“Following the Virgin Mary through Auschwitz: Marian Dogmatic Theology at the Time of the Shoah.”

When I applied to the University of Winnipeg for my STM degree, I did so with a project in mind. How could my studies lead me to a better understanding of my Jewish-German as well as Catholic identity?

A few years prior I presented a paper at St. Joseph’s Jesuit University in Philadelphia at the 33rd National Holocaust Conference entitled ‘The Christian Churches and the Shoah.’ To my surprise I was approached by Sister Rosemary Theiring whose doctoral thesis they had used at Vatican II to help with their deliberations on the Jewish people. Sister spoke highly of my presentation and offered me a scholarship—on the spot—Seaton Hall. I was blown away. I had to decline because I was not in good shape coming back from Israel where I had taken the Summer Institute on Teaching the Shoah. I was devastated from what I had learned. While others in the class were processing on an intellectual level, I was living the vicarious trauma of my father’s silence. Through a painful and slow process I decided to apply at UofW and continue my original research. My subject examines the political ideology of the Roman Catholic Church in Nazi Germany through the writings of Karl Adam and Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber. Both theologians used the dogma of the Immaculate Conception to disengage the Jewish roots of Christianity from any racial connection to post-biblical Judaism. At no time since the Holocaust has either theologian been critiqued according to the context and reasoning of my research. Cardinal Faulhaber was the chief spokesperson for the Catholic Church at the time through his Advent Sermons.

Throughout my work I wrote various scholars to see if I was on the right track. First I contacted J.B. Metz the father of Political theology in Europe. At the time he was having a knee operation but his secretary wrote me on his behalf stating: “Professor Metz affirmed that he fully agrees with your paper and your criticism on the political ideology of Kardinal Faulhaber and Karl Adam. It is a pity but even today (after Auschwitz) many Christians do not yet realize that Jesus was no Christ but a Jew.”—Munster 06.11.02. Wow! This was the same Metz who invited Cardinal Ratzinger (now the Holy Father) to his symposium when he retired—and was accepted! Then I wrote Susannah Heschel who was researching a parallel subject from the Protestant side namely how some Germans claimed that Jesus was Aryan and not a Jew. She replied “read your fabulous paper. It is superb! A magnificent piece of scholarship, fascinating material, very, very, important….I want to cite it in what I am writing!...It’s extremely important in many ways and it is the most interesting, most original and exciting work on Catholic theologians during the Third Reich that I have read in years.” June 28,04.

Since my STM degree I sent my thesis to a number of people with the hope of someone showing some interest toward publication. Eventually I gave up until I received an email from Tom Lawson in England who publishes ‘Holocaust Studies.” He agreed to publish an article based on my thesis and so it has just been published Volume 14, Number 3.

One thing I did not expect from my thesis was that through Cardinal Ratzinger (now the Holy Father) I was given permission to have access to the Chancery files in Munich. That was great but I do not speak German. Out of nowhere came a professor of

Economics who was fluent in German—God provides. Since then I have had numerous correspondences.

Another unexpected turn was that I found myself on a collision course with Kevin Spicer who just released his book *Hitler's Priests.* In my article I easily skate around Spicer's main thesis which presents Karl Adam as one of Hitler's priest's whereas Cardinal Faulhaber was seen not as such. I soundly rebuff Spicer's claim.

I now have a possibility of a book deal with 'Vallentine Mitchell' but I want to give it a break. I've been at this for ten years. If I could make one wish it would be for a Ghost writer. I have easily the material for what I think would be a bestseller. Any bored theologians looking for a project?