

Estimates of the number of followers of Jesus Christ killed by the Roman Pope



The Pope meets Hitler

This is from a book by David A. Plaisted called, "Estimates of the Number Killed by the Papacy in the Middle Ages and later" You can [download the entire document here](#).

Some of the text from that document:

Here are some of the places where figures about religious persecutions are given. Dowling in his History of Romanism says

"From the birth of Popery in 606 to the present time, it is estimated by careful and credible historians, that more than *fifty millions* of the human family, have been slaughtered for the crime of heresy by popish persecutors, an average of more than forty thousand religious murders for every year of the existence of popery."

– "History of Romanism," pp. 541, 542. New York: 1871.

Commenting on this quote, a fundamental Baptist web site says the following:

For example, it has been estimated by careful and reputed historians of the Catholic Inquisition that 50 million people were slaughtered for the crime of "heresy" by Roman persecutors between the A.D. 606 and the middle of the 19th century.

This is the number cited by John Dowling, who published the classic "History of Romanism" in 1847 (book VIII, chapter 1, footnote 1). Only seven years after its first printing, it could be said of Dowling's book, "it has already obtained a circulation much more extensive than any other large volume ever published in America, upon the subject of which it treats; or perhaps in England, with the exception of Fox's *Book of Martyrs*." Clark's *Martyrology*

counts the number of Waldensian martyrs during the first half of the 13th century in France alone at two million. From A.D. 1160-1560 the Waldensians which dwelt in the Italian Alps were visited with 36 different fierce persecutions that spared neither age nor sex (Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists*, "Post-Apostolic Times – The Waldensians," 1890). They were almost completely destroyed as a people and most of their literary record was erased from the face of the earth. From the year 1540 to 1570 "it is proved by national authentic testimony, that nearly one million of Protestants were publicly put to death in various countries in Europe, besides all those who were privately destroyed, and of whom no human record exists" (J.P. Callender, *Illustrations of Popery*, 1838, p. 400). Catholic historian Vergerius admits gleefully that during the Pontificate of Pope Paul IV (1555-1559) "the Inquisition alone, by tortures, starvation, or the fire, murdered more than 150,000 Protestants." These are only small samples of the brutality which was poured out upon "dissident" Christians by the Roman Catholic Church during the Inquisition.

Concerning the figure of two million killed, Bourne writes

Bertrand, the Papal Legate, wrote a letter to Pope Honorius, desiring to be recalled from the croisade against the primitive witnesses and contenders for the faith. In that authentic document, he stated, that within fifteen years, 300,000 of those crossed soldiers had become victims to their own fanatical and blind fury. Their unrelenting and insatiable thirst for Christian and human blood spared none within the reach of their impetuous despotism and unrestricted usurpations. On the river Garonne, a conflict occurred between the croisaders, with their ecclesiastical leaders, the Prelates of Thoulouse and Comminges; who solemnly promised to all their vassals the full pardon of sin, and the possession of heaven immediately, if they were slain in the battle. The Spanish monarch and his confederates acknowledged that they must have lost 400,000 men, in that tremendous conflict, and immediately after it-but the Papists boasted, that including the women and children, they had massacred more than two millions of the human family, in that solitary croisade against the southwest part of France.

– Bourne, George, *The American Textbook of Popery*, Griffith & Simon, Philadelphia, 1846, pp. 402-403.

In only one crusade, two million Albigenses were killed. How many must there have been altogether, and how many millions more must have been killed during the entire Middle Ages! Another source writes

The Catholic crusade against the Albigenses in Southern France (from 1209-1229), under Popes Innocent III., Honorius III. and Gregory IX., was one of the bloodiest tragedies in human history. ... The number of Albigenses that perished in the twenty years' war is estimated at from one to two millions.

– Cushing B. Hassell, *History of the Church of God*, Chapter XIV.

W. E. H. Lecky says:

"That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other

institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials, indeed, of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no power of imagination can adequately realize their sufferings." – "History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe," Vol. II, p. 32. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1910.

The following quotation is from *The Glorious Reformation* by S. S. SCHMUCKER, D. D., Discourse in Commemoration of the Glorious Reformation of the Sixteenth Century; delivered before the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of West Pennsylvania, by the Rev. S. S. Schmucker, D.D., Professor of Theology in the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. Published by Gould and Newman. 1838.

