

February 25, 2022

## One Family Under Heaven

The Hebrew Bible--often known by Christians as the Old Testament--is filled with stories of sibling rivalries and resentments. Cain and Abel's competition for God's approval ended in the murder of Abel. Isaac and Ishmael's relationship as children of different mothers ended in Ishmael's banishment from his father, brother, and land of his birth. Jacob and Esau were estranged for most of their adult lives until they reunited to bury their father, Isaac. Jacob's sons resented Joseph as their father's favored child and wrought revenge by selling Joseph into slavery. Joseph and his brothers were later reunited in Egypt, and Joseph forgave them. This is one of the better role models.

The longest running family feud, however, is found in the Christian New Testament. During the first century, in the time of Jesus, the people of Judea had differing ideas of how to express their faith. One form of Jewish observance would become what we think of as Christianity, those followers who accepted Jesus as the Messiah and for whom Jesus' death and resurrection became a central tenet of their faith. Another form did not believe and barely acknowledged Jesus' claim of messiahship. This group of Torah observant Jews would shape the rich and varied world of Judaism we have today. The conflict between these groups inspired Gospel writing Christians to portray their Jewish rivals as being more responsible for Jesus' death and the Romans less, more as demons and villains and less as their brethren.

At this time of year, reference to this sibling rivalry continues to appear in the Christian liturgy. Priests and pastors are busily preparing sermons for Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season that will lead to Holy Week and the Easter celebration. It is a time of Lectionary readings that lay out the vilification of the Jews. Here are a few examples:

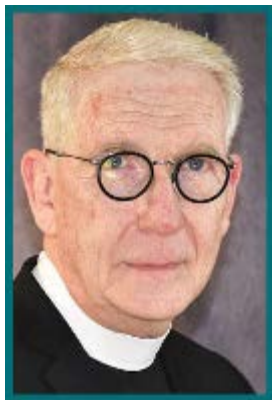
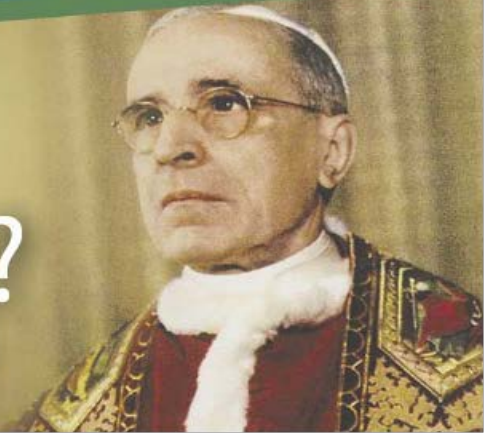
- On Ash Wednesday, the Gospel reading of Matthew 6 urges those in the pews to avoid practicing their religion in a boastful and showy way like the "hypocrites in the synagogues" and to not be materialistic or superficial.
- On certain Sundays during Lent, the Gospel reading rails on the moneychangers in the Jerusalem Temple. Scriptural misinterpretations that stereotyped Jews as generally materialistic, greedy and dishonest in their business dealings left their marks throughout the centuries.
- A reading from the Gospel of Luke emphasizes Jesus' conflicts with the Pharisees, a Jewish sect at the time of Jesus, who reject Jesus and his ministry to sinners and to the marginalized.
- Interpretations of references to former divine punishments of the Jews in I Corinthians have branded Jews as people who were rejected by God.
- Holy Week observances have included passages from the New Testament that charged the Jewish people with the collective guilt for the death of Jesus. In Matthew (27: 23,27) "all of the people", interpreted as all the Jewish people, clamor for Jesus's death while Pilate washes his hands. "Let him be crucified . . . His blood be upon us and on our children."
- In John's gospel, the Jews are identified as "from your father the devil" (John 8:44) and blames them for backing Pilate into a corner and forcing him to kill an innocent man.
- In Acts of the Apostles, "the entire house of Israel" (Acts 2:36) is charged with the crucifixion of Jesus having "killed the author of life" (Acts 3:14-15). Even the Jewish Paul refers to "the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus" (I Thessalonians 2:14-15).

These scriptural passages from the New Testament and their interpretations that often lack historical context have fanned the flames of hatred of Jews for thousands of years. To counter these negative attitudes and stereotypes, clergy speaking to those sitting in the church pews must be aware of this reality. They must also be knowledgeable about documents written and published by the Catholic Church such as *Nostra Aetate* (1965) and *God's Mercy Endures Forever: Guidelines on the Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Catholic Preaching* (1985). These address how to avoid preaching anti-Judaism during Lent and the Easter Season and throughout the liturgical calendar.

Join us! • 2022 Spring Public Lecture

# Hitler's Pope or Someday a Saint?

## A Second Look at Pope Pius XII



### Featured Speaker Rev. Dennis McManus, Ph.D.

In 2021, Fr. Dennis McManus was appointed Senior Research Fellow at Georgetown University to investigate the Vatican Archives and the question of Pius XII and the Holocaust. He has served as the delegate for Jewish Affairs for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops since 2010.

Sunday, March 27, 2022  
at 3:00 p.m. CT

In-Person or Online • Registration Required  
To register or for more information:

[shsst.edu/lux-events](https://shsst.edu/lux-events)

**Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology**  
7335 S. Hwy. 100, Franklin, WI

### Theological Perspectives on Nationalism, Antisemitism, and Racism in the U.S. Today

Saint Leo's University

Thursday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 7 - 9pm ET Online Only

**UPDATE: Due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19 this program is now an online Zoom program. To watch the program, you must register using the button below.**

The program will address the interrelationship between nationalism, antisemitism, and racism in the United States. For more information:

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/March-3rd-Program-Moves-Online---Register-Today.html?soid=1130426152656&aid=ItBuFvIIEFY>



# SISTER ROSE THERING AWARDS DINNER



## SAVE THE DATE

Please join the Lux Center for Catholic Jewish Studies' Sister Rose Thering Award Dinner  
Thursday, May 19, 2022  
at 6:00 p.m. at the Boerner Botanical Gardens

### **Honoring:**

Recipients of the Sr. Rose Thering Award  
Rabbi Ronald Shapiro  
Rev. David Cooper

Recipients of the Building Bridges Award  
Rev. Wayne Jenkins, SCJ  
Dr. Steven Shippee

For more information:

<https://www.shsst.edu/theringawardsdinner/>

### **Ms. Bonnie Shafrin**

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