The MRCE grant allowed me to travel to Rome, Italy this past summer. The purpose of the trip was to research in the library of *La Civita Cattolica*. *La Civita Cattolica* is the Jesuit publication associated with the Vatican. These articles were critical to my research because they have been cited by many contributors to the debate. Since the thesis’ goal is to track the evolution of each argument, understanding the sources that contribute to each side is imperative.

**ROLF HOCHHUTH AND THE CRITICS**

Though questions of the Pope’s actions were raised during the war and in the years immediately following, it was Rolf Hochhuth’s dramatic fictional work *The Deputy* published in 1963, that ignited the dispute. *The Deputy* creates a very strong case against Pope Pius XII. Claiming to be based on historical events, Hochhuth portrays Pius and others within the church as sympathetic towards the Jewish situation in Europe, but not proactive. Some of the arguments Hochhuth presents in his case against the Pope are listed here:

- Throughout the play the Pope and other clergy in the Vatican are primarily concerned with the church as an institution and the position it held on the international plane. This concern led the Pope and others to turn away from the evils being done to the Jewish people.
- The Vatican was fearful of the Western World falling to Communism and was therefore supportive of Hitler’s campaign against the East.
- Though he did employ some behind the scenes measures, the Pope’s silence still makes him guilty. He did not do enough as the Vicar of Christ.

Since the publication of the play, there have been some new components added to the case as people dig deeper into the history. Some of these include the added possibility of deep-rooted animosity towards the Jewish people and the effect of the Pope’s extended time in Germany serving as the Papal Nuncio of Bavaria. However, it could be argued that Hochhuth’s assertions inspired and guided the research that has taken place since.

**HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XII**

There has been a recent stir within the Vatican regarding the canonization of Pope Pius XII. According to some sources, Pope Francis is considering jumping the beatification process and moving to the last step in making this controversial figure a saint. Pius XII has always been a figure clouded in controversy because of his actions during World War Two. When Pope John Paul II declared Pius a Servant of God in 1990, the first major step in the process since 1965, the debate on what Pius XII did or did not do for the Jewish people was reignited and has remained relevant to the present day. This debate, relating to both the Holocaust and religion, captivates the attention of not only historians, but people of all backgrounds. With such high stakes, it is important to report the Pope’s actions accurately. In the case of Pius XII, however, students searching for information may find themselves confused. Since the conclusion of World War II, opposing sides have dominated the debate, with ample material to support their case. Many historians have attempted to answer this question definitively, but the majority of the Vatican’s records remain sealed stifling any major progress towards finding the answer. This thesis will not deliver a verdict on Pope Pius XII, but rather seek to shed some light on how we can make sense of the available information and debates. In tracing the history of the arguments used today and during the last century, this research can offer a better understanding of the foundations of each side.

**FATHER ROBERT GRAHAM AND THE DEFENDERS**

Much of the literature that has been published commending Pius XII is aimed at addressing the accusations made in *The Deputy*. Father Graham and others depict the Pope as a man who was compassionate and tormented by the events taking place in Europe. Responding to some of the charges presented by Hochhuth and the critics, those defending the Pope have made the following arguments:

- The Pope was a man who faced the threat of Nazi invasion. As the smallest country in the world, the Vatican had no way of defending itself against the Nazi forces that were enclosing on them after the occupation of Rome. Fearing that there was no place in the New Europe for the Pope, the suitcases were packed and evacuation was discussed.
- Despite the pressing danger from the Nazi party, Pius XII still did all in his power to help the Jewish people. There were even Jews that took refuge in Vatican City and other monasteries. Defenders also remind their readers that there are Jewish organizations that formally thanked the Pope for his aid to the Jewish people during the war.
- It is easy to pass judgment when you are decades removed from the reality of the situation.

Those who defend the Pope continue to suggest to their readers that the critics misrepresent the past and do not consider the existing sources that imply the Pope acted appropriately.