Need I speak to you of the thirty years' war in Germany, which was mainly instigated by the Jesuits, in order to deprive the Protestants of the right of free religious worship, secured to them by the treaty of Augsburg? Or of the Irish rebellion, of the inhuman butchery of about fifteen millions of Indians in South America, Mexico and Cuba, by the Spanish papists? In short, it is calculated by authentic historians, that papal Rome has shed the blood of sixty-eight millions of the human race in order to establish her unfounded claims to religious dominion (citing Dr. Brownlee's "Popery an enemy to civil liberty", p. 105).

Estimates range up to 7 to 12 million for the number who died in the thirty years' war, and higher:

This was the century of the last religious wars in "Christendom," the Thirty Years' War in Germany, fomented by the Jesuits, reducing the people to cannibalism, and the population of Bohemia from 4,000,000 to 780,000, and of Germany from 20,000,000 to 7,000,000, and making Southern Germany almost a desert, ...

– Cushing B. Hassell, *History of the Church of God*, Chapter XVII.

Concerning the Irish rebellion, John Temple's *True Impartial History of the Irish Rebellion* of 1641, written in 1644, puts the number of victims at 300,000, but other estimates are much smaller. Some estimates are larger:

In addition to the Jesuit or Catholic atrocities of this century already enumerated with some particulars, they massacred 400 Protestants at Grossoto, in Lombardy, July 19th, 1620; are said to have destroyed 400,000 Protestants in Ireland, in 1641, by outright murder, and cold, and hunger, and drowning;
...

– Cushing B. Hassell, *History of the Church of God*, Chapter XVII.

In fact, the population of Ireland is estimated to have decreased from 2 million in 1640 to 1.7 million in 1672, according to R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (1988). However, this could have resulted from British reprisals to some extent and from emigration, forced or voluntary. The

population should have increased by about 200,000 during this period, assuming a 30 percent growth rate per century. This implies that 500,000 people in excess of normal either died or left Ireland during this time, and is consistent with 300,000 or more Protestants being killed in 1641.

The figure of 68 million appeared in Schmucker's talk in 1838, in Brownlee's book of 1836, and also in a book "Plea for the West" by Lyman Beecher (Cincinnati, Truman and Smith, 1835), pp. 130-131:

And let me ask again, whether the Catholic religion, in its union with the state, has proved itself so unambitious, meek, and un aspiring so feeble, and easy to be entreated, as to justify-a proud, contempt of its avowed purpose and systematic movements to secure an ascendancy in this nation? It is accidental that in alliance with despotic governments, it has swayed a sceptre of iron, for ten centuries over nearly one-third of; the population of, the globe, and by a death of violence is estimated to have swept from 'the' earth about sixty-eight millions of its inhabitants, and holds now in darkness and bondage nearly half the civilized world?

The exact quote of Brownlee referenced above is as follows:

In one word, the church of Rome has spent immense treasures and shed, in murder, the blood of *sixty eight millions and five hundred thousand* of the human race, to establish before the astonished and disgusted world, her fixed determination to annihilate every claim set up by the human family to liberty, and the right of unbounded freedom of conscience.

– Popery an enemy to civil liberty, 1836, pp. 104-105.

Also, in another work Brownlee states

Papal Rome has shed the blood of fifty millions of Christians in Europe!

– The Roman Catholic Religion viewed in the light of Prophecy and History, New York, Charles K. Moore, 1843, page 60.

And later in the same work,

The best writers enumerate fifty millions of Christians destroyed by fire, and the sword, and the inquisition; and fifteen millions of natives of the American continent and islands; and three millions of Moors in Europe, and one million and a half of Jews. Now, here are sixty-nine millions and five hundred thousands of human beings, murdered by "the woman of the Roman hills, who was drunk with the blood of the saints." And this horrid list does *not* include those of her own subjects, who fell in the crusades in Asia, and in her wars against European Christians, and in South America!

– page 97.

These quotations make it clear that the figure of 50 million refers only to Christians in Europe, and does not include Christians killed elsewhere. It is also clear that Brownlee is taking these figures not from just one person, but from at least two, "the best writers," and ignoring others that he feels

are less qualified. Many others must have been convinced of the reputation of these individuals as well, judging from the frequency with which the figure of 50 million is quoted.

Brownlee further comments on the number killed by the Papacy in another work as follows:

When Languedoc was invaded by these monsters, one hundred thousand Albigenses fell in one day! See Bruys vol. iii. 139.

