

according to the Natural Law, requires openness to life. Because of the complex spiritual nature of the human person, the education of children is an even greater responsibility and requires a long-term commitment from both the mother and the father, who, as man and woman, each bring a unique contribution to the child's upbringing. He argues that the traditional family is thus crucial for proper childrearing and also demonstrates ways in which the family is the bedrock of society, branching out into further communities.

According to Fr. Mullady, gay marriage follows logically from the sexual revolution, which abandoned the procreation and education of children as a chief good of marriage. The Church, however, can never endorse gay marriage because of the impossibility of procreation. A man and a woman bound in marriage, however, do not violate the goods of marriage if they are unable to have children; the goods of marriage are not ordered in a utilitarian manner but rather as an object of the will.

In this ambitious but concise work, Mullady sweeps through major intellectual movements in history with ease, driving at the heart of the matter and exposing fundamental flaws that led to later problems. The book is not just another *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*; it is a work of a particular theology and philosophy consistent with and reflective on that tradition, with particular emphasis given as a corrective to trends in the Catholic world that the author believes have strayed from the path, acquiescing to secular humanism. Insightful for both its breadth and precision, *Christian Social Order* is a must-read for those who wish to engage in a serious study of the relation of faith and society.

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Mark Riebling, *Church of Spies*. Basic Books, 2015.

In the midst of the Second World War, Hitler once angrily denounced the Vatican as a “nest of spies.” Mark Riebling’s new book provides evidence of the extent of church-based espionage, and puts flesh and blood on the whole enterprise. Written more like a spy novel than historical research, *Church of Spies* relies on new archival evidence that tells the story of a Bavarian-Jesuit spy network known as the “Orders Committee” and centered around Josef Müller, a World War I hero and Catholic lawyer who

was the main link between anti-Hitler German generals and Pope Pius XII. Flying a small sports plane between Germany and Italy throughout the war, Müller, known as “Joey Ox,” conspired with the resistance in both countries in an effort to bring about regime change in Germany, including the assassination of Hitler and an early end to the war.

His German co-conspirators included principally Jesuit, Dominican, and Benedictine clergy, who were able to report to their superiors directly in Rome and thus bypass the local hierarchies where sympathy or security was more questionable. Nonetheless, the Orders Committee also included Bishop Konrad von Preysing of Berlin, a strong anti-Nazi, who lobbied Rome for more assistance to persecuted Jews while keeping apprised of the pope’s secret diplomacy through his contacts with Müller. The author repeats without much elaboration the critics’ frequent observation that the pope never once publicly uttered the word “Jew” during the war, including in his 1942 Christmas message; nor did he *publicly* protest the deportation of 1007 Roman Jews on the morning of October 16, 1943. He simply states that at the same time, over 4700 Jews were living in the Vatican and other Church properties in Rome. He also notes that Pius had decided that bishops and clergy on the ground ought to make their own judgments about whether more specific protests helped the situation of the Nazis’ opponents or further endangered them.

Riebling reveals that Müller brokered a “connecting” agreement between the German and Italian conspirators: “if one side should pull off a coup, the other should follow in train.” Riebling maintains that the plot to remove Mussolini “had in fact been hatched by Vatican channels years before.” Chief of the Italian General Staff, Marshal Pietro Badoglio, had learned that Mussolini wanted him court-martialed after he had expressed opposition to Italy’s invasion of Greece in November of 1940. As a result, Badoglio indicated that he would move against Mussolini if the king and the pope would back him, but had wanted the Germans to move first.

After the Allied invasion of Italy, however, and Mussolini’s arrest by King Victor Emmanuel in July of 1943, Pius spent the next month hosting secret talks between Prime Minister Badoglio and the Allies, which led to the September 8 armistice between Italy and the Allies, followed by the immediate German occupation of Rome. Hitler renewed his threats to invade the Vatican and kidnap the pope and the curia, whom he held responsible for Mussolini’s fall and Italy’s turnabout. He was talked into postponing the plan by Goebbels, von Ribbentrop, and later by the SS commander in Italy, Karl Wolff, all of whom advised that it would create a backlash in Rome and have a negative impact on world opinion.

