

Vatican envoy objects to Holocaust caption

by UPI

JERUSALEM - The Vatican ambassador to Israel plans to stay away from the Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony because of a museum exhibit on Pope Pius XII.

Monsignor Antonio Franco described his decision as "personal," The Jerusalem Post reported. He objects to a caption at the new Holocaust Museum at Yad Vashem on Pius' role during World War II.

Pius kept silent during the war on deportations of Jews and the Holocaust. He also, as secretary of the Vatican State before he became pope, negotiated a 1933 concordat with the new Nazi government that preserved the Roman Catholic Church's rights in Germany.

Supporters of the pope argue that Pius sincerely believed he could save more people by avoiding open opposition to Nazi policies.

Yad Vashem issued a statement saying that Franco's decision contradicts Pope Benedict XVI's statement during his recent visit to Israel on the importance of remembering the Holocaust.

"It is inconceivable to use diplomatic pressures on an issue of historical research," the statement said.

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