Soviet Union and joins the Allies.

—August 25 Allied forces liberate Paris.

1945

—January 25 Allies win Battle of the Bulge and begin final assault on Germany.

—January 27 Soviets liberate Auschwitz.

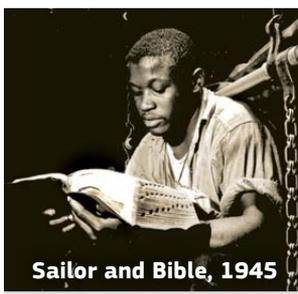
—May 7 Germany surrenders.

—August 6 US drops atomic bomb on Hiroshima and on Nagasaki two days later.

—August 15 Emperor Hirohito announces Japanese surrender.

—September 5 Ion Antonescu comes to power in Romania.

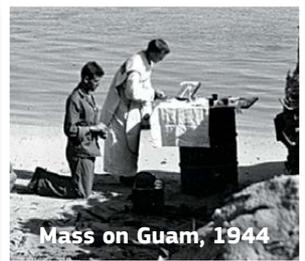
—September 16 US Selective Training and Service Act establishes provisions for conscientious objectors.



Sailor and Bible, 1945

all Western missionaries will be gone from China.

—September General Douglas MacArthur begins pleading for missionaries in Japan.



Mass on Guam, 1944

HITLER—WIKIPEDIA
IWO JIMA—WIKIPEDIA

AFRICAN-AMERICAN WWII—HTTPS://WWW.ARCHIVES.GOV
MASS ON GUAM—HTTPS://WWW.HISTORY.NAVY.MIL



The church of the bystanders

CHRISTIANS AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM

Christopher Gehrz

IN 1998 ISRAELI SCHOLAR YEHUDA BAUER was invited to speak before Germany's parliament, the Bundestag. "I come from a people who gave the Ten Commandments to the world," he told the legislators. "Time has come to strengthen them by three additional ones, which we ought to adopt and commit ourselves to: thou shall not be a perpetrator; thou shall not be a victim; and thou shall never, but never, be a bystander."

During the 12 years of the Third Reich, Christians broke each of Bauer's commandments. A few—both too many and not enough—sacrificed life or liberty to resist Nazi iniquity. But the vast majority of German Christians fell along that complicated spectrum between *perpetrator* and *bystander*.

THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS?

How did this happen? The roots stretched back to the First World War. In 1914 most German Protestants (two-thirds of Germany's population) participated

"THE SWASTIKAS RADIATE HOPE" Forty-seven Nazi couples are married in a mass wedding in a Lutheran church in Berlin in 1933.

gladly in what they saw as a crusade against their Catholic (French and Belgian) and Orthodox (Russian) national neighbors. Instead of taking out France and Russia, though, the costly war toppled the conservative German monarchy instead.

In its place came the Weimar Republic; this new democratic state got its nickname from the city of Weimar where its constitution was signed. Its socialist and liberal founders were forced to sign a harsh peace treaty that served as political fodder for right-wing groups like the National Socialists (Nazis). Even if they were put off by the violence of the Nazi "Brownshirts," patriotic Protestants living in Stalin's shadow could tell themselves that the stridently anti-Communist Nazis were the lesser of two evils.

On January 30, 1933, the conservative Protestant president, Paul von Hindenburg, appointed a new chancellor: Adolf Hitler. Hitler led the largest party in the Reichstag (predecessor of the Bundestag).



Many clergy greeted this appointment gladly. The dean of Magdeburg Cathedral said about the cathedral's Nazi flags, "Whoever reviles this symbol of ours is reviling our Germany. The swastika flags around the altar radiate hope—hope that the day is at last about to dawn." Another pastor, Julius Leffler, announced, "In the pitch-black night of church history, Hitler became, as it were, the wonderful transparency for our time, the window of our age, through which light fell on the history of Christianity. Through him we were able to see the Savior in the history of the Germans."

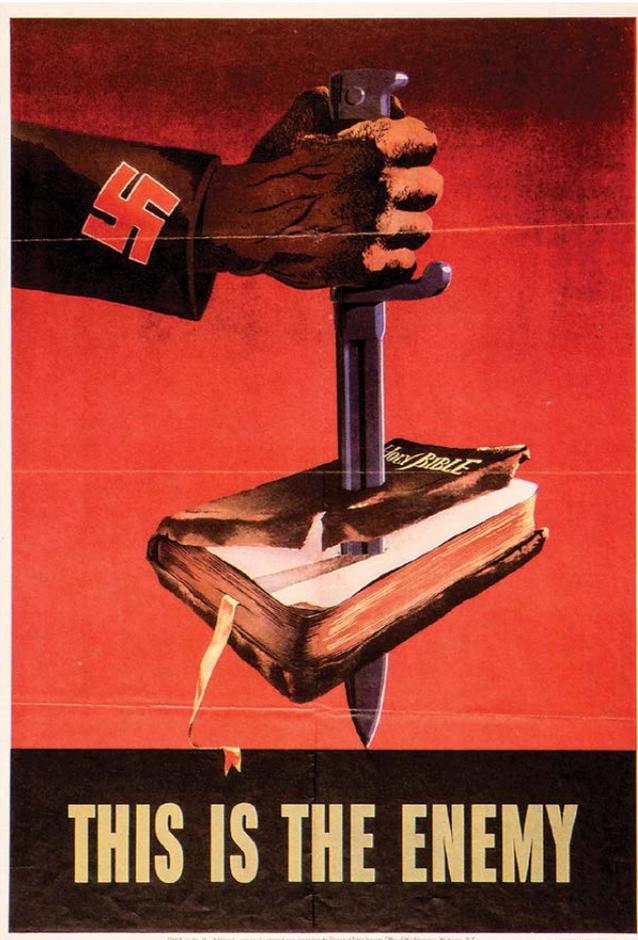
Just two days later, young pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer spoke on national radio. Having earlier campaigned against pro-Nazi candidates in church elections, Bonhoeffer proceeded to question Hitler's leadership as well—prompting the radio station to mysteriously switch off his microphone before he could broadcast his closing statement, which included the line "Leaders [Führers] or offices which set themselves up as gods mock God."

But protests like Bonhoeffer's were unusual. As Hitler eliminated political opposition, removed Jews from public life, and started to "nazify" (place under Nazi control) many German institutions, Protestant clergy celebrated by holding mass baptisms for children left unchristened during the Weimar Republic's more secular years.

DREAMERS AND THE NAÏVE

One who welcomed the Nazi revolution was minister Martin Niemöller. A former U-boat captain, Niemöller organized an anti-Communist militia after the war. He became a Nazi voter, hoping that Hitler would undo the restrictions of the Versailles treaty and restore Germany to greatness.

But middle-class pastors like Niemöller soon grew troubled. Not only did the new regime attempt to place Protestant churches under state control, but it encouraged the growth of the "German Christian" movement, whose tens of thousands of members viewed Hitler as a messianic figure and sought to strip Jewish influences from Christianity. Though Bonhoeffer referred in 1934 to "dreamers and the naïve like Niemöller," he was actually already working with such pastors to organize an opposition movement within the Evangelical Church.



TWO KINGDOMS Above: The US government's Office of War Information published this poster during World War II; it clearly depicts Nazism as anti-Christian.

IT'S COMPLICATED Left: Martin Niemöller began by supporting the Nazis and ended by opposing them.

In May 1934 Niemöller and other leaders of this opposition movement, which would become the Confessing Church, issued the Barmen Declaration, a statement against "German Christians" largely written by Swiss pastor Karl Barth: "We reject the false doctrine that, apart from this ministry, the Church could . . . give itself or allow itself to be given special leaders vested with ruling authority."

But most bishops were conservatives who did not want to risk losing the privileges of churches long connected to the state. Wearied by political debates, many laypeople retreated from church involvement altogether. And even though their German Christian opponents derided Confessing Church leaders as "Jew-pastors," those leaders actually did little to speak up for Jews who had not converted to Christianity (see "Did you know?," inside front cover). In 1935, the year that the Nuremberg Laws stripped Jews of citizenship,

Niemöller preached that God had cursed his chosen people as a penalty for the Crucifixion.

“THE PURITY OF THE BLOOD”

On January 30, 1937, Adolf Hitler celebrated his fourth anniversary as German chancellor. Speaking before the Reichstag, Hitler professed “thankfulness to our Almighty God for having allowed me to bring this work to success,” but promised more struggles lay ahead: “Of all the tasks which we have to face, the noblest and most sacred for mankind is that each racial species must preserve the purity of the blood which God has given it.”

That same day Niemöller spoke in another part of Berlin. Now his message was different. He preached about the apostle Paul’s imprisonment and prayed for all non-Aryans who had been removed from their jobs during the Nazi revolution. Meanwhile Bonhoeffer was writing *The Cost of Discipleship* (which would be published later that year) and teaching at the Confessing Church’s underground seminary in Finkenwalde.

By year’s end the seminary was closed and Niemöller had been arrested under the Law for the Prevention of Treacherous Attacks on State and Party and the Law for the Maintenance of Respect for Party Uniforms. He served his time while awaiting trial, but the state hung onto him anyway: eventually he was transferred to the Dachau concentration camp.

Catholic resistance also flared up in 1937. The same day he gave his fourth anniversary speech, Hitler pinned gold Nazi membership badges on those members of his cabinet who had not yet joined the National Socialist party. But when he reached his devoutly



Catholic postal and transport minister, Paul von Eltz-Rübenach, Eltz-Rübenach not only refused Hitler’s honor but loudly told the Führer to stop “oppressing the Church.” The infuriated Hitler stormed away, and Eltz-Rübenach resigned. Hitler’s propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels responded, “That’s the Catholics for you. They take orders from somewhere higher than the fatherland—the only truly saving church.”

Earlier that month anti-Nazi Catholic bishops led by Michael von Faulhaber and Clemens von Galen had traveled to Rome. Together with the Vatican’s chief diplomat, Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII), they convinced Pope Pius XI to issue a German-language encyclical—a departure from the usual Latin—to

Karl Barth preaches on the Jewishness of Jesus

Christ belonged to the people of Israel. That people’s blood was, in his veins, the blood of the Son of God. That people’s character he has accepted by taking on being human, not for the sake of that people or of the superiority of its blood and its race, but for the truth, i.e. for the proof of the truthfulness, the faithfulness, of God. . . . Jesus Christ has been a Jew. He has himself once said of himself: *To the lost sheep from the house of Israel and to them alone is he sent* (Matt 15:24; cf. 10:5–6). For us who are not Israel, that means a closed door.

If it is now, after all, open, if Christ now after all also belongs to us, and we, to him, that must surely say once again in a special sense: “Christ has welcomed us to the praise of God.” We are reminded that that is the case by the existence of the Jewish people right up to this day. . . .

The Jew reminds us that it is something special, new and wonderful, if we are now, despite all that, “no longer guests and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household” (Eph 2:19). . . . The Jew, in his



so puzzlingly strange, and equally puzzlingly indestructible, existence in the midst of all other peoples, is the living proof that God is free to choose whom he will, that he does not owe it to us to choose us, too, that it is grace, when he does also choose us. . . . Jesus Christ was a Jew. But by

his bearing and taking away, in the sin of the Jews, the sin of the whole world and our sin, too [cf. John 1:29], salvation has come from the Jews to us also. —Karl Barth, sermon on Romans 15:5–13, December 10, 1933. Translated by John Michael Owen. Reprinted by permission of Colloquium.

BISHOP OF SPEYER, MICHAEL VON FAULHABER (MIDDLE), VISITING BAVARIAN TROOPS IN THE TRENCHES DURING WWI, AUTUMN, 1915 (B/W PHOTO) / © SZ PHOTO / SCHERL / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES
KARL BARTH—LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

SOME OBJECTED . . . Left: Catholic bishop Michael von Faulhaber visits Bavarian troops in World War I. In the 1930s he would protest Hitler's rise.

. . . AND SOME DID NOT Right: Reichsbischof Ludwig Müller (bishop in the state German church) consecrates Nazi flags in 1934.

condemn the abuses of a regime that had promised in 1933 to leave Catholic institutions alone in return for the church staying out of political affairs.

Mit brennender Sorge (*With Burning Concern*) was eventually smuggled into the Third Reich and read aloud from Catholic pulpits across Germany on Palm Sunday:

Thousands of voices ring into your ears a Gospel which has not been revealed by the Father of Heaven. Thousands of pens are wielded in the service of a Christianity, which is not of Christ. . . . He who sings hymns of loyalty to this terrestrial country should not . . . become unfaithful to God and His Church, or a deserter and traitor to His heavenly country.

Catholics also worried about state interference with confessional schools. For example in November 1935, the education minister of Oldenburg had promoted the anti-Christian literature of Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg and tried to ban the public display of crucifixes. In response one priest told 3,000 Catholic veterans gathered for Remembrance Day that he would die for the cause, if necessary.