– page 346

There perished under pope Julian 200,000 Christians: and by the French massacre, on a moderate calculation, in 3 months, 100,000. Of the Waldenses there perished 150,000; of the Albigenses, 150,000. There perished by the Jesuits in 30 years only 900,000. The Duke of Alva destroyed by the common hangman alone, 36,000 persons; the amount murdered by him is set down by Grotius at 100,000! There perished by the fire, and tortures of the Inquisition in Spain, Italy, and France 150,000. ... In the Irish massacres there perished 150,000 Protestants!

To sum up the whole, the Roman Catholic church has caused the ruin, and destruction of a million and a half of Moors in Spain; nearly two millions of Jews South America in Europe. In Mexico, and , including the islands of Cuba and St. Domingo, fifteen millions of Indians, in 40 years, fell victims to popery. And in Europe, and the East Indies, and in America, 50 millions of Protestants, at least, have been murdered by it!

Thus the church of Rome stands before the world, "the woman in scarlet, on the scarlet colored Beast." A church claiming to be *Christian*, drenched in the blood of *sixty-eight millions, and five hundred thousand human beings!*

– W. C. Brownlee, Letters in the Roman Catholic controversy, 1834, pp. 347-348.

Brownlee apparently revised the 69 million figure downwards to 68 million. So the figure of 68 million has several sources in the early 1800's. The source for some of Brownlee's figures appears in the following quotation:

These forced baptisms, and the consequent claims which the pope set up over "his slaves," caused the death of *one million five hundred thousand Moors*, and on the most moderate calculation, that of *two millions of Jews!* See Dr. M. Geddes's *Tracts on Popery*, vol. i.

– W. C. Brownlee, Popery the Enemy of Civil and Religious Liberty, J. S. Taylor, New York, 1836, p. 88.

The work of Michael Geddes referred to may have been *Miscellaneous Tracts ...*, 3rd ed., London, 1730, 3 volumes. In 1678 Geddes went to Lisbon, and returned to England in 1688. During his stay in Lisbon, he collected many documents concerning Spanish and Portuguese history, and in 1714 published his "Tracts on Divers Subjects" in three volumes, a translation of the most interesting documents he obtained. In 1715 a posthumous volume of tracts against the

Roman Catholic Church appeared. In addition to those killed, many were exiled:

It has been calculated that, from the time of the conquest of Granada until 1609, three millions of Arabs were exiled from Spanish soil; and never have the plains of Valencia, Murcia and Granada recovered the flourishing aspect that they wore when cultivated by their former masters. The decree of 1609 was as fatal to Spain as the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was to France nearly a hundred years later.

– Williams, Henry Smith, *The Historian's History of the World*, vol. 8, p. 259.

In 1492, persecution was begun against the Jews, of whom 500,000 were expelled from Spain and their wealth confiscated. In seventy years the population of Spain was reduced from 10,000,000 to 6,000,000 by the banishment of Jews, Moors and Morescoes ("Christianized" Moors), the most wealthy and intelligent of the inhabitants of that country.

– Cushing B. Hassell, *History of the Church of God*, Chapter XV.

In fact, the population of Spain had at one time been twenty million higher:

It is estimated that the total population in the middle of the tenth century was about thirty millions: a phenomenal increase of population, betokening of itself a very high degree of civilization. A population normally, with fair sanitation and hygienic conditions, doubles in a quarter of a century. It will tell you in a word what the Moors had done, and what the Spaniards afterwards undid, if you reflect that this Spanish population, which was thirty millions in the tenth century, is now only twenty-two millions. The figure of thirty millions in the tenth century is an extraordinary tribute to the science and wisdom of the Moors. England, for instance, had then a population of about two or three million people.

– Joseph McCabe, *The Story of Religious Controversy*, Chapter XXV.

This suggests that the Christian reconquest of Spain cost this country alone over 20 million lives. This loss could not have resulted from the Plague, because the loss from the Plague was recovered by 1500.

The figure of 68 million appears again in a later work:

Alexander Campbell, well known religious leader of the nineteenth century, stated in debate with John B. Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati, in 1837 that the records of historians and martyrologists show that it may be reasonable to estimate that from fifty to sixty-eight millions of human beings died, suffered torture, lost their possessions, or were otherwise devoured by the Roman Catholic Church during the awful years of the Inquisition. Bishop Purcell made little effort to refute these figures. (Citing *A Debate on the Roman Catholic Religion*, Christian Publishing Co., 1837, p. 327.)

