The Vatican Ambassador to Israel has stated he will not attend this year's Holocaust Remembrance Day at Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Centre. Monsignor Antonio Franco has told the Jerusalem Post he will not be attending the ceremony, in protest over a photograph of the late Pope Pius XII and a caption commenting on his dubious reaction to the murder of Jews by the Nazi regime. The previous Vatican Ambassador to Israel had requested the caption be changed to show the Pontiff in a more positive light. The Holocaust Museum said they would change the caption when the Vatican opened its archives from the Second World War period. But this never happened and the caption was never changed. So now Franco must snub the deaths of six million Jews, because of his own religion's willingness to embrace the Nazi regime.

Quote: *"The role of the Holocaust-era Pope has long been controversial. "In 1933, when he was Secretary of the Vatican State, he was active in obtaining a Concordat with the German regime to preserve the Church's rights in Germany, even if this meant recognizing the Nazi racist regime," the controversial caption reads. "When he was elected Pope in 1939, he shelved a letter against racism and anti-Semitism that his predecessor had prepared. Even when reports about the murder of Jews reached the Vatican, the Pope did not protest either verbally or in writing. In December 1942, he abstained from signing the Allied declaration condemning the extermination of the Jews. When Jews were deported from Rome to Auschwitz, the Pope did not intervene. "The Pope maintained his neutral position throughout the war, with the exception of appeals to the rulers of Hungary and Slovakia towards its end. His silence and the absence of guidelines obliged Churchmen throughout Europe to decide on their own how to react."*

The reason for the Catholic Church's silence on the horrors of the Holocaust is because the Vatican and the Nazis were essentially fighting for the same cause. The Vatican was prepared to sanction Nazi atrocities, if in turn Hitler re-established the Pope's Holy Roman Empire. It's not the first time Rome has courted controversy over its Nazi past. Last month German Bishops also toured Yad Vashem expressing grief over the slaughter of the innocent, but later

told Palestinian journalists in the territories that Israel was behaving just like the Nazis. When it comes to the Holocaust and the Vatican, it seems the Nazis are alive and well.

Source Jerusalem Post