That Nazi official backed down; Hitler remained leery of alienating the faithful. But in 1937 the gloves came off. Hitler ordered all copies of Pius's encyclical seized, and Goebbels spread allegations that the church harbored clergy who sexually abused boys and mentally ill men. Even in Germany's most Catholic region, Bavaria, enrollment in confessional schools plummeted, from 84 percent of Bavarian children in 1934 to 5 percent four years later.

SS leader Heinrich Himmler and his violently anti-clerical deputy, Reinhard Heydrich, secured restrictions on Catholic pilgrimages and bans on Catholic marriage and parenthood classes. Catholic youth groups and monasteries closed. As many as one in three priests faced state discipline or imprisonment.

But even so the "Red Threat," as Communism was called, loomed larger for Catholics: five days after issuing his German encyclical, Pius XI addressed an even more strongly worded one against Communism, "which aims at upsetting the social order and at undermining the very foundations of Christian civilization."

Moreover, *Mit brennender Sorge* criticized Nazi racism without explicitly defending the Jewish people. Neither Catholic nor Protestant leaders spoke out



effectively in the wake of Kristallnacht, the November 1938 pogrom that moved Europe closer to the exterminationist violence of the Final Solution. (Bishop Martin Sasse of the official German church instead exulted that "on Luther's birthday, the synagogues are burning in Germany.")

When Germany finally went to war in September 1939, Protestants and Catholics alike filled the ranks of the German military, wearing belt buckles that paired the broken cross of the swastika with the traditional German military claim, "God with us."

HIDING PLACES

As the Holocaust began under the cover of war, some Christians did step up resistance. Thanks to the Lutheran Church in German-occupied Denmark and the Orthodox in German-allied Bulgaria, the vast majority of Jews in those countries survived. Reformed Protestants like French pastor André Trocmé and Dutch watchmaker Corrie ten Boom risked their lives to hide Jewish refugees (see "There is no pit so deep God's love is not deeper still," pp. 40–43).

Many scholars still criticize Pius XII for failing to speak out more publicly against Nazi atrocities, but his defenders have pointed out the role of Catholic officials in helping to rescue Italian Jews (see "A war story: Italian Catholics and a fascist Europe," pp. 37–39).

In Germany itself, too, some refused to stay silent in the face of radical evil. Clemens von Galen preached against the T4 euthanasia program, which ultimately extinguished the lives of 200,000 mentally and physically disabled children and adults. Christian faith inspired Sophie and Hans Scholl and others of the "White Rose," students whose nonviolent resistance through pamphlets and graffiti led to their arrest and



TRYING TO STEM THE TIDE New Yorkers protest Hitler's policies in front of Pier 86 on the Hudson River, where a German ship was docked.

execution in February 1943. A third of the country's 30,000 Jehovah's Witnesses were imprisoned for their refusal to serve in the military or give the Nazi salute; as many as a thousand died in the camps.

But even when those as courageous as von Galen protested treatment of Jews from their pulpits, they saved their sharpest words to critique new state sanctions limiting Christian practice. And as the details of the Final Solution became known, church leaders largely retreated in fear and complained only in private.

In the end most Christian laity and clergy were bystanders, if not willing perpetrators. Holocaust scholar Victoria Barnett writes,

The genocide of the European Jews would have been impossible without the active participation of bystanders to carry it out and the failure of numerous parties to intervene to stop it. . . . Moreover, the genocide was preceded by years of intensifying

anti-Jewish persecution, which much of Europe's non-Jewish population either witnessed or participated in.

"THERE IS GUILT BETWEEN US"

On April 9, 1945, to the sounds of nearing Allied artillery, seven anti-Nazi resisters were hanged at the Flössenburg concentration camp. One was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whose efforts to rescue Jews had resulted in his arrest in 1943. In 1944 the Gestapo discovered that he was also part of a plot to assassinate Hitler. The camp doctor who watched the brutal execution said of Bonhoeffer, "I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God."

Unlike hundreds of other priests and pastors held at Dachau, Martin Niemöller survived imprisonment. While he exerted significant moral authority in post-Nazi Germany, Niemöller knew that he and the Christians had largely failed the test when faced with the crimes of the Third Reich. In his 1946 memoir, he confessed that he felt compelled to tell any Jew he met, "Dear Friend, I stand in front of you, but we can not get together, for there is guilt between us. I have sinned and my people [have] sinned against thy people and against thyself." ❏

Christopher Gehrz is professor of history at Bethel University, editor of The Pietist Vision of Christian Higher Education, and co-author of The Pietist Option, and he blogs at The Pietist Schoolman and The Anxious Bench.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer sees the handwriting on the wall

Costly grace is the hidden treasure in the field for the sake of which people go and sell with joy everything they have. It is the costly pearl, for whose price the merchant sells all that he has; it is Christ's sovereignty, for the sake of which you tear out an eye if it causes you to stumble. It is the call of Jesus Christ which causes a disciple to leave his nets and follow him.

Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which one has to knock. It is costly, because it calls to discipleship; it

is grace because it calls us to follow *Jesus Christ*.

It is costly because it costs people their lives; it is grace because it thereby makes them live. It is costly because it condemns sin; it is grace because it justifies the sinner.

Above all, grace is costly because it was costly to God, because it costs God the life of God's Son: "you were bought with a price," and because nothing can be cheap for us which was costly to God. Above all, it is grace because the



life of God's son was not too costly to give in order to make us live. . . .

It comes to us as a gracious call to follow Jesus; it comes as a forgiving word to the fearful spirit and the broken heart. Grace is costly because it forces people under the yoke of following Jesus Christ; it is

grace when Jesus says: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."—From *THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Copyright © 1959 by SCM Press Ltd. Reprinted by permission of Scribner, a Division of Simon and Schuster, Inc. Translated by Barbara Gree and Reinhard Krauss for Fortress Press.

PROTEST IN NEW YORK AGAINST THE PERSECUTION OF JEWS (BW PHOTO) / © SZ PHOTO / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES
DIETRICH BONHOEFFER (BW PHOTO) / © SZ PHOTO / SAMMLUNG MELELE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



A war story: Italian Catholics and a fascist Europe

MUSSOLINI, TWO POPES, AND HUNDREDS OF FALSE PAPERS

Matt Forster

IN WORLD WAR II, 97 percent of Italy's population identified as Roman Catholic. Some joined Mussolini's Fascist Party and enlisted to fight in the Italian Army, but some also risked imprisonment or death to protect Jews and supported the resistance. Most would have been people without much influence, men and women who went to Mass, prayed, worked, and did good deeds for their neighbors. Most of their stories will never be told.

THE POPES AND THE DICTATOR

The individuals in Italy who receive the lion's share of historical scrutiny are the wartime popes, Pius XI (1857–1939) and Pius XII (1876–1958). As leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, they had responsibility for the care of Catholics around the world, as well as the Holy See in Rome. Their roles were both pastoral and political, navigating ecclesiastical polity and secular politics. Pius XI and Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) came to prominence the same year, 1922: Pius XI was

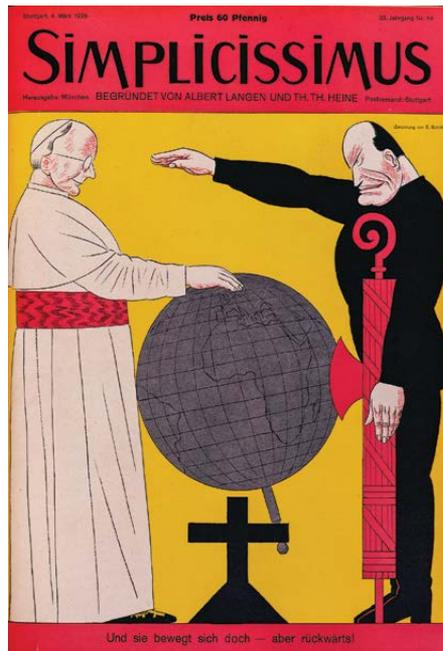
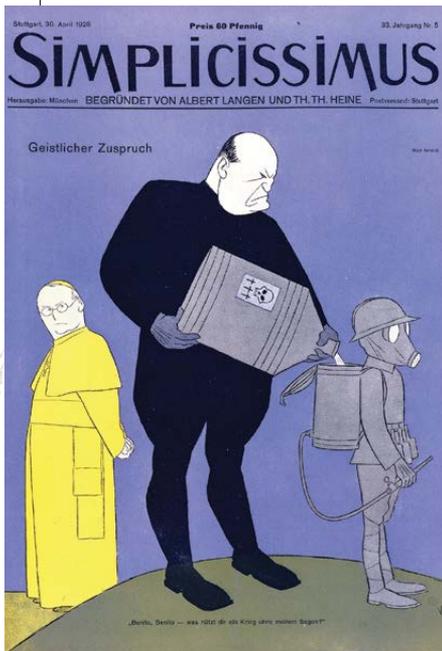
LORD, HAVE MERCY Pius XII prays in the Basilica of San Lorenzo after Rome was bombed in June 1943.

made pope in February, and King Victor Emmanuel III made Mussolini prime minister in October.

Though raised by a devoutly Catholic mother and baptized in the church, Mussolini chose to emulate his outspokenly anticlerical father. As a young journalist, his first article was titled, "God Does Not Exist." Mussolini founded Italy's Fascist Party in 1919 and, tapping into a rising tide of Italian nationalism and antisocialist sentiment, rose quickly to power.

Despite his own lack of religious belief, Mussolini realized he could not afford to antagonize the pope and Italian Catholics. His primary political opponents were socialists, Communists, and politically active Catholics. If he could placate the Catholics, that would go a long way in securing his leadership.

A major point of contention between the papacy and the Italian state had for years been the so-called Roman



THE DEAL IS DONE Cartoons mock Pius XI asking Mussolini, “What use is a war to you without my blessing?” (*far left*) and signing the Lateran Accord with him (*near left*).

Much has been made in recent years about Pius XII’s motives during World War II. As pope he directed the *nuncio* of Berlin to honor Hitler’s fiftieth birthday with a celebratory reception. And letters from his time as *nuncio*, released in the 1990s, have been read as proof of his anti-Semitism.

On the other hand, Pius XII’s first papal encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus* (1939), denounced racism in general and anti-Semitism in particular. He later offered to help the Allies communicate with German generals who wanted to overthrow Hitler, and his speeches on Vatican Radio during the war regularly condemned racial hatred and murder.

By the latter half of World War II, Italy had suffered significant military setbacks. The tide of nationalist sentiment that Mussolini rode to power began to ebb, as Italians perceived their country being subordinated to its ally Germany. In 1943 the Allies routed Italian forces from North Africa and then invaded Sicily. On the night of July 24, 1943, a motion of no confidence was put forward to the members of the Grand Fascist Council, and Mussolini was deposed and replaced as prime minister by General Pietro Badoglio.

The next day an unsuspecting Mussolini arrived for his usual morning meeting with King Victor Emmanuel III to find he was no longer in charge. He was soon arrested and taken to the island of Ponza. As Badoglio’s new government began secret negotiations with the Allies, Germany responded by taking control of northern Italy. Adolf Hitler forced Mussolini, rescued by German forces, to lead the new German-backed Italian Socialist Republic in northern Italy.

“I ONLY ACTED UPON ORDERS”

Anti-Semitism had not majorly figured in Mussolini’s political ideology until Hitler visited Italy in 1938, after which Mussolini instituted racial laws intended to create a “pure” Italian race. Even then no Jews were deported from Italy until the 1943 establishment of the Italian Socialist Republic. Then the Italian threat to Jewish lives became significant.

During this period Pius XII helped Jews escape the Nazis, offered to use Vatican coffers to pay the ransom for Jewish prisoners, and—as German soldiers moved to capture Jews and transport them to concentration camps—directed clergy to make the Vatican a refuge for all “non-Aryans.” Meanwhile Vatican clergy worked with friendly embassies to create false identification papers.

Question. Since 1870, when Italian forces took control of Rome and completed what they called *Risorgimento* (Italian unification), popes had refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Italian government. Calling themselves “prisoners of the Vatican,” they refused to leave the walls of the Vatican compound.

Now Pius XI saw that working with Mussolini could promote the interests of the Holy See. Neither he nor Mussolini were fans of parliamentary democracy. Together they hashed out an agreement to establish the independence of the Vatican, restore the Roman Catholic Church as the state religion of Italy, and keep the pope out of political affairs.

FROM POPE PIUS TO ... POPE PIUS

This uneasy accommodation bore fruit in 1929. On February 11 of that year, Cardinal Pietro Gasparri (1852–1934)—who had been laid up with the flu for three days—rose from his sickbed to sign the Lateran Accords as Pius XI’s representative.

These agreements established Vatican City as an independent enclave within the city of Rome and regulated relations between the church and the Italian state. The Vatican received some financial advantages, and the pope was pledged to remain politically neutral in both national and international affairs.