Walter M. Montano, a former Catholic priest, asserts in his book, *Behind the Purple Curtain* that it has been estimated that fifty million people died for

their faith during the twelve hundred years of the Dark Ages. (Citing Walter M. Montano, *Behind the Purple Curtain*, Cowman Publications, 1950, page 91.)

– *The Shadow of Rome*, by John B. Wilder; Zondervan Publishing Co., 1960, page 87.

Campbell may be referring to the martyrology of Samuel Clarke, written in 1651. Perhaps this figure of 68 million came from Brownlee or somewhere else, possibly the writings of Llorente or Clark's *Martyrology*, cited above.

Such figures sometimes appear in recent books, such as Wilder's, but in general, all the figures about the number killed by the Papacy go back many years and have reputable sources. It is interesting that Campbell implies that the figure of 68 million includes many who were not killed, but just persecuted, while the three earlier references, including Brownlee, state that this number were killed. Campbell may have taken the earlier figure and misread it as including those who were persecuted but not killed. Here are more quotations about the number killed by the Papacy:

For professing faith contrary to the teachings of the Church of Rome, history records the martyrdom of more than one hundred million people. A million Waldenses and Albigenses [Swiss and French Christians who renounced papal authority] perished during a crusade proclaimed by Pope Innocent III in 1208. Beginning from the establishment of the Jesuits in 1540 to 1580, nine hundred thousand were destroyed. One hundred and fifty thousand perished by the Inquisition in thirty years. Within the space of thirty-eight years after the edict of Charles V against the Protestants, fifty thousand persons were hanged, beheaded, or burned alive for heresy. Eighteen thousand more perished during the administration of the Duke of Alva in five and a half years.

– *Brief Bible Readings*, p. 16.

This great antichristian power robbed the church of its gospel light and plunged the world into the Dark Ages. It put to death and thus took away the lives of from fifty to one hundred millions of the saints of the Most High.

– Bunch, Taylor, *The Book of Daniel*, 1950, p. 170.

One thousand years covers the crest of the persecutions when from 50,000,000 to 150,000,000 martyrs died of the sword, at the stake, in dungeons, and of starvation because of the confiscation of their earthly possessions.

– Bunch, Taylor, *The Book of Daniel*, 1950, p. 185.

In like manner the blood of a hundred million martyrs cries for justice to the One who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." Rom 12:19.

– Bunch, Taylor, *Studies in the Revelation*, 1933?, p. 105.

Let us keep a sense of proportion. The record of Christianity from the days when it first obtained the power to persecute is one of the most ghastly in history. The total number of Manichaeans, Arians, Priscillianists,

Paulicians, Bogomiles, Cathari, Waldensians, Albigensians, witches, Lollards, Hussites, Jews and Protestants killed because of their rebellion against Rome clearly runs to many millions; and beyond these actual executions or massacres is the enormously larger number of those who were tortured, imprisoned, or beggared. I am concerned rather with the positive historical aspect of this. In almost every century a large part of the race has endeavored to reject the Christian religion, and, if in those centuries there had been the same freedom as we enjoy, Roman Catholicism would, in spite of the universal ignorance, have shrunk long ago into a sect. The religious history of Europe has never yet been written.

– The Story Of Religious Controversy Chapter XXIII by Joseph McCabe (*an atheist*) who lived from 1867 to 1955.

‘The church,’ says [Martin] Luther, has never burned a heretic.’ . . I reply that this argument proves not the opinion, but the ignorance or impudence of Luther. Since almost infinite” numbers were either burned or otherwise killed,’ Luther either did not know it, and was therefore ignorant, or if he was not ignorant, he is convicted of impudence and falsehood, –for that heretics were often burned by the [Catholic] Church may be proved from many examples.

– Robert Bellarmine, *Disputationes de Controversiis*, Tom. ii, Lib. III, cap. XXII, “Objections Answered,” 1682 edition. (Bellarmine was a Roman Catholic.)

Some have computed, that, from the year 1518 to 1548, fifteen million of Protestants have perished by war and the Inquisition. This may be overcharged, but certainly the number of them in these thirty years, as well as since is almost incredible. To these we may add innumerable martyrs, in ancient, middle, and late ages, in Bohemia, Germany, Holland, France, England, Ireland, and many other parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia.

