

From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews 1933-1965
by John Connelly.
Harvard University Press 2012.

The relationship between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people is a one-sided relationship of hate, persecution, forced conversion, torture and murder. The blood guilt that the Church carries is beyond imagining, and as it is a guilt born of remorseless negativity since the Church's inception, the fact that the Second Vatican Council of 1965 decided that God actually loved Jews, rather than having rejected them, is but a small step in the right direction when set against the legacy of 1700 years of hatred.

In *From Enemy to Brother*, John Connelly traces the genesis of the transformation in Catholic and Jewish relations and perceptions; the book is divided into nine chapters: *The Problem of Catholic Racism*; *The Race Question: German Volk and Christian Reich*; *Catholics Against Racism and Antisemitism: Conspiring to Make the Vatican Speak*; *Conversion in the Shadow of Auschwitz*; *Who are the Jews? The Second Vatican Council*; *A Particular Mission for the Jews*.

No study of this kind can ignore the relationship between Church anti-Judaism and the Shoah, and Connelly tackles this unflinchingly, not with a view to apportioning blame but rather to try and understand not just what contemporary Catholics thought but why, and then how the knowledge of the Shoah began a serious shift in attitudes.

This is a finely researched and highly readable study, made even more so by the fact that it is interested in individuals as well as events, none more than the born Jews who converted to Catholicism and then went on to work tirelessly to change perceptions of their former people. The giants who stride these pages are Johannes M. Oesterreicher, Dietrich von Hildebrand, Annie Kraus and Cardinal Lustiger and they come across as the true heroes of the story rather than the Popes who fronted the Church at the time.

From Enemy to Brother is essential reading for all those working in the inter-faith field, and a reminder of how easy it can be, ultimately, to right long-standing wrongs.

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