Pius XI died on February 10, 1939, nearly 10 years to the day from the historic pact. He was succeeded by Cardinal Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli, who took the name Pius XII. Cardinal Gasparri had become Pacelli’s mentor as a young priest and helped groom him for diplomatic service. Pacelli was eventually assigned to serve as *nuncio* (ambassador) to Bavaria; there was no *nuncio* to Prussia or Germany at the time, so he took on those responsibilities as well.



SMILE, YOU'RE ON CANDID CAMERA Mussolini visits Hitler in Germany in 1940 (in a photo taken by Hitler's mistress, Eva Braun).

The pope also directed the efforts of many others. He aided Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty (1898–1963), for example, who worked from his office in the Vatican to save thousands of escaped Allied POWs and Jews, hiding them in safe houses throughout Rome. He gave secret orders to Archbishop Giovanni Ferrofino (1912–2010), who saved 10,000 Jews by securing visas for Portugal and the Dominican Republic.

And Pius XII helped thousands escape to safety by reestablishing church asylum through papal secretary of state Giovanni Montini (1897–1978), who became Pope Paul VI in 1963. When Montini was offered an award for his service, he responded, "I only acted upon orders from the Holy Father."

BRUNACCI AND NICOLINI OF ASSISI

The church's resistance wasn't unique to Rome. Sometimes at the behest of a superior, other times alone, clergy risked life and liberty to protect their neighbors from the worst atrocities of the war. The city of Assisi became the center of a network to protect Jews, created by Father Aldo Brunacci.

Twenty-six convents and monasteries were used to hide Jewish men, women, and children. Many of these properties were off-limits to outsiders by tradition or by papal order, but the bishop of Assisi, Monsignor Giuseppe Nicolini (1877–1973), directed his clergy to open their doors.

Hiding in plain sight, Jewish men donned monks' robes, and women dressed in habits and tried to act like nuns. Papers were falsified and new identities created. In this way between 200 and 300 Jews were saved from concentration camps.

The Catholics also allowed the Jews space to practice their faith. When some Jewish refugees celebrated

Yom Kippur, Catholic nuns prepared the meal that broke the traditional fast. For his efforts and leadership, Monsignor Nicolini was later named "Righteous Among the Nations" by the Yad Vashem Center in Israel.

Not all stories were so heroic. Policeman Giovanni Palatucci (1909–1945) of Fiume (now Rijeka in Croatia) was long celebrated as the "Italian Schindler" for saving thousands of Jews, supposedly sending them to an internment camp presided over by his uncle, Bishop Giuseppe Maria Palatucci. Yad Vashem declared him Righteous Among the Nations, and the Vatican considered beatifying him.

But scholars have recently suggested that Palatucci may have been a Nazi collaborator. Fiume actually had a population of only 500 Jews: over 400 ended up in Auschwitz, and records he supposedly destroyed to save Jews surfaced in the state archives in the early 2010s. Among other things they revealed that he himself had been sent to Dachau (where he died) not for saving Jews but for passing German plans to the British.

In 1939 Pius XII had written in *Summi Pontificatus*, "The world and all those who are stricken by the calamity of the war must know that the obligation of Christian love, the very foundation of the Kingdom of Christ, is not an empty word, but a living reality." Italian Catholics in wartime wrestled over and over again with what that meant. ❏

Matt Forster is a freelance writer from Clarkston, Michigan.



A war story: “There is no pit so deep God’s love is not deeper still”

CORRIE TEN BOOM WORKED TO SAVE JEWS; EDITH STEIN WAS MARTYRED BECAUSE SHE WAS ONE

Kaylena Radcliff

ONE WAS AN ETHNICALLY Jewish Carmelite nun, the other a Dutch Reformed watchmaker. One received her doctorate, the other initially failed to get even a Bible training certificate. On the surface Edith Stein (1891–1942) and Corrie ten Boom (1892–1983) had little in common, but their faith and choices during World War II bound them in suffering.

THE WATCHMAKER’S DAUGHTER

Cornelia (Corrie) ten Boom was the fourth surviving child of a poor but generous Dutch Reformed couple, Casper and Cornelia ten Boom. After her birth the family moved to Haarlem, the Netherlands, where Casper took over the family watchmaking business. Their architecturally meandering home, containing the watch shop and two adjacent buildings, was affec-

HIDDEN TREASURES Corrie ten Boom stands by the door behind which her family hid Jews from the Nazis.

tionately nicknamed the Beje. It was often overflowing with extended family, customers, and a stream of visitors. After 1918 the ten Booms housed displaced German families and fostered missionary children; this hospitality continued even after the deaths of Corrie’s aunts and mother. These children were especially dear to Corrie, who called them her “Red Cap Club.” She later founded Christian girls’ clubs in Haarlem.

Like her elder sister Betsie, Corrie never married; the two sisters worked diligently in the family home and business. Unlike her father Corrie was business-minded, and her pragmatic management actually

ENDS JUSTIFYING MEANS A member of the Resistance creates fake documents.

made the profit Casper's good intentions had not. Her gifts led to an apprenticeship, and in 1924 she became Holland's first licensed female watchmaker.

ATHEIST TURNED NUN

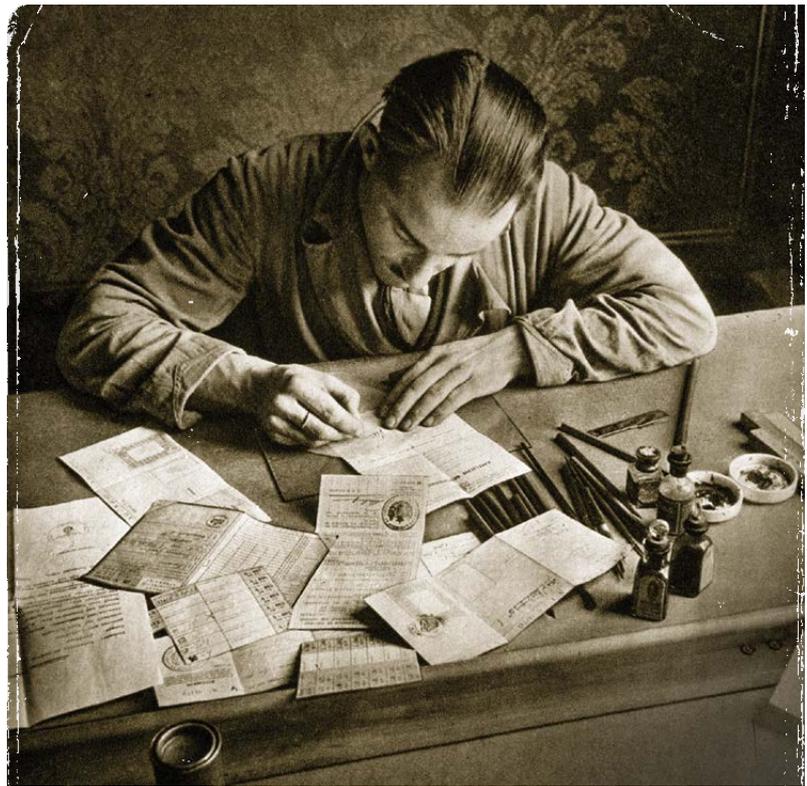
Edith Stein hailed from Breslau in what was then Germany, born on Yom Kippur (the Jewish Day of Atonement) to devout Jewish parents in October 1891. The youngest of 11 children, she demonstrated from an early age a keen intellect and a voracious desire to learn.

Before she was two, her father died unexpectedly, leaving Edith, her mother, and siblings with the burden of a growing but indebted lumber business. Edith blossomed into an impressive student but rejected the deep Jewish faith of her mother. In 1911 she entered the University of Breslau at 21 to become a teacher; there she stumbled upon the works of Edmund Husserl, founder of a philosophical movement known as phenomenology. It sought to objectively arrive at the essence of things normally considered subjective—human consciousness, emotions, perceptions, and the like. This discipline promised to satisfy the young atheist's quest for truth where Judaism, psychology, and relativism had all failed. Edith moved to the Gottingen School in 1913 to study under Husserl.

The budding philosopher's grasp of phenomenology soon propelled her into Husserl's inner circle. But her faith in phenomenology was beginning to flounder; and for several like-minded philosophers, the movement was finding its natural conclusion in Christianity. When respected phenomenologist and Jewish convert to Catholicism Max Scheler hosted a series of lectures connecting philosophy to the Christian faith, Edith found herself confronted with Christian truth for the first time.

In World War I, the draft called up many of Edith's friends and teachers, including beloved lecturer Adolf Reinach. Reinach embraced Christianity during the war and died on the battlefield toward the end of 1917. It was a severe blow to Edith, who had received her doctoral degree and was working as Husserl's graduate assistant at the University of Freiburg.

She returned to Gottingen to grieve with Reinach's widow, but found instead a woman filled with hope, peace, and faith in God. The experience so affected Edith that she began reading the New Testament, trying to decide whether she would become Catholic or Lutheran. Despite her newfound revelation of God, she continued to struggle with



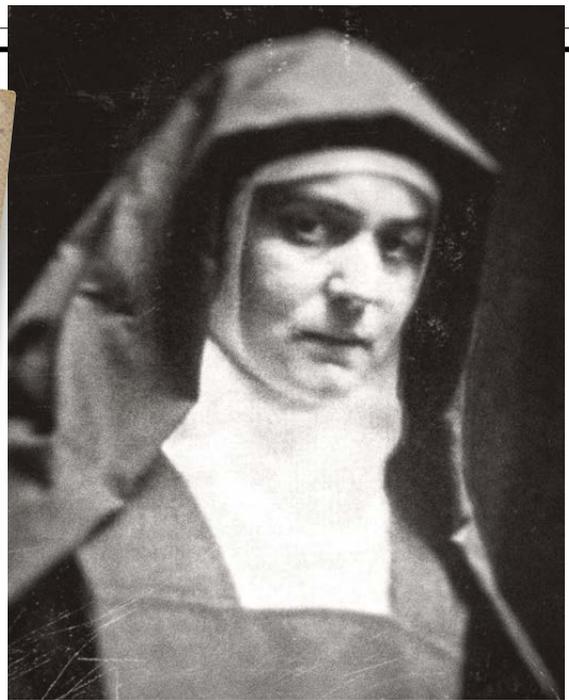
atheistic convictions. In 1921, after coming across the autobiography of Teresa of Ávila, she finally surrendered in faith. She was baptized as a Catholic on January 1, 1922.

RUMBLINGS OF WAR

Edith's conversion initially derailed her scholastic career; she was content to focus on her new faith and on teaching at a Dominican school in Speyer. But at the encouragement of her superiors, Edith began to translate some works of Thomas Aquinas. Her gifts and inclinations led her to develop philosophical connections between phenomenology and Thomism, bringing her again into academia and to the realization that her religious devotion need not be at odds with her scholastic pursuits.

As Hitler rose to power, anti-Semitism wormed into German consciousness once again, rapidly laying the groundwork for a public campaign against Jews. Edith had long perceived with prophetic clarity what was coming. The 1933 Nazi takeover confirmed her fears, with vicious attacks and forced business closures and seizures a daily reality. From the unique position of a Jewish-born Catholic convert and scholar, Edith appealed to Pope Pius XI for help. Her request was denied; outside of Germany few understood the impending horror.

Meanwhile the atmosphere in the Netherlands was likewise changing, though the rumbling was still distant. Corrie's brother Willem, a concerned pastor



working with Jews in Germany, brought the news of Jewish persecution home. Corrie later wrote:

When Willem was visiting and would not let us forget, or when letters to Jewish suppliers in Germany came back marked “Address Unknown,” we still managed to believe that it was primarily a German problem. “How long are they going to stand for it?” we said. “They won’t put up with that man for long.”

But put up with it they did. Humiliated and economically devastated, Germans embraced Hitler’s rhetoric. Soon after her request to the pope was denied, Edith was forced to resign from her teaching position. Throughout her career she had been discouraged from entering the contemplative life of a religious order. But the political climate confirmed what Edith long had believed—that she would suffer with and for the Jewish people under the banner of the cross.

To the consternation of her mother and siblings, Edith left for the Carmelite convent of Cologne the day after her birthday in 1933. (Other Jews read the signs just as Edith did. In that same year, Otto Frank, father of Anne Frank, sought refuge for his young family by opening a business in Amsterdam.)

THE FATE OF HOLLAND

At Cologne Edith took the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross and learned to balance scholastic and contemplative life. She counseled friends and family as the situation in Germany culminated in the brutal purge of Jews on November 9, 1938—the night known as Kristallnacht. More for the convent’s safety than her own, Edith transferred to the Dutch convent of Echt, taking along her younger sister Rosa (also a Catholic convert by this time).

Holland’s safety, however, was precarious after Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Neutral in World War I, Holland again claimed neutrality, and with confirmation that Dutch borders would be respected,

SOLDIER OF THE CROSS Above: Her peers and family counseled Edith against becoming a nun, but for her it was the only choice.

PAPERS, PLEASE Left: All Dutch citizens under the occupation had to carry ID papers like these.

Holland’s prime minister took to the radio on the evening of May 10, 1940, to reassure his people. But the war for Holland began only hours later with furious airstrikes throughout the country.

