

# 1937 Interviews on Calendar Reform

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The growing agitation and wide-spread support for the World Calendar concerned many conservatives of every Christian denomination. In 1937, Dr. Jean Nussbaum conducted a series of interviews with various government officials as well as leaders in the Roman Catholic Church. The purpose of these interviews was to learn what attitude toward the proposed calendar was held by the Catholic Church and, if possible, to modify it as needed.

In a letter dated April 9, 1937, to Mr. C. S. Longacre in Takoma Park, Washington, D. C., Dr. Nussbaum shared what led him to conduct these interviews. Italics supplied; capitalization in original:

While in the train on my way from Paris to Rome, I wrote you a letter . . . (in which) I told you how utterly surprised I was to discover, at least in leading Catholic circles in France, an atmosphere entirely in favor of the change of the calendar.

The interview which I had with Father SAMSON, the foremost Catholic preacher in France, and other personages, showed me that a regular campaign was on foot to bring about the calendar reform. The arguments set forth are extremely alluring. *The reform would make possible a calendar in which holy days would always come on the same dates*, thus simplifying a great deal the work of the priests. Moreover, if the Orthodox Catholic Church accepts the reform, as it very likely will, the Roman and Orthodox churches would be brought a little closer together, and this step might well lead to an eventual union of the two churches. *Finally, and this is more serious, the Catholics favoring the reform declare that it might cause the whole world to observe the same day of rest, and they hope that Sunday will be that day.*

I immediately consulted some of my influential Catholic friends in Paris, and all advised me to go to Rome. They were under the impression that the state of mind of the Catholic leaders in France was not the same as that of the leaders in Rome, and that it would be of great interest to know just what opinions ruled in Rome, and to modify them if needs be.

These Catholic friends offered to prepare the way for me inasmuch that they would contact influential persons in Rome in the hope that they could make it possible for me to interview some of the prelates at the Vatican. The result of my visits is contained in the reports herewith inclosed [*sic*].

The three most important of these visits were those I had with Monsignor PIZZARDO, Professor GIANNINI, and Cardinal PACELLI. It really was providential that Cardinal Pacelli gave me a hearing. I now feel that in him the calendar reform will find an insurmountable obstacle; and, as you will see by the report, I believe the attitude of the Italian Government will depend upon that of the Vatican. That is what I told Cardinal Pacelli, and he appeared very satisfied.

I believe, Brother Longacre, that we must be very active and very prudent. Our activity must not be limited to one field either. Incidentally, I hope that before many weeks go by I will be able to tell you what will be the attitude of the French Government. But, above all, we must be very prudent. The "REVIEW AND HERALD" should never publish one bit of information including names of officials of the League of Nations, for if it should become known that these officials are against the reform, they might find themselves in serious trouble.

The interviews did indeed begin with Nussbaum endeavoring to discover what opinions “ruled in Rome.” He was grateful for the time afforded him and sought to learn what he could from those he interviewed. There is very little reference to himself; the focus is on the person with whom he is meeting. The Interview notes are brief, analytical.

Unfortunately, the subtle flattery of having the attention of influential men focused on him begins to affect Nussbaum. The more powerful and high-ranking the church official, the more focus on himself appears in the interview notes. By the time of his most important interview – the interview with Secretary of State for the Vatican, Cardinal Pacelli – Nussbaum is no longer trying to gain information. The interview is filled with “I”: “I tell him”; “I make bold”; “I insist”; “I add”; “I decide”, etc.

Nussbaum did not realize it, but the balance of power had shifted. Cardinal Pacelli said little and listened much, a classic yet subtle tool of interrogation. The interviewee became the interviewer, learning a great deal about the opposition to calendar reform but revealing nothing of his personal convictions or the Vatican’s official stance. Filled with a perceived sense of power and influence, Nussbaum decides when the audience has lasted long enough and ends the interview. He leaves, knowing nothing more than when he entered the room, but having revealed all that he knew.

*Some corrections have been made in the following interviews. Obvious spelling or punctuation mistakes have been corrected as well as breaking long paragraphs up into shorter ones for easier reading. The content, however, is as quoted in Box 4, Folder 9 of Collection 154 (Grace Amadon Collection.) All emphasis supplied.*

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**Interview with Mr. Hervier  
Chief Editor of the “Intransigeant”  
Director of the Bureau of Calendar Reform**

**Paris, 5, rue Bernouillé  
March 19, 1937  
11:30 A.M., Friday**

Upon entering the anteroom, I notice a great many large envelopes, containing pretty voluminous documents, ready to be mailed.

Impression of great activity.

Mr. Hervier greets me very cordially. I ask him a number of questions as to the chances the reform stands of being accepted. He replies with conviction: “Never have we been so near succeeding. Never has the League of Nations put forth such an effort to that end. Since the beginning of January we are conscious of a possibility of winning out.”