(from the commentary on the book of Revelation in Wesley’s “Explanatory Notes on the New Testament,” fifth edition, 1788), in which the comments on the book of Revelation are translated from the work of the German scholar John Bengel, and Wesley stated that he did not necessarily defend all of Bengel’s statements.)

Writing about the Jesuits, Lord states

They are accused of securing the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, – one of the greatest crimes in the history of modern times, which led to the expulsion of four hundred thousand Protestants from France, and the execution of four hundred thousand more.

– John Lord, *Beacon Lights of History*, volume VI, p. 325.

Some estimate that a million or even two million Huguenots fled France as a result, and a million and half converted, willingly or otherwise, to Catholicism. In fact, even before the Edict of Nantes, the Huguenot wars took place in France, and many perished as well:

Some two millions of lives had perished since the breaking out of the civil

wars.

– James A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, Vol. 2, Book 17, Chapter 19.

One estimate (Mariejol) is as high as four million. In 1660 there were about 1,200,000 Huguenots (Protestants) in France, according to one source. In 1562, 10 to 20 percent of France's population of 16 million were Huguenots. At one point, the (Catholic) Cardinal of Sainte-croix estimated that more than half of the French population were Huguenots. It is estimated that more than one million Huguenots were slain trying to escape or became slaves in the galleys of the King of France.

A final figure:

Mede has calculated from good authorities "that in the war with the Albigenses and Waldenses there perished of these people, in France alone, 1,000,000."

– *Christ and Antichrist*, by Samuel J. Cassels, 1846, page 257.

And many similar figures could be given.

Chapter 2. The plausibility of massive persecution

The following quotation shows the attitude of the Papacy towards heretics, which lends ample credibility to a large figure for the number persecuted and killed in the Middle Ages:

Treason. The following paragraph from the "Review of the principles and history of Popery" contains an accurate summary of Romanism, as it involves the interest and safety of Protestant governments and nations. "Refractory princes who have not been disposed to glut Rome's insatiable thirst with enough of Christian blood, or who have not assented to all the Papistical usurpations and arrogant claims, have experienced no mercy. The right of succession has been denied and subverted, for the smallest personal taint of Anti-Romanism, or for the toleration of it in others; and indescribable difficulties always were interposed against the rebellious ruler's restoration to power, even after he had made every possible renunciation, and degraded himself to the most humiliating penances, and received the amplest pontifical absolutions. For suspected and actual heresy, sentence of excommunication and deposition was fulminated against governors, more than for any other causes. Treasonable plots, conspiracies, insurrections, and rebellions, were formed, promoted, executed, and by pretended pleas of religion were justified, delighted in, and eulogized. Those infernal proceedings were blasphemously ascribed to the inspiration of God, and when any success attended the scheme, it was imputed to the divine approval, and unquestionable miraculous interposition. To execute those traitorous machinations, or to die in the attempt, was pronounced to be infallible proof of the most exalted piety, and the certain path to eternal felicity; entitling the actor to the honour of saintship, and the glorious crown of martyrdom. On the contrary, obedience and loyalty on the part of Papists to

Protestant governments, are declared damnable sins, for which there is no pardon either in this world, or in eternity. To convince the bigoted adherents of the Papacy, that all such treasons are works of pre-eminent piety, pretended prayers, discourses, sacraments, ecclesiastical censures, absolutions, oaths, and covenants, with all that is apparently sacred and imposing in religion, have been prostituted; and all that is exciting and fascinating in superstition has been effectually employed among the votaries of the Romish Priesthood, who are divested of every sentiment of religion, virtue, or humanity. The absolute duty of assassinating Protestant rulers, especially after sentence has been pronounced against them by the Pope, is constantly taught and vehemently proclaimed; with the most deliberate resolution, and after the most solemn preparations, that nefarious criminality has frequently been perpetrated; although it has more often been unsuccessfully attempted: but in all cases the remorseless murderers have been exalted in Popish estimation to the very highest honours: and some of them were worshipped with the same adoration which is performed to the Romish canonized saints."

– Bourne, George, *The American Textbook of Popery*, Griffith & Simon, Philadelphia, 1846, pp. 410-412.

The following statement concerning England in about the year 1400 gives more insight into the extent of the persecutions.

By this it was enacted that any one whom an ecclesiastical court should have declared to be guilty, or strongly suspected, of heresy, should, on being made over to the sheriff with a certificate to that effect, be publicly burnt.