Awakened by bombings Corrie and Betsie ten Boom were praying earnestly when Corrie experienced a premonition—she, her family, and friends carried on an old wagon out of Haarlem to an inescapable fate. The German invasion of the Netherlands ended within days. Following the flight of Holland’s Queen Wilhelmina and the devastating bombing of Rotterdam, Dutch forces surrendered. German occupation began.

For those like Corrie and her family, the first few months of the occupation were bearable. Meeting the criteria for *ubermensch*, the genetically desired qualities that Nazis felt constituted the Aryan race, the Dutch received a measure of leniency from German soldiers. Even so citizens were required to carry identity cards to be produced on demand; ration cards replaced currency; curfews kept citizens indoors after 10 p.m.; and radios spewed German propaganda.

Nazism gained traction and power with every passing month of the occupation, leading to Holland’s National Socialist Bond (NSB). A fascist organization sympathetic to the German agenda, the NSB endorsed Nazi anti-Semitism and recruited members aggressively. Power and privilege came with membership—more ration cards, coupons for clothing, better jobs, and the best housing.

DUTCH ID—WIKIMEDIA; DIRK VAN DER MADE; LA PHILOSOPHE ET THEOLOGienne ALLEMANDE EDITH STEIN (1891–1942), JUIVE CATHOLIQUE MORTE A AUSCHWITZ / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

STAR OF TERROR Nazis forced Dutch Jews to wear yellow stars and carry special ID cards.

Armed with newly granted positions of power at every civic level, the NSB became the agency addressing Holland's own "Jewish Problem." Just as in Germany, terrorizing Jews was now public policy. Jewish-owned businesses were vandalized, synagogues burned, and those who bore the yellow star vanished daily, their vacant homes filled with NSB families eager to supplant them.

These disturbing events deeply affected Holland's Protestant and Catholic churches, forcing their leadership to speak out in a joint telegram sent to Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the appointed *Reichskommissar* (occupation ruler) of the Netherlands. Though he promised the anti-Semitic campaigns would stop, they did not, and he vetoed any further discussion.

Unsatisfied, the bishop of Utrecht wrote a scathing pastoral letter sent to all Catholic parishes in Holland in July 1942. Retribution came the following week: mass arrests of Jewish converts to Catholicism. Though Edith had the necessary paperwork to flee Holland, Rosa did not. Knowing the consequences, Edith determined to stay. On August 2 the sisters were arrested and deported on a hellish train ride to Auschwitz. Edith was almost 51 when they died in the gas chambers there on August 9. That same week, eight Jews hiding in a secret annex above a warehouse were discovered and arrested. Among them was 15-year-old Anne Frank. She eventually perished in Bergen-Belsen in February 1945.

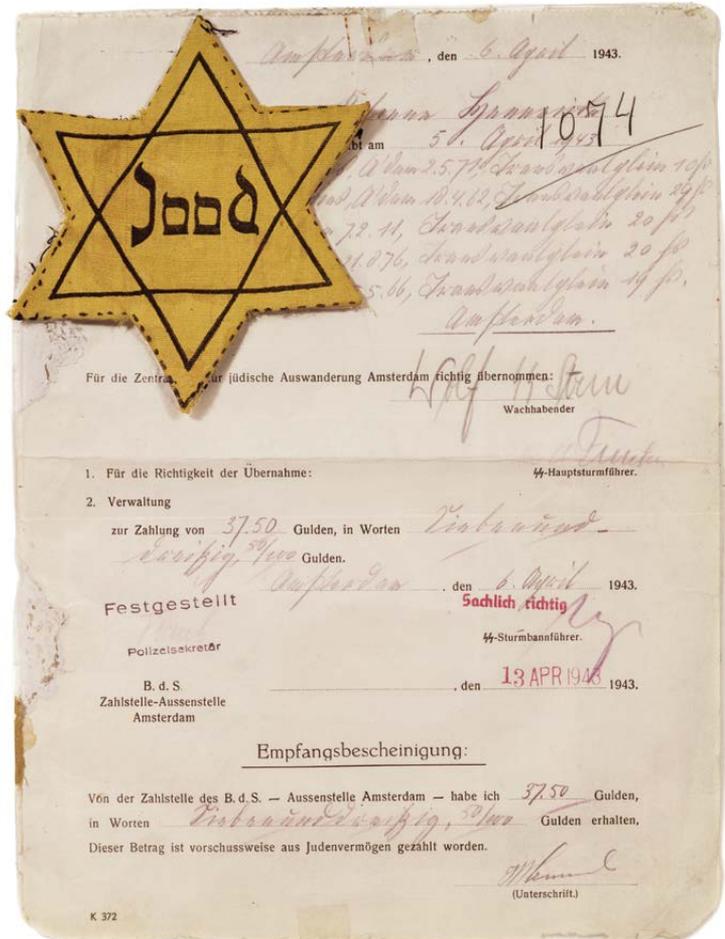
A SAFE HOUSE

The spring before the Stein sisters met their fate, the ten Boom sisters faced their own terrible choice: to watch passively as their Jewish neighbors were deported or to risk losing their lives to save them. Corrie was 50 years old when she joined the Dutch Resistance and offered the Beje as a safe-house for Jews and Resistance workers.

For two years the ten Booms housed, fed, and relocated Jews and others passing through, miraculously obtaining enough ration cards and other supplies despite the watchful eyes of the SS headquarters nearby. A secret room with a sliding panel was built in Corrie's bedroom.

But success did not last. On February 28, 1944, the Gestapo raided the Beje. The six people living illegally in the house survived in the hiding place, but Corrie, her siblings, father, and nephews were arrested and transferred to Scheveningen. There Casper ten Boom died. Corrie and Betsie were sent first to Vught, Holland, and later to Ravensbrück in Germany in September 1944.

Despite brutal conditions, abuse from guards, and the murder of prisoners around them, Betsie and



Corrie ministered to the women in the camp, sharing the gospel from a small smuggled Bible. Even as many fellow prisoners turned to Christ, Betsie fell ill and died at Ravensbrück on December 16, 1944. On Christmas Day Corrie received orders of release, later discovered to have been a clerical error.

By the time the war ended, some 110,000 Dutch Jews had been deported to concentration camps, along with many members of the Dutch Resistance. Three-quarters of these Jews never made it home, giving the Netherlands the second highest mortality rate among nations during the Holocaust.

In the years that followed, Edith Stein was celebrated for her philosophical works, radical conversion, and ultimate martyrdom. Pope John Paul II canonized her in 1998. Corrie ten Boom, well known for offering forgiveness to the guards who held her captive, touched millions of lives through books and speaking tours before dying on her ninety-first birthday. She often recalled Betsie's hope-filled words: "There is no pit so deep that God's love is not deeper still." ☐

Kaylena Radcliff is the author of Corrie ten Boom in the Torchlighters series.



A war story: Romania above all

WE KNOW THE STORY OF THE JEWS IN GERMANY; THERE IS ALSO A SAGA ABOUT JEWS—AND CHRISTIANS—IN ROMANIA

William D. Pearce

"ONE HAS TO BE SORRY for the poor Romanian people, whose very marrow is sucked out by the Jews. Not to react against the Jews means that we go open-eyed to our destruction. . . . To defend ourselves is a national and patriotic duty." So spoke Patriarch Miron Cristea (1868–1939), the leader of the Romanian Orthodox Church between the world wars. What should have been a bright time for Romania, following the treaties of World War I, which were generous to the country, had devolved into political, economic, and cultural crises. Romanian leaders blamed these crises on the Jews.

ROMANIANS FOR ROMANIA

During the interwar period, the Romanian Orthodox Church members made up 72 percent of Romania's population; other significant Christian groups included Greek Catholics, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and Reformed, with Jews 5 percent of the total population. Romania was moving toward the kind of right-wing nationalism found elsewhere in Central Europe

FRIENDS AND RULERS Romanian dictator Ion Antonescu (*left*) attends saint's day celebrations for the king of Romania alongside Nazi officer Wilhelm Keitel.

during the same period; by the mid-1930s, though most Romanian parties fought among themselves, they all agreed that the Romanian Orthodox was the church for the Romanian people and that Jews were bad. Romanian Orthodox Church leaders, neutral on paper, in practice agreed.

The government gave special privileges in Romania's parliament and constitution to Orthodox leaders. (Cristea in fact served as prime minister from 1938 to 1939.) During the war the Orthodox Church worked closely with wartime dictator Marshall Ion Victor Antonescu (1882–1946), though it did not participate with Romania's military in the Holocaust on the Eastern Front. Antonescu brought Nichifor Crainic (1889–1972), a noted Orthodox theologian, into the government to work as his propaganda minister. When Romania began



FOLLOWING ORDERS *Left:* Romanian soldiers load Jews onto trains in Iasi. Orthodox Christians had worshiped in Romania since the Middle Ages (*above*).

taking Jewish properties, Crainic wrote, "The State's Leader has given satisfaction to Romania's nationalist martyrs. . . . The ancestral heartland has become a property exclusively for the Romanian people." The Orthodox Church began lobbying the government to ban Jews from converting to Christianity in the late 1930s; in March 1941 the government complied.

Though the church accepted the existence of non-Orthodox Christians in churches that were not ethnically Romanian (such as German Lutherans and Hungarian Roman Catholics and Reformed), any non-Orthodox Christians of ethnic Romanian descent were labeled "sectarians" and called by the patriarch "a destructive element in our people's bosom because they destroy our people's unity . . . [and] not only undermine the Church's authority but . . . [also] the foundation of the unified Romanian state."

The church kept track of all those deemed to be a threat, and in early 1937 asked the government to take necessary measures against those "of foreign tongue and those not of Romanian ancestry, to stop them from any kind of propaganda activities . . . to save our good faithful people."

That April the government issued a decision outlawing the International Bible Student Association, Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, Apostolic Church of God, Nazarenes, and some smaller charismatic and evangelical groups. The police were ordered to close those organizations' meeting places and presses and confiscate their publications. No proselytizing was allowed, and anyone breaking this law was to be arrested. Other groups could operate as religious associations, but it was almost impossible to obtain a permit.

Antonescu declared in 1940 that only seven official religions were allowed in the country besides Orthodox: Greco-Catholic, Roman Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, Unitarian, Armeno-Gregorian, and Islam. Properties of now-illegal groups became the state's, to be turned over to another legal Christian church.

PLEASE DON'T CLOSE THE ORPHANAGE

The Baptist Orphanage in Simeria was closed after a single hearing in February 1943 to be turned into an Orthodox mission to "reconvert these religious wanderers." One petitioner, Rusu Ioan, pleaded to keep it open: "You would bring great joy to the minds of these sobbing orphans who do not want to hear that they are to lose their old home where they were cared for with tremendous Christian love." What Ioan did not know was that the orphanage had been secretly under police surveillance, accused of harboring "false apostles" and spreading Baptist propaganda.

Hundreds of hearings in Romanian courts produced the same results. In the final three years of Antonescu's regime, 338 Baptist properties, 18 Adventist properties, and 16 other churches were confiscated, with 17 given to the Orthodox Church and the rest kept by the government. Those caught meeting were arrested, and the postal service spied on suspected religious dissidents. When Antonescu was ousted by a coup in August 1944, the Orthodox Church reversed its rhetoric. But its leaders never offered an apology. ❏

William D. Pearce works for ETS Global and is the author of a dissertation on Romanian Orthodoxy in World War II.

Melting down the bells: Orthodox and atheists in Russia



Karl Marx famously defined religion as “the opiate of the people,” a kind of Prozac for the proletariat. Lenin called religious ideas “unutterable vileness . . . of the most dangerous kind.” The result? Overall a policy of unremitting hostility toward the Russian Orthodox Church under Lenin and Stalin, occasionally tempered for pragmatic reasons.

Just prior to World War I, the Russian Orthodox Church boasted 100,000,000 members, more than 54,000 churches, 57,000 priests and deacons, 1,500 monasteries, 95,000 monks and nuns, and extensive state and private support. It had been dominated by the tsars since 1721, when Peter the Great had replaced the patriarch (head of the church) with a synod. Shortly after the Bolshevik coup in November 1917, the patriarchate was restored, but with Lenin’s accession to power, everything changed. Through the nationalization of all land in Russia, the church lost its property and its legal status. Priests were disenfranchised, religious instruction in

THE WAR ON CHRISTMAS *Above:* Soviet leaders confiscated and melted down church bells and ran anti-Easter and anti-Christmas propaganda campaigns.

schools prohibited, and church marriages and divorces lost legal recognition. In 1921 group religious instruction of anyone under 18 was banned, and in 1922 all gold and silver objects and precious stones were confiscated from churches, ostensibly for famine relief.

Many church leaders were charged with counter-revolutionary activities for protesting these outrages. Beginning with Tikhon, the new patriarch, thousands were imprisoned or executed. The Soviets attempted to split the church through the Living Church movement (which failed) and did not allow a new patriarch to be elected when Tikhon died in 1925.

