The Church is not afraid of history

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Pope Francis announces opening of the Vatican Archives for the Pontificate of Pius XII on March 2, 2020.

On March 4, 2019, Pope Francis received in audience the superiors, employees and collaborators of the Vatican Secret Archive for the eightieth anniversary of the election as Supreme Pontiff of the Servant of God Pius XII.

In this audience, the Pope announced his decision to open to researchers the archival documentation related to the pontificate of Pius XII, up to his death at Castel Gandolfo on 9 October 1958. At this occasion he said:

“I have assumed this decision after hearing the opinion of my closest collaborators, with a serene and confident mind, sure that serious and objective historical research will be able to evaluate, in the proper light and with appropriate criticism, the praiseworthy moments of the Pontiff and, without any doubt, also moments of serious difficulties, of tormented decisions, of human and Christian prudence, which to some might have seemed to be reticence, and which instead were attempts, humanly also very hard-fought, to keep the flame of humanitarian initiatives lit during periods of more intense darkness and cruelty, of hidden but active diplomacy, of hope in possible good openings of hearts.

The Church is not afraid of history; rather, she loves it, and would like to love it more and better, as God does! So, with the same trust of my predecessors, I open and entrust to researchers this documentary heritage.”

This decision raised many positive reactions in Israel and in the Jewish communities abroad.

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