[footnote, page 298] It is remarked that England was the only country where such a statute was needed, as elsewhere the secular powers at once carried out the sentence.

– James C. Robertson, *History of the Christian Church*, The Young Churchman Co., 1904, p. 297.

These persecutions were not necessarily directed by the hierarchy of the church, but for the most part probably originated at a much lower level, from the "ecclesiastical feudalism" of the Middle Ages, as described by Williams:

Abbes and bishops in consequence became suzerains, temporal lords, having numerous vassals ready to take up arms for their cause, counts of justice – in fact all the prerogatives exercised by the great landlords. ... This ecclesiastical feudalism was so extensive, so powerful, that in France and England it possessed during the Middle Ages more than a fifth of all the land; in Germany nearly a third.

– Williams, Henry Smith, *The Historian's History of the World*, vol. 8, p. 487.

Probably the greatest number of those who perished by the Papacy in Europe did so at the hands of these local authorities, on the grounds of suspected

heresy or opposition to the church, and not necessarily at the direction of the Pope, preceded by a trial, nor mentioned in records. Who would there have been to interfere with the actions of the local abbots and bishops? The constant elimination of a few heretics here and there, in many locations, continued for many years, could easily have added up to a total of millions without making much of an impression on recorded history. Throughout the Middle Ages as the possessions of the church increased, so would the number and power of these officials have increased, together with the number of their victims. During the Crusades, their attention may have been externally directed, but with these ending in about 1272, the number of martyrs within Europe could have greatly increased.

The persecutions were not at all limited to the Inquisition, but took many forms. Many of the victims were killed secretly and never brought to trial or sentenced. These deaths would never have appeared in the official records of the Inquisition. Such persecutions even continued until very recent times, as illustrated by the following quotation from W. C. Brownlee, *Popery the Enemy of Civil and Religious Liberty*, J. S. Taylor, New York, 1836, page 124:

I beg to direct you to the history of Spain, which, at length, is beginning to raise her head from the dust; and of Austria, Italy, and Naples. There everything is exclusive and sanguinary. Utter a word against the priest, or his senseless mummery, or refuse to fall down before the wafer god, and the dagger is plunged into your heart!

Note that it was common knowledge in Brownlee's day that such executions of dissenters from Catholicism took place. Another quotation from Brownlee, p. 115 gives further support to this fact:

Listen, I beseech you, to your fellow-citizens, who have returned from their travels in Italy, Austria, and Naples, or South America. In these lands the drawn sword of papal myrmidons is put to the throats of every public speaker, and editor, and author! One unpopish idea,—one single charge against despotism,—one word in praise of liberty,—one innuendo against priestcraft, even although you say no more than that you have seen them in their priestly robes, at the cockpit; and deeply engaged, publicly, in gambling, with their mistresses, and licentious companions: one appeal, even though feebly uttered, for a free press,—for pure Christianity, and the rights of human conscience, will cost a man his liberty, or life, in one brief hour! Men may be as wicked as any of the ghostly leaders of the fashion that way; men may blaspheme God, and set heaven and hell at defiance, providing they do it with all due courtesy to the priests: they may, be consummate profligates, but it must be according to canonical rule. Crimes and vices contravene no law, providing the church be respected, and her dues be paid! But woe to the patriot who shall whisper an insinuation, or print an effusion of a noble spirit, bursting with holy indignation against the hypocrisy, the priestly espionage, and despotism of popery! This is the only unpardonable sin at Rome. It can never be forgiven him, either in this world, or in purgatory! The dungeon cells, placed by papal care, at the bishop's service, in each cathedral; and the cells of the inquisition, and the agonies, and moanings, and shrieks of the oppressed, breathed only on the ear of heaven —these—these are the overwhelming proofs of popery's deadly hostility to the freedom of

speech, and the press!

This description of persecution derives from the testimony of many travelers to Catholic countries at that time. If such persecution took place in the early nineteenth century, how much more must it have occurred in the Middle Ages when the Papacy was at the height of its power! For example, M'Crie relates (*The Reformation in Spain*, pp. 181-188) how a Spaniard in the year 1546 converted to Protestantism and was in consequence killed by his brother, who never was punished for his deed. There must have been many such assassinations in the Middle Ages by loyal Catholics who were jealous for the reputation of the Virgin Mary. In fact, threats and persecution even took place in the United States, according to Brownlee, pp. 210-211:

Who have their dungeon cells under their cathedrals, in which they claim, as inquisitors of their own diocese, to imprison free men in our republic? Foreign popish bishops! And the facts respecting a man being so confined and scourged, in the cells at Baltimore, until he recanted, have been published, and not to this day contradicted! ... Who are in the habit of uttering ferocious threats "to assassinate and burn up" those Protestants who successfully oppose Romanism? The foreign papists! I have in my possession the evidence of no less than six such inhuman threatenings against myself.