THERE ARE STILL CHRISTIANS HERE

After Stalin came to power, emphasis shifted to atheist propaganda, leading to the formation of the League of Militant Atheists. Labor unions, youth groups, schools, workplaces, and the military all promoted antireligious activities. In 1927 Metropolitan Sergius, deputy acting patriarch, accepted Soviet authority over the church and collaborated with the regime to deny any persecution, even while mass closings of churches and arrests and executions of priests and believers escalated.

The Russian Orthodox Church was left with only 4,200 churches, 8,700 priests and deacons, and 38 monasteries by June of 1941. The 1937 USSR census was suppressed, partly because it reportedly showed an unacceptably large number of Christian believers.

Nazi Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, marked a turning point. Sergius sent a message to his parishes reminding them of their patriotic duty: “The Church of Christ blesses all the Orthodox defending the sacred frontiers of our Motherland. The Lord will grant us victory.” The church made major contributions to Russian morale and war efforts. As a result the government curtailed antireligious policies, and the League of Militant Atheists vanished. At Easter 1942 the Moscow curfew was lifted to allow midnight services. In 1943 election of Sergius as patriarch was allowed, and the church was recognized and permitted to publish a journal, open theological institutes, and resume religious instruction of children.

The war led to revival. By 1947 there were 22,000 churches, 33,000 priests and deacons, and 80 monasteries, a far cry from 1914, but considerably more than in 1941. Churches once again could acquire religious objects, build or rent facilities, receive assistance in repairs and rebuilding, and avoid taxation on monastic lands and buildings. The honeymoon lasted through Stalin’s death in 1953.—*Paul E. Michelson*



Christ and the remaking of the Orient

THE GENERAL WHO ORDERED BIBLES AND THE MISSION THAT HELD ON

Darren Micah Lewis

THE SUN FLOWED through the low-hanging clouds above the USS *Missouri*. Tokyo Harbor was abuzz with hundreds of military vessels, all awaiting the unconditional surrender of Japan. September 2, 1945, was a day that so many at home had prayed for. This ceremony marked the official end of almost four years of hostilities between the Allied Powers and the Axis Powers. World War II was now left to history.

THE MAN WHO RETURNED

At first the Japanese had refused to accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, a statement calling for unconditional surrender on their part. They were unwilling to have their emperor disgraced by his submission to a foreign power. In response President Harry Truman ordered the *Enola Gay* to drop an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima on August 6.

The Supreme War Council of Japan still refused to surrender, hoping for more favorable terms. Three days later a second bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki. Surrender negotiations were immediate.

THE DAY THAT LIVED IN INFAMY The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II; four years later the war ended in Tokyo Harbor.

At 9:00 a.m. Tokyo time, representatives of the allied nations gathered. General Douglas MacArthur stepped forward to sign the Japanese Instrument of Surrender as the supreme commander of the Allied Forces Pacific (SCAP). This was his moment in history. He had promised to return when his forces retreated from the Philippines in 1942, and here he was. He had promised an unconditional surrender, and it occurred.

D. M. Horner, an Australian Army officer, said of MacArthur's presence at the signing, "It was fitting recognition for a general whose contribution to the Japanese defeat had been surpassed by few others and for a nation which had borne an unsurpassed burden." As SCAP MacArthur now enjoyed an unprecedented mandate from the United States government to make whatever changes he felt necessary to reconstruct postwar Japan. After the Japanese dignitaries



THE ABOVEGROUND CHURCH Maryknoll Sisters did extensive mission work in prewar China.

departed from the *Missouri*, he made a radio speech that included the lines:

Military alliances, balances of power, leagues of nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be by way of the crucible of war. We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door.

The problem basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence [revival] and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature and all material and cultural

Preaching on the problems of peace

If only we could hope that war would solve the problems it has set out to solve, that would redeem, in part at least, our estimation of our era, but war never does that. When this conflict is over and its immeasurable sacrifices have been poured out, Hitler, to be sure, will be gone, but the basic problems that confronted us before, even the fear of totalitarian dictatorship, will confront us still, and endless new problems as well that the war itself has caused.

—“A Great Time to Be Alive,” by Baptist pastor Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969), preached at Riverside Church, New York, and appearing in the book *A Great Time to be Alive: Sermons on Christianity in Wartime* (1944)

development of the past two thousand years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh. MacArthur and many others in the United States viewed this as a great opportunity not just to modernize governments in Asia, but to influence their cultures through Christian principles, affecting the lives of millions.

A lifelong Episcopalian, MacArthur was a man of quiet and reserved faith. Many of his troops attested that they never saw him attend church. Yet in the dark days of WWII, MacArthur prayed for wisdom and success in the battles that he led. Leading chaplains, bishops, and other Christian religious leaders visited him frequently, and he believed that for secular government to succeed, it must be rooted in the moral standards, human rights, and ethical principles of Christianity. MacArthur firmly held that the American experiment in democracy succeeded because of its deep roots in faith in the Almighty.

It seemed obvious to him that the new Japanese democracy needed the same firm foundation for success. In November of 1945, he welcomed four American clergymen, the first civilians to enter postwar Japan, to Tokyo’s Dai-Ichi Insurance Building. There he told them: “Japan is a spiritual vacuum. If you do not fill it with Christianity, it will be filled with communism.”

HELMETS FOR PILLOWS

The Western world in general agreed with MacArthur’s estimation that Japanese culture needed to change. Japan’s religious beliefs were ancient and strongly held. The traditions of Shintoism and Buddhism meshed with a long-standing culture that seemed to support the ideal of honorable suicide whether by *hara-kiri* or *seppuku* (self-disembowelment using a large sword) or *kamikaze* (suicide attacks during WWII using planes).

The first-person experiences of American soldiers only added to this opinion, with testimonials of Japanese brutality in the treatment of prisoners and eyewitness accounts of suicides in the name of the emperor. Although it was not published until 1957, Robert Leckie’s famous *A Helmet for My Pillow* typifies the stories told by many.

The Japanese military also believed that missionaries throughout Southeast Asia were spies (some, like John Birch, were; see “John Birch, fighting missionary,” p. 52) and therefore could be subjected to torture. In one type of torture, the interrogator placed a tube down the throat of the victim. His abdomen was subsequently filled with large amounts of water. Another soldier would then jump on the abdomen, rupturing the stomach and other internal organs, often leading to death.

MacArthur called for a thousand missionaries to be sent from the United States in an effort to spread

Mitsuo Fuchida: from Pearl Harbor attacker to Christian evangelist

Commander Mitsuo Fuchida (1902–1906) of the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service is perhaps best known for leading the first wave of bomber and fighter planes during Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. At 7:40 a.m. on December 7, 1941, he sent up the green flare from his plane signaling the order to attack; and he later ordered his radio operator to send the message “Tora! Tora! Tora!,” informing the Japanese that they had achieved complete surprise. (In 1970 *Tora! Tora! Tora!* was the title of a cinematic dramatization of the attack.)

The attack on the Hawaiian US Navy base resulted in 2,403 American and 64 Japanese deaths. The following day the United States officially declared war on Japan and entered World War II.

Fuchida served Japan throughout the war. He once again escaped possible death when an emergency appendectomy left him on the bridge of the aircraft carrier *Akagi* instead of flying a plane when the United States attacked during the Battle of Midway.

Later, having broken both ankles when thrown by an explosion, he became a staff officer with Vice Adm. Kakuji Kakuta. Ordered to Tokyo just before Kakuta failed to stop the American liberation of Guam, he would otherwise have participated with Kakuta in suicide by *seppuku*. “Again the sword of death had missed me only by inches,” he told reporter Hal Drake in 1971.

One of his tasks was to inspect the city of Hiroshima after the atomic bomb was dropped—again he was the only one of his party not to die, this time from radiation poisoning. (He would have by original orders been in Hiroshima when the bomb exploded on August 6, but was abruptly sent to Yamato instead on August 5 for an intelligence briefing.) After returning to his family and their chicken farm, he later recalled, “Life had no taste or meaning. . . . I had missed death so many times and for what? What did it all mean?”

THE CODE OF THE WARRIOR

After the war a number of Japanese military personnel were put on trial for war crimes relating to their treatment of prisoners of war. Fuchida, called on to testify, felt the trials were a sham. He had harbored resentment of the United States for decades due to its restrictions on Asian immigration, and he believed the Americans had treated Japanese POWs just as badly. He sought out



THE MAN WHO KEPT ESCAPING DEATH Above: Fuchida, pictured (left) as a young officer, flew Mitsubishi “Zeros” like this for the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service.



recently released POWs to gather evidence. It was then he met his former flight engineer Kazuo Kanegasaki, presumed to have died at the Battle of Midway, who had instead been taken prisoner.

Rather than telling a story of abuse and torture by Americans, the man told him of a young American woman, Peggy Covell, who treated him and his fellow prisoners with great kindness even though Japanese soldiers had killed her missionary parents in the Philippines. Fuchida was astounded. The code of the warrior not only permitted revenge, it demanded it; but this woman declined revenge and offered compassion to Japanese prisoners.

This sparked Fuchida’s interest in Christianity. He soon encountered the testimony of Jacob DeShazer, an American POW who shared his story of finding God in a Japanese camp in *I Was a Prisoner of Japan* (1950). In September 1949 Fuchida became a Christian. “Looking back,” he said later, “I can see now that the Lord had laid his hand upon me so that I might serve him.”

Fuchida established the Captain Fuchida Evangelical Association and began to travel full time sharing a presentation of his conversion story. In his autobiography, *From Pearl Harbor to Calvary* (1959), he wrote, “I remember the thrill that was mine when, in one of my first [evangelistic] meetings, I led my first soul to Christ in America. And he was one of my own countrymen.” In 1952 he toured with the Worldwide Christian Missionary Army of Sky Pilots.

Over the years Fuchida authored a number of books including the autobiography and an account of the Battle of Midway. He died in Japan at age 73. —Matt Forster.



BEFORE HE RETURNED *Left:* General MacArthur (in hat) meets with his chief of staff Richard Sutherland in the Philippines in 1942.

WHEN EVERYTHING CHANGED *Right:* Dropping the atomic bomb on Nagasaki ended World War II but ushered in forever a new kind of warfare.

Christianity. He wrote to the president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1956, "Christianity now has an opportunity without counterpart in the Far East." In 1949 MacArthur welcomed visitors from around the world in celebration of the 400th anniversary of

Preaching on the problems of war

These are indeed troublous times. We must not deny it, nor ignore it, nor miss, as the world so strangely does, the signs of God's chastening hand. Missionaries in places are interned or impeded, communications are poorer and more perilous, reinforcements must needs be smaller, and many who would have been our volunteers have heard the sterner call of war. Some will never return to take up their purposed work, while others, we hope, will gain help from the experience of earthly chivalry. Many of our women have heard the call of suffering, too loud to be ignored.

We cannot forget that Europe, the great and age-long trustee of the Gospel, has become also Europe the great stumbling-block or scandal of it. What must the nations say and think of Christendom — Christian people tearing out each other's vitals, the Christian spirit and the Church which embodies it wholly unable to forbid, or to stay, or even to mitigate the strife, force worshipped and triumphant? and, above all, a spirit of hatred and even a glorification of that spirit. . . Christian ministers uttering words of deadly rancor.—*"The World at the Cross-Roads,"* by Edward Talbot (1844–1934), *Anglican bishop of Winchester, in the book Christ and the World at War: Sermons Preached in Wartime (1917)*

St. Francis Xavier (1506–1552) arriving as a missionary to the island nation.

To fulfill MacArthur's vision, Japan greatly needed Bibles. A collection and fund-raising drive began, and the goal of 10,000,000 Bibles was met. Japanese citizens readily accepted the Bibles—sometimes because they contained cheap paper that was useful in many ways. By 1950, 2,500 missionaries served in Japan.

MacArthur also saw education as a valuable means of leading the Japanese nation to Christ. He raised funds and served on the board of a new university specifically established as a Christian school, the International Christian University. It opened in 1953 in the Japanese city of Mitaka, near Tokyo.

MacArthur's optimism peaked in the late 1940s, following evangelist doctor Toyohiko Kagawa's 1946 appointment to Japan's House of Peers and Christian socialist prime minister Tetsu Katayama's election in 1947. Katayama appointed four Christians to his cabinet, and they completed a 427-day "Campaign for Christ" across Japan. But the rule of Katayama and his cabinet only lasted until February 1948.

Though MacArthur encouraged the spread of Christianity in Japan, he still stressed the importance of freedom of religion. He later told Billy Graham that the emperor was willing to make Japan a Christian nation, but he did not feel it right to mandate such a move.

At the height of Christian mission in Japan under MacArthur in 1951, Christians made up 4,000,000 of the nation's 83,000,000 population. By comparison Shinto believers numbered 17,000,000, and Buddhists numbered 45,000,000. MacArthur did not fully understand the connection of these ancient religions to Japanese culture. He also did not fully comprehend the struggle of a missionary's work. Today 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 Japanese identify as Christian, making up 1 percent of the population.

