

# Pope's Plea to Spare Rome From Ruin of War

LONDON, March 12 (U.P.)—The text of a BBC version of Pope Pius XII's speech today follows. Radio reception was poor and divergent texts were recorded in London and other listening centers:

In the tribulations that have deprived you of your family life you have been forced by the present calamity to be dispersed, to be without homes, perhaps separated from your beloved ones, often wandering about and without sufficient news of those with whom the ties of love and relationship connect you. Preoccupied with their fate as much as they are trembling for yours, resolve yourselves to have faith in your Heavenly Father, who in His love has promised to turn everything to the best—even the most serious and most bitter things.

As Vicar of Christ, I have come to give you words of blessing and comfort. You have crowded around us not to learn the anguish of our heart, but to hear from our lips and to read on our face that all your sufferings are ours and that we feel with you from the depth of our heart.

Be assured that there is not a single one of your sorrows and anxieties or physical and spiritual sufferings that does not pierce our soul more deeply and more painfully than any personal sufferings of our own.

From the day when our endeavors to avoid the scourge of war—the disastrous and fearsome consequences of which we foresaw—were unheard, our spiritual fatherhood, which already was in anxious solicitude in behalf of you in your innumerable multitudes, has been wholly bent toward alleviating your needs and your sufferings and to give the help of our unfortunately limited material resources in bread and clothing to those who had nothing left and needed everything, and to gather together those separated by fighting and invasions.

We spared no effort and we neglected nothing to prevent the sick and the people from experiencing the horrors of deportation and exile.

When harsh reality came to disillusion our most legitimate beliefs, we did all in our power to alleviate suffering but were conscious that all it was possible in our power to do was insufficient.

We cried out for help as would a father in his sorrow for his unfortunate sons, hoping to be heard far and near in those bosoms with a generous heart. And they have answered our appeal. Our deep gratitude remembers their names and offers them to God that He may enter them in the book of eternal reward.

But in this especially grave hour for the so-much-martyred city of Rome—torn in her living flesh, her inhabitants mutilated, and wounded in horrible fashion, where sufferings have been most sharp and daily needs most pressing—we pray anew, we beg, we implore all those who have the means to help, either with material contributions or with the help of active work, not to deny their efficacious support and assistance.

Thus with towns stricken on nearly every continent by aerial war that knows no law nor restraint—in itself a terrible accusation against the cruelty of such fighting methods—how could we believe that anyone should ever dare to turn Rome, this noble city which belongs to all times and all places, on which the whole civilized world fixes its eyes in trepidation, to turn her into a field of battle and a theatre of war, thereby perpetrating an act as inglorious militarily as

it is abominable in the eyes of God and humanity conscious of the highest spiritual and moral values.

We therefore once more appeal to the clear-sightedness and wisdom of responsible men on both belligerent sides who would not associate themselves with an act that no motive can ever justify in the eyes of history, but would rather turn their thoughts, their endeavors, desires and efforts toward a firm and lasting liberalizing peace.

[This paragraph as given to The Associated Press by the National Catholic Welfare Council in Washington read:

[We must therefore appeal once again to the clear-sighted vision and wisdom of responsible men in both belligerent camps; we feel certain that they will not wish to have their names associated with a deed which no motive could ever justify before history and that they would rather turn their thoughts, their intentions, their desires and labors toward the securing of a peace which will free mankind from all internal and external violence, so that their name may remain in benediction and not as a curse through the centuries on the face of the earth.]

Beloved Roman people, in the midst of a whirlwind of so many sufferings and trials, we recognize with bitterness of mind that any human help is unequal or inadequate to the extent of your sufferings, to alleviate which even the most generous helping hand of man cannot suffice.

Therefore, beloved sons and daughters, lift up your eyes to Him who will give you strength to carry your cross with warm faith and Christian fortitude—to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. To Him we wish to lead you. He Himself invites you and tells you "come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." He chose to undergo miseries of this earthly life, sufferings and afflictions, obstacles and most terrible tortures that can be inflicted by man. He precedes you with His cross: Follow Him.

He—the most innocent—bears His cross. Bear yours in penitence and expiation of our own sins and those others that provoked God's just punishments. He bears His cross for the salvation of the world. Bear yours with Him so faith and fear of God, Christian life and Christian love may come alive again in every heart, in every family, in social life and among all peoples. He bears His cross for the peace of the world; bear yours with Him to procure for yourselves and for the whole of mankind peace with God and peace among all nations.

Almighty God, who deigned in human shape to become our brother and the consolation of the afflicted, look down with grace and mercy upon this multitude of our sons and daughters whom war has deprived of their beloved homes; who look to their uncertain and dark future with sad anguish and the faith in Thee to which they cling in the serene and prosperous years, and which now that unspeakable sufferings have befallen them, has become more precious to their supreme support. Give them, O God, strength on the hard and sorrowful path along which they have been led by events of war.

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Oh Son of the Heavenly Father through the course of centuries and the succession of peoples, Thou shalt be at every moment our support, our consolation, our grace, our virtue, our justification, our mercy. Thou, who when still a child in the arms of Thy tender and beloved Mother Mary, and under the care of Thine earthly father, Joseph, had to abandon Thy home, grant those who today are wandering homeless the same obedience to the will of God which sanctified the sufferer.

Thou Master of the World who said of Thyself, "Foxes have their holes and birds of the air their nests, but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head," grant that these, our beloved children, anguished and tried by their privations, may draw from the example of Thy voluntary poverty that living faith, that divine strength, that Christian courage that will enable them to bear with true dignity and patience the bitterness of their unfortunate lives.

External and Supreme Priest who, following the dictates of Divine Providence to gather all peoples in one single creed and under one shepherd, placed beauty and grace over Rome, before which the faithful of the entire universe bow with reverence and gratitude, take this town in this hour of increasing danger under the great wings of Thine omnipotence and protection; give counsel to those who live in it to look upon these days of fear and anguish as a time of spiritual meditation, of determination and a sincere return toward Thee and Thy law—so often neglected and violated.

Lord, in behalf of millions of people whom tremendous conflict has thrown into sorrow, misery and tears, we beseech Thee with the prayer of the holy liturgy: "Clement Lord, show us Thine ineffable mercy which may purify us of all those sins and save us from the penalties which

we deserve for them. Grant to all those who trust Thee the possibility of seeing a day dawning in which shepherd and sheep, glorifying Thee and Thine infinite bounty, may acclaim with joy and gratitude 'we are saved through the mercy of the Lord.'"  
Yes, today dawn here and for ever and ever. Amen.

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