The thirteen-month calendar is losing favor. The Swiss Committee and the Belgian Committee oppose having thirteen months. The Swiss Committee is very active. The Belgian Committee has not been very active, and therefore Mr. Hervier went to Brussels to attempt to give it new life. The chairman of the Belgian Committee, Mr. Stropan, director of the Brussels Observatory, has died, and the committee is without a chairman. Mr. Delporte, the present director of the Observatory, will probably be chosen as future chairman. He favors the reform, and has given three lectures on this subject.

“The astronomers,” says Mr. Hervier, “are not opposed to the reform.”

Miss Achelis will come to Paris in May or June. Mr. Hervier promises me an interview with her. He will advise me of her arrival.

In Paris, an astronomer, Mr. Mineur, is interested in the question. He has written some articles in favor of the reform, but the Government is doing nothing.

There used to be a committee, and a report was drawn up by Mr. Bertaux. However, this report was neutral, and the committee was dissolved.

Justin Godart is fully acquainted with the question. He intends to present a bill to the Senate.

Mr. Jouhaux, secretary-general of the worker's syndicates, is in favor of the reform.

In the course of the discussion, Mr. Hervier agrees that it is the breaking up of the week that imperils the reform.

The Catholics have not made known their opinion. Among those near the Pope, there are some who favor the reform.

The book of Abbé C\_\_uve [unclear] Bertrand was published by permission of the bishop of Nevers. Miss Achelis and Mr. Hevier have done their utmost to promote the circulation of this book. Copies of it have been sent to many newspapers. The League of Nations has been surprised by the number of articles that it has inspired.

Mr. Hervier has sought out the opinion of professors and of Chambers of Commerce. He gathered most interesting results. Motions favoring the reform were voted, but the French Government did not endorse them.

*Will the reform be applied in 1939? The general public is not aware of the situation, but since the beginning of 1931 great headway has been made. The plan is to rush things through, to act a little dictatorially, and once the reform has been accepted by the Governments, nobody will protest. Above all, there must be no investigations, and no commissions must be appointed.*

In response to a question of mine, Mr. Hervier tells me that the Greek Catholics and the Mohammedans will probably be seriously annoyed by the reform. However, there was in Greece a bishop named Ignenitis who favored the reform, but he died.

The Mohammedans and the Buddhists have not been consulted.

*It seems that only religious feelings oppose the reform. Were it not for them, everybody would agree to the reform. The religious beliefs constitute the greatest obstacle to the reform.*

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**Interview with Father Garrigou-LaGrange**  
**Rome**  
**Easter Time, 1937**

This interview took place in a convent on the Janiculum Hill. I am introduced to the Reverend Father by the Mother Superior of the convent, and, after a few preliminary remarks, I bring up the calendar question.

Father Garrigou-LaGrange is a well known theologian. In fact, he is one of the greatest Catholic theologians in Rome. Twice a year he comes to the convent to give a Bible study. This time he spoke about the epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans. I thought I would do well to present the Biblical side of the calendar reform first of all. To my great surprise, Father Garrigou-LaGrange, who however is very pious, does not seem to be concerned in the least over my arguments, and *he tells me that nothing in the dogmas of the Church opposes a change in the calendar.*

In spite of all my efforts to make him understand that the weekly cycle must not be touched, he maintains his first position and declares that the matter is of no importance whatsoever. Nevertheless, our conversation seems to interest him very much, and he advises me to go and see some exegetes, who alone could express a helpful opinion. He leaves me advising me to write a book on the question.

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**Interview with Father Lyonnet**  
**Biblical Institute**  
**Rome**  
**Easter Time, 1937**

Father Lyonnet expected me at five P.M., and he gives me a hearty welcome. He knew what would be the subject of our interview, and he places himself at my disposal.

I explain the whole calendar question, and he listens very attentively. He entirely shares my viewpoint. This highly pleases me, for Father Lyonnet is an exegete. He takes me through the Biblical Institute.

“The purpose of the Institute,” he tells me, “is to form professors of the Holy Writings. It was founded by Pius X, who was a very religious pope. Pius X wished to thus confound the modernistic movement.”

Father Lyonnet greatly loves the Bible and tells me that it is perhaps to the Jansenist movement that we owe the scorn into which the Word of God fell. In the past, Catholic preachers have not used the Bible as much as they now do. However, there were exceptions, and Bossuet frequently quoted the Holy Scriptures.

The greatest exegete of today is father LaGrange, who must not be confused with Father Garrigou-LaGrange, who is a theologian. Both fathers are Dominicans. Father Garrigou-LaGrange is a professor at the International Theological Institute of Rome, otherwise called the “Angelicum”, and which is supervised by Dominicans. Father LaGrange, the exegete, is the founder of the present movement in favor of the Bible. Until the age of eighty years old, he taught at Jerusalem. For health reasons, he is now in France.