THE CHURCH GOES UNDERGROUND

Meanwhile a different challenge arose in the newly forming People's Republic of China. Missionaries had arrived in China as early as 623; the first recorded missionary was a Persian man named Alopen, and European missionaries came in large numbers in the mid-1800s as the Opium Wars broke out.

Arguably the most famous missionary to China arrived in 1854, though. His name was James Hudson Taylor (1832–1905), the father of the China Inland

Mission (CIM), now known as Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF) International.

Hudson Taylor's organization has been credited with bringing 800 missionaries to China, resulting in over 18,000 conversions. His impact and legacy live on to this day. CIM remained active in China throughout World War II, but as Communism swallowed China, growing atheism and laws against churches and religious expression forced the church underground. It remains there today.

At the height of World War II, 4,000,000 Chinese people identified with Christ. Today estimates run as high as 100,000,000 believers in the underground church. Whether due to the many centuries missionaries were present in China, the volume of Westerners who lived there during the days of colonization, or the effects of persecution, the church in China thrives to this day in a way not true in Japan.

But in the days during and after WWII, CIM workers and those from other missionary organizations found themselves in precarious situations. CIM worker Phyllis Thompson, in her book *China: The Reluctant Exodus* (1979), related many harrowing experiences. One Swedish female missionary, E. E. Lenell, was tried and executed by a tribunal of the People's Republic.

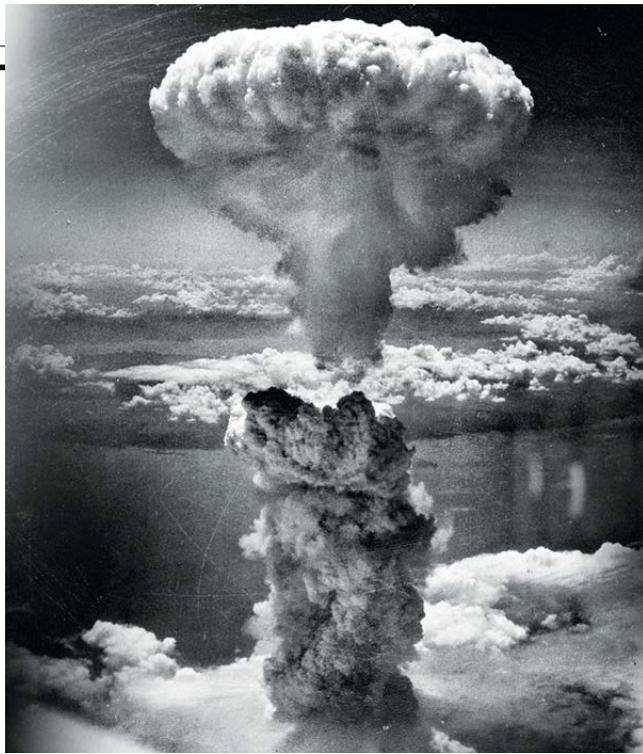
To Thompson's knowledge this marked the first time a missionary had been put to death by the Chinese government. Many had lost their lives through war, from sickness, or from crime, but never before had a missionary been openly executed.

CIM officials, headquartered in Chinese Nationalist-held Shanghai, understood the realities of their team members serving in Communist-held regions. For a time an order of evacuation was given. In the end, however, CIM workers unanimously approved a policy of no evacuation in the areas overtaken by the Communists. Bishop Houghton, the general director of CIM China, stated, "We have yet to prove that Christian witness will be impossible under a Communist government in China."

BLOSSOMING UNDER PERSECUTION

But the Chinese Communists continued to push south, winning battle after battle against the Chinese Nationalists, and eventually taking Beijing in 1949. The People's Republic of China was proclaimed on October 1, 1949, and a new culture in China took hold, characterized by antireligious sentiment and the rejection of Western culture and thought. Government placed a new emphasis on Chinese culture and ideals.

The People's Republic allowed traditional Chinese religious practices to continue as long as they met the strict standards of the government, but the squeeze



against Christianity continued. Missionaries realized that the greatest risk of violence or imprisonment was toward Chinese natives who identified as Christian. As a result many missions began to leave the country. For a time CIM remained and even brought new missionaries to the field, but, as an OMF historian later wrote,

It eventually became plain that the continued presence of the missionaries was causing suspicion and harassment for the Chinese believers. In 1950, the momentous decision was made that, in the best interests of the Chinese church, the China Inland Mission (CIM) would withdraw. CIM moved its East Asian headquarters to Singapore, and the Chinese church was left to grow on its own, which it did, surviving and even thriving.

People often assume that Christianity should thrive where freedom of religion is encouraged and suffer under persecution. In East Asia the opposite seemed to be true. One Chinese minister said during the Nationalist-Communist conflict, "Do not pray for our safety, rather pray that we can endure persecution."

Whether MacArthur's dreams for Japan will one day be realized, and whether the Chinese church will continue to grow under persecution, no one knows. But in the end, World War II played a significant part in spreading Christianity across the Orient. ■

Darren Micah Lewis is the lead pastor of Calvary Christian Center in Louisville, Kentucky, and the author of Captured by the Rising Sun: Missionary Experiences under Japanese Occupation, 1941-1945. For more on the underground Chinese church today, check out our issue 109, Eyewitnesses to the Modern Age of Persecution.



DESTRUCTION APPROACHING *Left:* The Japanese attack China during World War II. Birch (*below*) vowed not to leave China until the Japanese Army did.

John Birch: fighting missionary

Hearing the name “John Birch” today, many think of the John Birch Society. But the real John Birch had nothing to do with the anti-Communist group of the 1950s that named itself in his honor.

When 22-year-old Birch, graduate of Mercer University and a Baptist seminary in Macon, Georgia, arrived in Shanghai in Japanese-occupied China in 1940, he’d come to be a missionary to the Chinese people and began by learning the world’s most difficult language in record time—no surprise to his family back in Georgia who always saw Birch as the smartest guy in any room.

The Chinese recognized his charitable heart as he preached the love of Christ, a message many had never heard except from the lips of an interpreter. And preach he did, as he covered much of occupied and unoccupied China—dodging Japanese patrols, dressing in native clothes, eating the same food, and taking the same risks as the people he quickly came to love.

FROM MISSIONARY TO GUIDE TO SPY

As financial support from the World Fundamental Baptist Missionary Fellowship dried up, Birch realized he’d have to find some other source of income. He was sitting in a restaurant in Zhejiang province, eating the cheapest fare on the menu, when a man approached. “Are you American?”



Birch nodded. “Follow me,” the man said and led him to a *sampan* (flat-bottomed boat) on a nearby river where he could hear English being spoken inside. Birch called out, “Are there Americans in there?” “Jesus Christ!” came a voice from inside. “No Jap could have that southern drawl.”

Birch answered, “Jesus Christ is a very good name, but I’m not he.” He stepped inside the *sampan* and looked directly into the eyes of Colonel James Doolittle. After bombing Tokyo, Doolittle and his men had bailed out over what they erroneously thought was free China. They needed help.

As things turned out, it became a question of who helped whom the most. Birch and many Chinese citizens risked their lives guiding Doolittle and his raiders to the safety of Chungking and Chiang Kai-shek; while Doolittle, impressed with Birch’s intelligence and knowing that the young man wanted to join the army, preferably as a chaplain, plugged him through military channels.

And so Birch became a second lieutenant in the famed Flying Tigers, commanded by General Claire Chennault, but not as a chaplain. Because of his command of the Chinese language, thorough knowledge of the countryside, mastery of disguise, mutual love for the Chinese nationals he worked with, and genius for gathering intelligence, Birch became . . . a spy.

But he had one request of Chennault—“Whenever I can, without neglecting my duties, can I preach?” General Chennault assented. Years later, the war over and Birch dead, this rough military man would remark with tears in his eyes, “John Birch was like the son I never had.”

In a last letter home to his mother who had asked him if he’d be getting a furlough, Birch answered that he would love to but could not leave until the last Japanese had left. And indeed he stayed past Japan’s surrender on August 15, 1945. On August 25 Birch, along with some American, Chinese, and Korean comrades, went on one last mission in a small town near Xuzhou. There Chinese Communists shot and killed Birch when he refused to surrender his revolver. After his death both the American and Chinese governments awarded him military honors.—*Don Haines, freelance writer, Woodbine, Maryland*

JAPANESE ARMY IN CHINA, DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR (BW PHOTO) / © SZ/PHOTO / SCHEERL / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES
JOHN BIRCH—SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, JACK TARVER LIBRARY, MERCER UNIVERSITY



Spreading light in a dark world

THE WORLD WARS SERVED AS A PIVOTAL TIME FOR CHRISTIAN RELIEF EFFORTS

Jared S. Burkholder

IN 1944, the same year Allied forces stormed the beaches of occupied Europe, the congregation of Boston's historic Park Street Church began giving up some meals during Lent. They sent the money they would have spent on food to the War Relief Fund, an initiative created by the newly formed (1942) National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). They were not alone in their desire to alleviate the suffering in war-torn Europe. Now known as World Relief, this fund was just one of many new Christian service organizations spurred into being by the world wars.

THE CALL OF THE REFUGEES

In World War I modern industrial war disrupted trade, destroyed farms, and decimated populations of young men, all while Europe experienced harsh winters and crop failures. Throngs of people became refugees, including women and orphaned children. Prisoners of war occupied temporary camps filled with disease and lacking adequate food and basic services.

ONWARD CHRISTIAN YOUNGSTERS Both the YMCA and YWCA aided relief efforts; in this World War I poster, YWCA women are shown gardening for relief.

In Belgium the 1914 German invasion displaced thousands. The following year the Ottoman government systematically brutalized the Armenian population in what most experts now consider genocide. Then in 1921–1922, the Russian people suffered through one of the worst famines in history, a suffering made worse by the Russian government's policies and resulting in approximately 5,000,000 deaths.

Protestant missionaries helped to raise awareness about these atrocities, sometimes collaborating with nonreligious humanitarian groups such as the Near East Foundation (founded in New York in 1915). Others worked with international organizations such as the League of Nations. Karen Jeppe, a Danish missionary who founded a farming colony near Aleppo,



THE NEED IS NEVER-ENDING One of Karen Jeppe's colleagues took a picture of this 1920s Armenian refugee camp in Aleppo.

Even prior to World War I, the American branch of the YMCA served among military personnel in America and abroad. Although the YMCA and YWCA mostly provided services and aid to American servicemen and women, their work extended to enemy prisoners of war held in miserable conditions in Europe. They partnered with other humanitarian agencies, such as the Rockefeller Foundation.

Prominent Methodist and YMCA leader John Mott wrote directly to oil magnate John D. Rockefeller, pressing for resources to help the 2,000,000 POWs on both sides "in grave danger of physical, mental and

moral deterioration unless something is done to occupy their minds, and so far as possible, their bodies."

In World War II when Hitler's Final Solution became public, the plight of Jews gave Christians new reasons for activism. Though Christians often were criticized for not doing more, Catholics in Europe did take measures to rescue Jews, and American Protestants supported Roosevelt's new War Refugee Board. In fact most of the relief agencies that continue to work globally with suffering people today had their beginnings in the years surrounding World War II: the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief (1940), Episcopal Relief and Development (1940), Catholic Relief Services (1943), World Relief (1944), Lutheran World Relief (1945), Church World Service (1946), World Vision (1950), and Compassion International (1952).

HAUNTING HOOVER'S MIND

The Christian desire to alleviate suffering was often complicated by prejudice or political realities. Herbert Hoover's Quaker heritage influenced his leadership in the government's war relief program; he remarked early in World War I as he led the Commission for Relief in Belgium, "Were it not for the haunting picture in one's mind of all the long line of people standing outside the relief stations in Belgium, I would have thrown over the position long since." But it also promoted American political interests.

Some Americans struggled to overcome antipathy toward the Russians, and Christian missionaries among the suffering Armenians were tempted to see their efforts as a means of civilizing the inferior "Turk." Prejudice sometimes marred even efforts to help Holocaust survivors. Jeannine Burk, a Belgian Jew who was hidden with a woman in Belgium when she was a child, wrote later, "I lived inside this house for two years. Occasionally, I was allowed to go out in the back

Syria, for Armenian survivors, wrote when she took on the task,

How would I supply for all these people? It is quite certain that if I have got them out of the harems, then I will also be responsible for what becomes of them. And who will finance this huge enterprise? I have very little trust in the whole affair. But it may be a vocation. Well, then I must apply myself to it, however much I resist.