The German counterpart to Marshal Badoglio was Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, head of German military intelligence and a long-time acquaintance and admirer of Pius XII, whom he had met in the 1920s while Pius (Cardinal Pacelli) was papal nuncio in Berlin. Canaris had sought to remove Hitler following the 1939 invasion of Poland, which had outraged Canaris, who was opposed to this widening of the war—as well as the Nazis' plan to target the Catholic clergy in Poland for elimination. Canaris was a leading conspirator in the various bungled plots to assassinate and overthrow Hitler, culminating in the disastrous Valkyrie Plan on July 20, 1944, after which Canaris, Colonel von Stauffenberg, Colonel Oster, and others were executed for their involvement in the plot.

Riebling also addresses the concerns among the plotters concerning the morality of political assassination, noting that the Protestants within the group were more troubled than the Catholics. The latter were more inclined to Aquinas's view that "tyrannicide" is a matter for individual conscience, and is sometimes not only allowable but even necessary, provided it doesn't lead to greater evils such as civil war. Some of the Protestants on the other hand, were more constrained by Luther's and Calvin's teachings against any resistance to rulers since all authority comes from God and that "disobedience (to a prince) is a greater sin than murder." In any case, Müller assured his collaborators that the pope would not formally endorse political assassination, while fully understanding that the coup plots involved attempts to kill the Führer. Rather it appears that the pope's greater concern was that the Allies' Casablanca declaration that called for the "unconditional surrender" of Germany might prolong the war unnecessarily and dissuade those generals who were contemplating a coup but who wanted an armistice that would not result in another punitive peace and the dismemberment of Germany.

As early as March 1943, Müller's Jesuit conspirators laid the plan for a new democratic government in Germany, with Pius prepared to accept Müller's credentials as the new government's official representative to the Holy See. The plan failed when the bomb placed on a plane flying Hitler from Smolensk to Rastenberg failed to explode as planned "somewhere above Minsk." Again, at the time of the Valkyrie plot the following year, Müller was "preappointed" special emissary of the new German government to the Holy See, prepared to fly immediately to Rome and make the Vatican the first foreign power to recognize the new anti-Nazi regime.

"Joey Ox" was eventually arrested and tortured for months as a "special prisoner" of the SS along with other conspirators, including German officers and both Catholic and Protestant clergymen. However, unlike the others, he managed to avoid execution and later escaped after the SS trans-

ported him and others to the Italian Alps, where the remnants of the Third Reich apparently planned a last stand before being killed by partisans.

Those historians and others who continue to cling to the “Hitler’s Pope” myth despite the abundant evidence to the contrary, will have an even more difficult task as they are faced with Mark Riebling’s well-documented page-turner.

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Todd Scribner, *A Partisan Church: American Catholicism and the Rise of Neo-Conservative Catholics*. Catholic University of America Press, 2015.

Michael Novak, Richard John Neuhaus, and George Weigel were three major figures in late twentieth-century American Catholic economic and political thought. This fact is widely recognized—so much so that the grouping of the three as a kind of “Catholic neo-conservative triumvirate” has become a commonplace in the intellectual history of religious conservatism in the period. Indeed, one might argue that the attention paid to the three, while justified with respect to their influence, has skewed our understanding of Catholic conservatism by neglecting other important figures who are not as easily categorized or lumped together into a movement.

Nonetheless, Scribner’s *Partisan Church* is another entry in this historiography, focusing closely on these three thinkers and bringing in others only by way of elucidating the protagonists’ context. Combine this focus on well-trod territory with the fact that Scribner holds a position in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops—an institution often on the receiving end of neoconservative barbs—and one might reasonably expect little in the way of originality or balance.

One would be wrong. Scribner’s book excels where many other accounts have failed: fundamentally, by taking seriously the thought of these public intellectuals and by assuming their good faith. Scribner is not uncritical, but he clearly strives to be fair (Novak’s blurb on the back cover attests to the same point), and in the process he achieves what few other analysts of neoconservatism have: a thorough and lucid exposition of Novak’s, Neuhaus’s, and Weigel’s views on key topics, and real insight into the sources of those views.