Persecution also took the form of murders by corrupt authorities, as described in the following passage from *Peter's Tomb Recently Discovered in Jerusalem*, by F. Paul Peterson, 1960, p. 45:

At length a Sclavonian waterman came to the palace with a startling story. He said that on the night when the prince disappeared, while he was watching some timber on the river, he saw two men approach the bank, and look cautiously around to see if they were observed. Seeing no one, they made a signal to two others, one of whom was on horseback, and who carried a dead body swung carelessly across his horse. He advanced to the river, flung the corpse far into the water, and then rode away. Upon being asked why he had not mentioned this before, the waterman replied that it was a common occurrence, and that he had seen more than a hundred bodies thrown into the Tiber in a similar manner.

Even as recently as the mid twentieth century, dissenters from Catholicism were in danger, according to the following quotations:

But to even bring things closer home; an acquaintance told me of a recent conversation between a Protestant relative of hers and a Roman Catholic. The Catholic said, "I would like to see the blood of Protestants flow down the streets of this city." The Protestant was rightly surprised and said, "How can you say that, we are friends and you know that I am a Protestant?" The Catholic responded, "Yes, I know, but the greater the sacrifice, the greater the reward." Since they teach Catholics from childhood on, that to kill a Protestant is to do God a service, we had better be careful how we put Catholics in public office [but note that such teaching does not appear to be continued today, and also other quotations show that many Catholics oppose such persecution].

While I was in Ohio recently, I was told the same story by two people at different times, of a pastor who has a Christian broadcast. Through the preaching of the Gospel, this pastor at times would have Roman Catholics tell him of their difficulties and ask for advice. One case was of a lady who implicated a priest in a scandal. The pastor would always advise all those who came to him, according to the Scripture, and would urge all to trust only in Jesus Christ for their salvation. Several times, this pastor received strange telephone calls. Once a woman called and advised the pastor never to have communications with Catholics who call or write in to him. He responded that it was his God-given duty to help in any way possible, all those who came to him, and that he could not comply with her request. She then said that bodily harm could come to him or those Catholics who communicated with him. The pastor responded that surely the Catholic Church would not be guilty of such an unchristian act. The answer came that the Catholic Church was too "holy" to shed blood, but they had their agents who would. Mark you, what an outrage on human intelligence, to leave the impression that the instigators of bloodshed are innocent. This is a perfect example how they do their nefarious acts, whether to individuals or nations, and manage to keep hidden from the public.

– Peterson, 1960, pp. 50-51.

While travelling on a train in Spain I talked with quite a number of Spanish Catholics, and some of them in hushed voices said, while armed soldiers were passing to and fro outside our compartment door, "I am a Catholic, but I do not agree with the way the priests are persecuting the Protestants." You hear such statements in all Catholic countries. Six months ago, in Brazil, a fanatical mob led by a priest destroyed a Baptist and a Presbyterian Church. It got out into the papers there, and honest Catholics all over the land raised their voices against such barbarity. The same is true of the priestly murders of Christians in Colombia. But Rome does not mind, nor is she checked by mere protests.

– "The Rise and Fall of the Roman Catholic Church" by F. Paul Peterson, published privately, 1959, page 21.

A pastor in Britain, who had been a missionary in Lebanon, told me the following story: A young man had visited America when World War II had broken out, and remained there until the war was over. He then returned to Lebanon enquiring about his relatives. He was told that only a cousin remained and she had entered a Convent. He went there and saw her and they decided to be married, which is lawful in Lebanon. They spoke to the Superior about it and it was agreed that he should come back the next day to take her away. When he came back the Superior said that she had already given him the girl. He responded, "Why no, you did not give me the girl." The Superior insisted and called two nuns and asked them if it was not true that they had given him the girl, and they bore testimony to the statement. His first thought was to notify the police, but then he realised that he would have to give an account as to what had been done with the girl, since there were testimonies against him. But murder will out. Next door to the Convent lived an old couple. The man was not feeling well, and he asked his wife to make him some tea from the lemon blossoms of a tree which they had in their back yard. The wife climbed

the tree, picked the blossoms, when she noticed that over the high wall the nuns were digging a large hole in the ground. She told her husband of the strange incident, who accused her of being mad to say that at night the nuns were digging a large hole in the ground. But he went out and verified the fact. They reported the incident to the police, who were directed to the spot, and excavation was made and the girl was found. She had been poisoned. The Convent was made into a Government institution, and the nuns were judged according to the law. A large book could be written over modern occurrences of this type. Rome never changes.