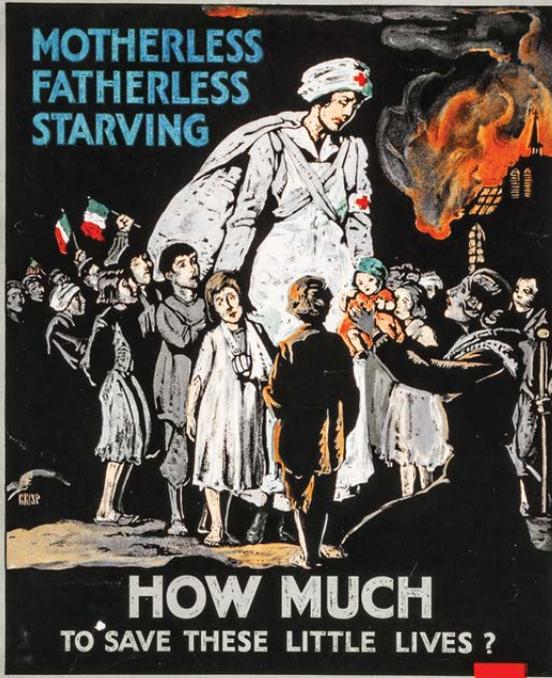
Later, when the League questioned her about the work, she made the shortest speech in its history: "Yes, it is only a little light, but the night is so dark."

"THEY HAVE NEVER TASTED MILK"

Some of the earliest Christians to respond to these tragedies were the "peace churches," including the Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Mennonites. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), formed in 1917, provided nonviolent opportunities for conscientious objectors to serve their countries, but also became the primary facilitator for all kinds of humanitarian efforts.

Friends made up a small army of ambulance drivers and medical personnel. They cared for orphans, refugees, and prisoners of war and were among the most active in providing relief during the Russian famine. In Austria Friends helped supply milk through a program called "Cows for Vienna."

The *New York Times* reported on the "sufferings of the little children" in Austria—where many children, it said, "have never tasted milk." The AFSC bought cows in Holland or Switzerland and gave them to farmers in Austria, who donated a portion of the milk to Quaker Infant Welfare Centers. Friends considered this a natural embodiment of their religious commitments to peacemaking and social justice. So did American Mennonites, who established the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in 1920.



WAR FUND WEEK
ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS
MAY 20th—27th



RESCUING THE PERISHING Christians founded their own war relief organizations, but also worked with groups like the Red Cross (*above*) and the American Committee for Relief in the Near East (*right*).

yard. I was never allowed to go out front. I was never mistreated. Ever! But I was never loved. I lost a great part of my childhood simply because I was a Jew."

Another survivor, Shep Zitler, who came to the United States as an adult, wrote of encountering a different kind of prejudice: "I remember the first time I came into a bus in New Orleans. I sat in the back of the bus, where I like to sit. A few people looked at me. That was where the blacks were supposed to sit. I found out about segregation, but I did not understand."

SAVE THE WORLD

Among American evangelicals, the rise of new organizations in the wake of World War II corresponded with a more expansive mindset. The founders of *Christianity Today* and the NAE sought to foster a broader and less separatist posture with a stronger commitment to social causes and global justice. In saving their grocery money, Boston's Park Street parishioners followed the lead of their pastor Harold J. Ockenga, one of the NEA's "new evangelical" leaders.

Overall, wartime relief among Christians had lasting, positive effects, sparking a willingness in denominations to work together and helping to facilitate a new ecumenical spirit. It also spurred

cooperation between Christian and secular groups toward humanitarian ends, like Pope Benedict XV's official support in 1920 of Save the Children Fund, the first time a non-Catholic charity received such support from the Vatican.

Though Christians had been known for centuries for their care for the poor and destitute, earlier grassroots efforts were not as highly structured or wide ranging. The world wars jumpstarted the many professional relief efforts Christians now take for granted.

Of the many Christian traditions embracing organized relief work, the Quakers alone were recognized on a global scale. Nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize five times, they finally received one in 1947. When the chairman of the Nobel Committee, Gunnar Jahn, presented the award, his description fit any number of Christians who sacrificed out of compassion for the suffering individuals of war-torn Europe:

The Quakers have shown us that it is possible to translate into action what lies deep in the hearts of many: compassion for others and the desire to help them—that rich expression of the sympathy between all men, regardless of nationality or race, which, transformed into deeds, must form the basis for lasting peace . . . the strength to be derived from faith in the victory of the spirit over force. **Q**

Jared S. Burkholder is associate professor of American and world history at Grace College and the editor of The Activist Impulse and Becoming Grace.



Christmas miracles

FOUR MEN RECALL CHRISTMAS AT THE FRONT

During Christmas 1914 spontaneous gestures of goodwill erupted in some places on the Western Front.

"ON CHRISTMAS EVE the firing practically ceased. I think both sides understood we were going to have a day off. Through the night we sang carols to one another. . . . When dawn arrived we started putting our head above the parapet and waved to each other. On our left was a brewery occupied by the Germans and to our surprise we saw a German come out and hold his hand up; behind him were two rolling a barrel of beer. They came half-way across. . . .

Three of us went out, shook hands with them, wished them a merry Christmas, and rolled the barrel to our own trenches amid the cheers of both British and Germans! After that it was understood that peace was declared for a day. We both got out of our trenches and met in the middle of the field, wished each other season's greetings. The Germans said: 'A merry Grismas!' Some of them were quite good at English. . . . The Germans got permission from our officers to bury some of their dead which were lying near our lines. When darkness came we both went back to our trenches and the great European war was on again." —*Private Cunningham of the Scottish Rifles, reprinted in The Scotsman, January 5, 1915.*

"A FRIENDLY CHAT WITH THE ENEMY" English and German soldiers exchange Christmas 1914 greetings.

"YESTERDAY THE BRITISH & GERMANS met & shook hands in the Ground between the trenches, & exchanged souvenirs. Yes, all day Xmas day, & as I write. Marvellous, isn't it? Yes. This is only for about a mile or two on either side of us (so far as we know). . . . On Xmas eve both armies sang carols and cheered & there was very little firing. The Germans called to our men to come and fetch a cigar & our men told them to come to us. This went on for some time, neither fully trusting the other, until, after much promising to 'play the game' a bold Tommy crept out & stood between the trenches, & immediately a Saxon came to meet him. They shook hands & laughed then 16 Germans came out. Thus the ice was broken." —*English soldier Henry Williamson (1895–1977) in a letter to his mother, December 26, 1914.*

"THE MIST WAS SLOW TO CLEAR and suddenly my orderly threw himself into my dugout to say that both the German and Scottish soldiers had come out of their trenches and were fraternizing along the front. I grabbed my binoculars and . . . saw the incredible sight of our soldiers exchanging cigarettes, schnapps



CHRISTMAS PROMISE Army Air Corps airman Ben Vegors (*right*) made a bargain on a bombing mission like this one to serve Christ. He became a VA chaplain after the war.

and chocolate with the enemy. Later a Scottish soldier appeared with a football which seemed to come from nowhere and a few minutes later a real football match got underway. The Scots marked their goal mouth with their strange caps and we did the same with ours. . . . After an hour's play, when our Commanding Officer heard about it, he sent an order that we must put a stop to it. A little later we drifted back to our trenches and the fraternization ended." —*German lieutenant Johannes Niemann, recalling the truce in the 1960s.*

Ben Vegors served in the Army Air Corps in World War II from 1942 to 1945 and flew 30 missions, but the one that made the greatest impression on him took place on Christmas Day 1944, as he told Christian History.

"ON ONE MISSION we were shot up terribly; a terrible, horrible mission, on Christmas Day, 1944, my fourteenth mission. We bombed Waxweiler in Germany, just one of many towns that we bombed. On that day another plane flying beside us was shot down. Our plane got back without a scratch. That was Christmas Day.

A good friend of mine who I led to the Lord just before combat was in the plane that was shot down. There were nine men who got out of the burning plane. The flames were going clear back to the tail of their plane. Each of them pulled the ripcord too soon. It just went up in a puff. They all fell to the ground. It left such

a terrible impression on me that day, Christmas Day of 1944, that I said, 'Lord, if you please spare my life I will serve you somehow as long as I live.' And I meant it.

The effect of that mission just tore me up. It was the only experience like that I've had in my life. After that on our missions, I never had any fear that we wouldn't get back. I believed that God would preserve us. He did preserve me. There were three times I was taken off the roster to fly, and those three days the plane crashed that I would have been in, and I would have been killed any of those three times. I realized that it was God who spared my life. That is the only explanation for it.

When I got back after the war, my mother wanted me to finish college and go to law school. I said no, I made a promise that if God spared my life I'd serve him all of my life. Since that time I've had just a marvelous life. I came here to Walla Walla, Washington, to be pastor of Trinity Baptist Church and the first Sunday I was here the chaplain from the local VA hospital asked me if I would come out for night calls. When he retired the director made me full-time chaplain. I told war stories a lot in the chapel, and a lot of the folks liked it.

I retired when I was 92 as the oldest chaplain in government service. I've had wonderful health I was blessed with. Every Wednesday morning I have a Bible class in the women's nursing home. I'm 94 and I have a lot to be thankful for." ❏

Thanks to James D. Smith III of Bethel University for connecting us with Chaplain Vegors.

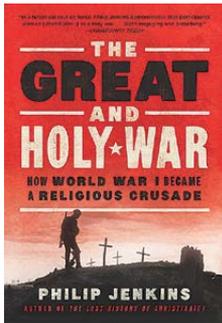


Recommended resources

THE LANDSCAPE OF RESOURCES ABOUT FAITH IN THE WORLD WARS IS VAST. HERE ARE SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CH EDITORIAL STAFF AND THIS ISSUE'S AUTHORS.

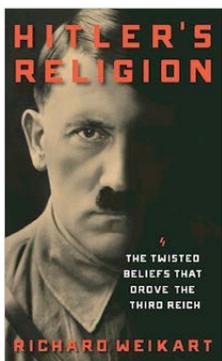
BOOKS

General books about **soldiers, the home front, and faith** in World Wars I and II (and sometimes other wars) include John Costello, *Virtue Under Fire* (1987); Gerald Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism* (1997); Michael Burleigh, *Earthly Powers* (2005) and *Sacred Causes* (2007); Michael Snape, *God and the British Soldier* (2005) and *God and Uncle Sam* (2015); David Fromkin, *A Peace To End All Peace* (2009); Jonathan Ebel, *Faith in the Fight* (2010) and *G. I. Messiahs* (2015); and Philip Jenkins, *The Great and Holy War* (2014).



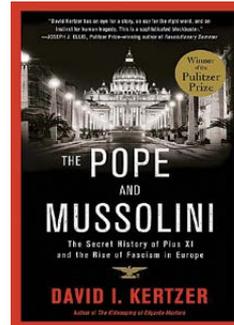
Many books tell the stories of **chaplains** in both wars; among them John Smyth, *In This Sign Conquer* (1968); Donald Crosby, *Battlefield Chaplains* (1994); Richard Budd, *Serving Two Masters* (2002); Israel Yost, *Combat Chaplain* (2006); Alan Robinson, *Chaplains at War* (2008); Michael Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains' Department, 1796–1953* (2008) and (coedited with Edward Madigan) *The Clergy in Khaki* (2013); Lyle Dorsett, *Serving God and Country* (2012); Michael Shay, *Sky Pilots* (2014); and Ronit Stahl, *Enlisting Faith* (2017).

Read about the **Inklings at war** in John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War* (2003); Janet Brennan Croft, *War and the Works of J. R. R. Tolkien* (2004); K. J. Gilchrist, *A Morning After War* (2005); and Joseph Loconte, *A Hobbit, a Wardrobe, and a Great War* (2015). **Conscientious objectors** feature in Albert Keim, *The CPS Story* (1990); Jeffrey Kovac, *Refusing War, Affirming Peace* (2009); Mark Matthews, *Smoke Jumping on the Western Fire Line* (2009); Will Ellsworth-Jones, *We Will Not Fight* (2007); Amy Shaw, *Crisis of Conscience* (2009); and Karyn Burnham, *The Courage of Cowards* (2014).



Learn more about **Christians and Nazism** in John Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches* (1968); Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People* (1992); Doris Bergen, *Twisted Cross* (1996); Robert Ericksen and Susannah Heschel, eds., *Betrayal* (1999); Kevin Spicer, *Resisting the Third Reich* (2004), and (as editor) *Antisemitism, Christian Ambivalence, and the Holocaust* (2007); Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich* (2004); Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus* (2008); and Richard Weikart, *Hitler's Religion* (2016).

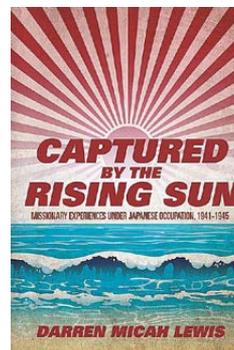
Catholics in Italy feature in John Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929–1932* (1985), *The Fascist Experience in Italy* (1998), *The Unknown Pope* (1999), and *The Papacy in the Age of Totalitarianism, 1914–1958* (2014); John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope* (1999); Carol Rittner and John K. Roth, eds., *Pius XII and the Holocaust* (2004); David Dalin, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope* (2005); Robert Ventresca, *Soldier of Christ* (2013); and David Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini* (2014).



