

“Holy Father! As a daughter of the Jewish people who has been a daughter of the Catholic Church for 11 years thanks to God’s grace, I have taken the liberty to communicate to the father of Christianity the concerns of millions of Germans. For weeks now in Germany we have been witnessing events that show complete disregard for justice and humanity, not to mention love for one’s neighbour. For years, National Socialist leaders have preached hatred against Jews. Now that they have taken over power and have armed their followers – which include notorious criminals – they are reaping the fruit of the seed of hatred they sowed.”

After mentioning the numerous cases of Jews committing suicide as a result of Nazi oppression, Edith Stein added: “It may be said that those who are unhappy do not have the moral force to deal with their destiny. But while the responsibility for this unhappiness lies greatly with those who pushed them to commit the act of suicide, the responsibility also falls on those who keep quiet and do nothing.”

“Everything that has happened and that is going on every day is down to a government that calls itself “Christian”. Not just Jews, but thousands of Catholic faithful in Germany, and I believe, throughout the world have been waiting for Christ’s Church to speak out against this abuse, in the name of Christ, for weeks now. Isn’t the idolatry of race and State power, which the radio hammers into the minds of the population on a daily basis, open heresy? Isn’t this war of extermination against Jewish blood a violation of the sacred humanity of our Saviour, of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Apostles? Is it not in complete contrast to the behaviour of our Lord the Redeemer, who even prayed for his persecutors on the cross?”

“All those of us who are witnessing the current situation in Germany as faithful children of the Church, fear the worst for the image the Church will give to the world if this silence continues any further. We are also adamant that this silence cannot obtain peace from the German government in the long run. The war against Catholicism is being waged quietly and less brutally than the war

against Judaism, but just as systematically,” the philosopher concluded.

The nun’s criticism was clear and far-sighted, accompanied by a request for the Holy See to side against Nazism. The Holy See did respond to Stein’s missive. Cardinal Pacelli wrote a letter in German to the Benedictine Arch-Abbot Waltzer on 20 April 1933, informing him that Stein’s letter “was duly presented to His Holiness.” In 1937, Pius XI published the encyclical *Mit Brennender*, whose National Socialist ideology was condemned as pagan and anti-Christian.

On 9 August years ago Edith Stein, the Jew turned Carmelite sister was being killed in Auschwitz concentration camp. In 1933 she wrote to the Pope about the Jewish persecution