– Peterson, 1959, pp. 44-45.

A British Consul in Yugoslavia told the following incident to a good friend of mine, which happened in the early days of Marshall Tito. There was a boys' school run by priests and, not far away, was a small village made up of Protestants. One day the priests told the boys that the Protestants should be killed and, together with the priests, the horrible massacre was carried out. Tito, hearing of this, sent his troops and killed every priest and boy in the school.

– Peterson, 1959, p 50.

Just recently I was in various cities in Eire (Southern Ireland), and while travelling there I spoke to over 15 priests about salvation through Christ. I realized I was treading on dangerous ground, but one Irishman seemed to realize it more than I did. I was in a compartment in a train with about sixteen people, one of whom was a priest. I gave him a good testimony, telling him of my experience of conversion. I had just asked him about his own experiences with God (which is quite an embarrassing question), when the Irishman next to him entered into the talk, but quickly steered the conversation to other matters. Later, when we had to change trains, this Irishman came to me and apologized for the way he had changed the subject. But he asked me, "Didn't you know that man was a priest ?" I replied that I knew that. He then said, "You were in danger, for this is Southern Ireland."

– Peterson, 1959, p. 111.

During its rise to power, the Papacy also essentially exterminated the Heruli shortly after 493 A.D., the Vandals soon after 533 A.D., and the Ostrogoths in 554 A.D, all of whom were asserted to hold to the Arian belief. However, Limborch (The History of the Inquisition, p. 95) doubts that Arius held the views attributed to him. Concerning the Vandals, Bunch writes

"It is reckoned that during the reign of Justinian, Africa lost five millions of inhabitants; thus Arianism was extinguished in that region, not by any enforcement of conformity, but by the extermination of the race which had introduced and professed it." – History of the Christian Church, J.C. Robertson, Vol. 1, p. 521.

– Bunch, Taylor, The Book of Daniel, p. 101.

Of course, the Heruli and the Ostrogoths also undoubtedly numbered in the

millions, and were exterminated. Everywhere one looks there is evidence of millions and millions of people who were killed by the Papacy in various stages of its history. The Hussites were also nearly exterminated:

[footnote, speaking of Innocent VIII] Yet on the papal throne he played the zealot against the Germans, whom he accused of magic, in his bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus*, etc., and also against the Hussites, whom he well nigh exterminated.

– Williams, Henry Smith, *The Historian's History of the World*, vol. 8, p. 643.

Furthermore, in a footnote speaking of the thirty years' war which started in Bohemia where the Hussites originated, Krus and Webb write

The intensity of that conflict surpassed that of other types of armed confrontations. In Bohemia, for instance, there were whole sections of the country in which nobody was left to bury the dead. The total population of Bohemia decreased in the 17th century from about 3 million to 500,000. These population changes are representative of other areas of Central Europe afflicted by the Thirty Years War.

– Krus, D.J., & Webb, J.M. (1993) Quantification of Santayana's cultural schism theory. *Psychological Reports*, 72, 319-325.

In fact, many sects had been exterminated throughout the history of Rome:

The inquisitor Reinerius, who died in 1259, has left it on record: "Concerning the sects of ancient heretics, observe, that there have been more than seventy: all of which, except the sects of the Manichaeans and the Arians and the Runcarians and the Leonists which have infected Germany, have through the favour of God, been destroyed.

– Broadbent, E.H., *The Pilgrim Church*, Gospel Folio Press, 2002, p. 90 (originally published in 1931).

One of these sects lost a hundred thousand to persecution:

An edict was issued under the regency of Theodora, which decreed that the Paulicians should be exterminated by fire and sword, or brought back to the Greek church. ... It is affirmed by civil and ecclesiastical historians, that, in a short reign, *one hundred thousand* Paulicians were put to death.

– Andrew Miller, *Short Papers on Church*, London, Chapter 16.