Read about **Jews in Holland and the Dutch Resistance** in Werner Warmbrunn, *The Dutch under German Occupation, 1940–1945* (1963); Jacob Presser, *Ashes in the Wind* (1968); Barth Hoogstraten, *The Resistance Fighters* (2008); and Jeroen Dewulf, *Spirit of Resistance* (2010).

Books about the **Orthodox in Romania and Russia** include Harvey Fireside, *Icon and Swastika* (1971); Dimitry Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917–1982* (1984); Vladimir Solonari, *Purifying the Nation* (2000); Nathaniel Davis, *A Long Walk to Church* (2003); Steven Merritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War* (2003); Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims* (2009); Dennis Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally* (2006); and Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (2016).

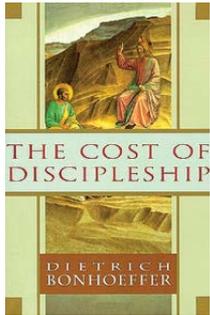
More about **Christian missionaries and soldiers on the Pacific front** can be found in Weldon Rhoades, *Flying MacArthur to Victory* (1987); Gavan Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese* (1994); Phyllis Thompson, *China: The Reluctant Exodus* (2000); Chuck Holsinger, *Above the Cry of Battle* (2001); Darren Micah Lewis, *Captured By the Rising Sun* (2014); and Arthur Herman, *Douglas MacArthur* (2016).



Find out more about **refugees and relief agencies** in Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted* (1985); J. Bruce

Nichols, *The Uneasy Alliance* (1988); Elliott Abrams, *The Influence of Faith* (2002), and Bruno Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism* (2014).

Experience sermons, poems, and reflections from the world wars in Basil Mathews, ed., *Christ and the World at War* (1917); G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, *The Unutterable Beauty* (1927); Ray Abrams, *Preachers Present Arms* (1933); Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (1937); Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Why Does God Allow War?* (1939); Harry Emerson Fosdick, *A Great Time to Be Alive* (1944); Herbert Butterfield, *Christianity, Diplomacy and War* (1953); and Dean



Stroud, ed., *Preaching in Hitler's Shadow* (2013). Finally separate myth from history about the Christmas truce with Stanley Weintraub, *Silent Night* (2001); Malcolm Brown and Shirley Seaton, *Christmas Truce* (2011); and Chris Baker, *The Truce* (2014).

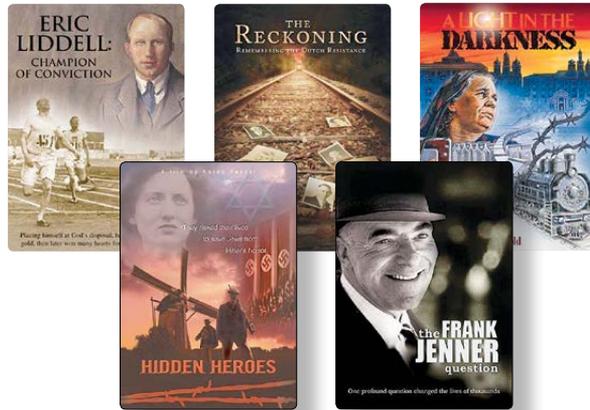
Biographies and memoirs of people whose stories we've told include:

- **Alvin York:** Douglas Mastriano, *Alvin York* (2014)
- **Corrie ten Boom:** Corrie ten Boom, *The Hiding Place* (1971) and *Tramp for the Lord* (1974)
- **Edith Stein:** Waltraud Herbstrith, *Edith Stein* (1992)
- **Dietrich Bonhoeffer:** Charles Marsh, *Strange Glory* (2014)
- **Martin Niemöller:** James Bentley, *Martin Niemöller, 1892–1984* (1983)
- **John Birch:** Terry Lutz, *John Birch: A Life* (2016)
- **Mitsuo Fuchida:** Mitsuo Fuchida, *From Pearl Harbor to Calvary* (1959)
- **Ben Vegors:** Scott Reardon and Ben Vegors, *My Brightest Christmas Memory* (2009)
- **Ludwig Wittgenstein:** Roy Monk, *The Duty of Genius* (1991)

PAST CHRISTIAN HISTORY ISSUES

Read these past issues of *Christian History* online; some are still available for purchase:

- **7 and 88:** C. S. Lewis
- **9:** *Heritage of Freedom*
- **18:** *Russian Christianity*
- **33:** *Christianity and the Civil War*
- **32:** *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*
- **50:** *American Revolution*
- **52:** *Hudson Taylor*
- **78:** J. R. R. Tolkien
- **98:** *Chinese Christianity*
- **113:** *Seven Sages*



VIDEOS FROM VISION VIDEO

Videos related to this issue's articles include *A Light in the Darkness*; *Bonhoeffer*; *Corrie ten Boom*; *Dawn of War*; *Eric Liddell*; *Gladys Aylward*; *Hanged on a Twisted Cross*; *Heroes*; *Hidden in Silence*; *Hidden Heroes*; *Making Choices*; *Overlord*; *PAX Service*; *Sergeant York*; *Sophie Scholl*; *The Diary of Anne Frank*; *The Frank Jenner Question*; *The Hiding Place*; *The Reckoning*; *The Scarlet and the Black*; *Unbroken*; *World War I Military Chaplains*; and *World War II*.

Four children's Torchlighters episodes have world war themes: *Eric Liddell*, *Gladys Aylward*, *Corrie ten Boom*, and *Richard Wurmbrand*. The Corrie ten Boom DVD has a companion biography for kids by Kaylena Radcliff.

WEBSITES

Find documents and resources related to World War I history at FirstWorldWar.com, the [British National Archives WWI site](http://BritishNationalArchives.com), GreatWar.co.uk, and the [World War I Document Archive](http://WorldWarIDocumentArchive.com). World War II history can be found at [World War II Database](http://WorldWarIIDatabase.com), the [Avalon Project](http://AvalonProject.org), the [U. S. National Archives](http://USNationalArchives.com), and the [Illinois Digital Archives World War II site](http://IllinoisDigitalArchives.com). An excellent site devoted to the Civilian Public Service program is CivilianPublicService.org. Read more about Pearl Harbor's seventy-fifth anniversary at PearlHarbor75thAnniversary.com.

The [Corrie ten Boom Museum](http://CorrieTenBoomMuseum.com) has a website (it's in Dutch, but an older version is also available in [English](#)), and there is also a site devoted to ten Boom's life at TenBoom.org. The [Edith Stein Circle](http://EdithSteinCircle.com) is devoted to the study of Stein's philosophy, and the [Edith Stein House](http://EdithSteinHouse.com) has other resources on her life. There is a [Dietrich Bonhoeffer Center](http://DietrichBonhoefferCenter.com) site, a site for the English-language section of the [International Bonhoeffer Society](http://InternationalBonhoefferSociety.com), and a site for [Bonhoeffer's house](http://BonhoefferHouse.com).

And if you're interested in what exactly Niemöller said in his famous quote, a whole [website](#) by Harold Marcuse is devoted to the topic! ☑

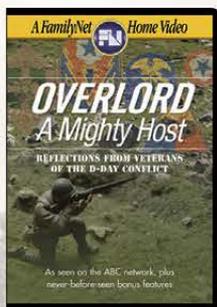
DVDs to Commemorate WWII



Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace

The story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German clergyman of great distinction, who actively opposed Hitler and the Nazis. His convictions cost him his life. Drama, 90 minutes.

* DVD - #4638D, ~~\$14.99~~
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Overlord: A Mighty Host

Seventy years ago, 150,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches of northern France. This awesome military event is examined from the point of view of those who survived that extraordinary conflict. Documentary, 58 minutes.

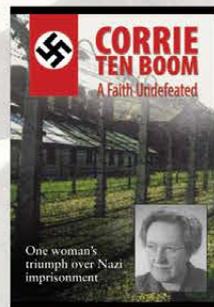
* DVD - #501057D, \$14.99



The Reckoning: Remembering the Dutch Resistance

This documentary captures the compelling stories and eyewitness accounts of six survivors in the war-torn Netherlands during World War II. Documentary, 96 minutes.

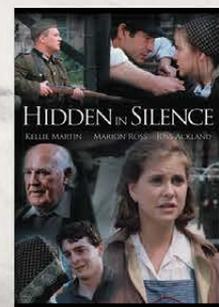
* DVD - #501177D, \$12.99



Corrie ten Boom: A Faith Undefeated

When Nazi forces invaded Holland in 1940 and began rounding up Jews, Corrie ten Boom and her family risked their lives to save as many as possible. This is their story. Documentary, 55 minutes.

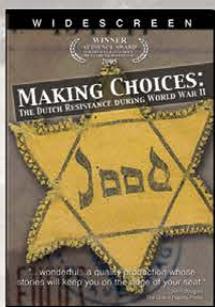
* DVD - #501550D, \$14.99



Hidden in Silence

Przemyśl, Poland, WWII: while some stand silent, Catholic teenager Stefania Podgorska sneaks 13 Jews into her attic. This is the true story of a young woman's selfless commitment in the face of war. DVD includes additional movies that we find objectionable and do not recommend. Drama, 90 minutes.

DVD - #23304D, \$9.99



Making Choices: The Dutch Resistance during World War II

A moving firsthand account of four Dutch survivors of the 1940 Nazi invasion of Holland who helped protect total strangers from certain death. Hear their stories of fear and courage, danger and faith as they put their lives on the line to do what they thought was right. Documentary, 57 minutes.

* DVD - #500873D, \$9.99



The Scarlet and the Black

This film tells the thrilling true story of an Irish priest in the Vatican who organized an underground network in Rome to hide Jews and others from the Nazis during World War II. Starring Gregory Peck, Christopher Plummer, and Sir John Gielgud. Drama, 165 minutes.

DVD - #1395D, \$14.99



The Hiding Place

In wartime Holland, Corrie ten Boom and her family quietly sheltered Jews in their small house—until Nazis discovered the “hiding place” and arrested them all. This is the gripping, true story of Corrie and her sister as they endured the horrors of the Ravensbruck death camp. Drama, 145 minutes.

DVD - #8210D, ~~\$19.99~~ **SALE! \$9.99**

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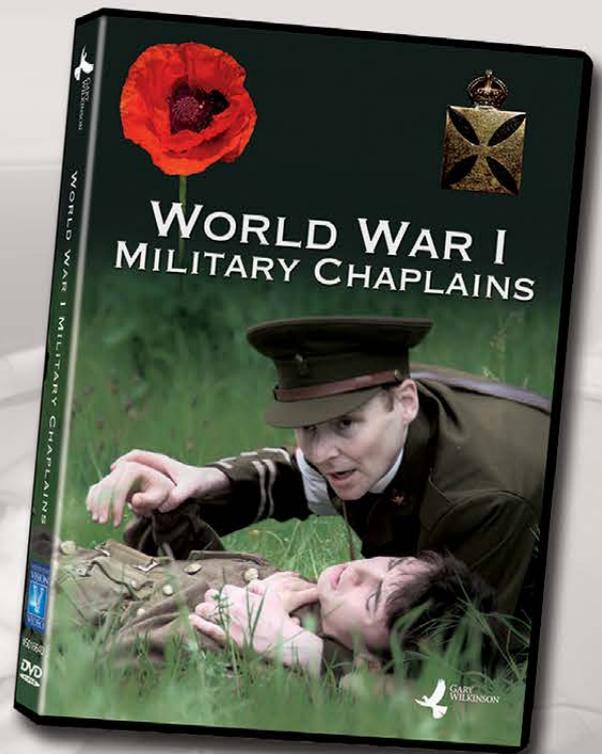
Explore the Lives of Military Chaplains

World War I Military Chaplains

Military chaplains, men of faith serving in World War I, found themselves facing the gruesome reality of modern warfare. Serving side by side with soldiers in the trenches, chaplains became essential to the spiritual and psychological needs of those under their care.

This four-part series takes you inside the lives of military chaplains who served during the Great War. Dramatic reenactments and interviews with key experts shed new light on an often overlooked but important role.

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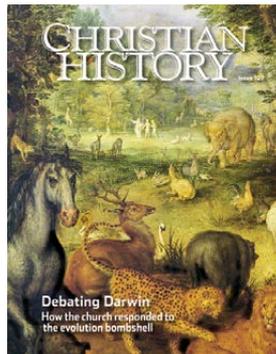
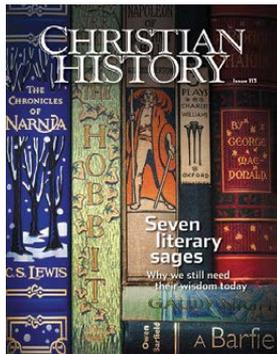
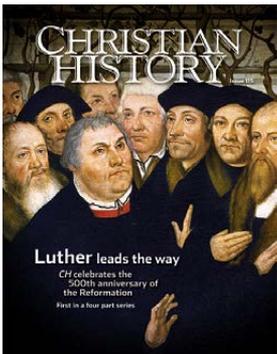
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