He founded the “Revue Biblique” (Biblical Review) published in France, but edited at Jerusalem. He there taught Bible, and especially the New Testament. In Jerusalem he did the same as is done here in the Roman Biblical Institute. At present he is at Saint-Maximin. Recently he published in the “Revue Biblique” an

article by Pierre Mauriac on the life of Christ, and this author took this into account for his second edition. Father Lyonnet talks a lot to me about Father Lebreton, editor of the “Etudes”, 15, rue Monsieur, Paris. This exegete deals especially with the New Testament. He teaches Christian Origins.

We return to the library, and Father Lyonnet shows me a number of works that I would read with interest. We discuss a few Bible texts, and I am astonished at his profound knowledge of the Hebrew texts. We come back to the question of calendar reform. He manifests real indignation against the promoters of the reform. My interview with him has lasted exactly two hours and forty-five minutes.

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**Interview with the  
Rector of the Biblical Institute  
Rome  
Easter Time, 1937**

Father Lyonnet introduces me to the Rector of the Biblical Institute. This exegete disappoints me. *He sees no difficulty in accepting the calendar reform.* The thing that saddens me still more is that Father Lyonnet takes sides with his chief. In spite of all my efforts, I do not succeed in bringing him to admit *the sacred character of the week.* *He feels that the Church has the necessary power to make this change.*

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**Interview with Father Stein  
Vatican Astronomer  
Rome  
Easter Time, 1937**

The day before, the Mother Superior of the Janiculum Hill Convent, whom I see every afternoon, secured an appointment for me with Father Stein, astronomer of

the Vatican. He receives me in the Pope's palace with quite a bit of astonishment. He had understood that the Mother Superior herself was coming to see him, and therefore was surprised to see me. I tell him the object of my visit. We converse for a few minutes in the anteroom, than go into an office room. Finally, as he is visibly interested in my account of the calendar of the calendar question, he takes me into his private study.

He tells me that the question was studied by his predecessor, Father Hagen. This man was in favor of the reform, but when an international commission was about to be appointed, Cardinal Maffi gave him orders not to accept the presidency of the commission. Then Father Gianfranceschi was won to the cause of calendar reform by Miss Achelis, and the two wanted to send out letters to all the bishops throughout the world.

The Vatican opposed this plan. Father Stein is under the impression that the Holy Father is not very favorable to the reform, but this is simply an impression. He speaks to me about the tremendous activity of Miss Achelis, and goes to the library and brings back the numbers of her paper that strike him as the most interesting. Miss Achelis is a flooding the scientific world with her publications.

Father Stein tells me I would do well to call on the director of the Capitoline Hill Royal Observatory, Professor Giuseppe Armellini, who was chairman of the official Italian commission that pronounced itself against the reform. A second commission, designated later on by the Foreign Ministry, was likewise against the reform. But all that occurred before 1931, consequently before the Transit Conference.

He then told me of an international congress of astronomers that took place in Germany in 1933 or 1934 and that was against the reform. Forty per cent of the members present were Germans. A committee of fourteen was also appointed, and eleven of the fourteen members definitely expressed their opinion. Three of the eleven professors were opposed to any change whatsoever. Their names are as follows:

Lindblad, Saltsjöbaden, Stockholm Observatorium

Lundendorff, Potsdam, Astrophysicalisches Observatorium

(This Ludendorff is the brother of the General.)  
Neugebauer, Berlin-Steglitz, Baymesatr. 1

Seven were opposed to a calendar with a blank day, but declared themselves ready to accept any reasonable change. Two of these seven are dead. The five remaining are:

Hartmann, Gittingen, Schillerstrasse 43  
Peters, Berlin-Lichterfelde, Weddigenweg 25  
Manderli, Berne, Astronomisches Institut der Universität  
Stein, Castelgondolfo Specola Vaticana  
Strömngren, Kopenhagen Observatorium

Only one of the above mentioned eleven was in favor of the entire reform. This one is Professor Prysbyllok, Königsberg i. Pr., Universitäts Sternwarte. On May 24, 1934, the result of the work of this committee was passed on to the astronomers by Mr. A. Kopf, secretary of the “Kalender Kommission der A. G. Berlin Dahlem.” (A. Kopf, Astronomisches Rechen Institut, Berlin Dahlem.)

Father Stein also calls my attention to an article, published in the October number of the “Journal of Calendar Reform” (page 120), that makes known Germany’s feeling toward the reform. Germany seems entirely in favor of the reform. This is because of a conversation that took place between Mr. Erland Echlin, secretary of the “Rational Calendar,” and Doctor Frick, Minister of the Interior for the Reich.

After our long two-hour conversation, Father Stein takes me through his observatory. He shows me the new equatorial installed last year and that cost two million liras. It is a magnificent thing. We go on the gallery, while he makes it function electrically. This telescope comes from the Zeiss House at Jena. The first one of this kind was installed in the Peking Observatory; the second in the Vatican.

Father Stein also shows me the library and the extremely interesting museum of aërolites. Then, while showing me the Pope’s apartments, he tells me about how trying was the period of tension between Mussolini and the papacy. Father Stein was then afraid the Jesuits, of whom he is one, would be expelled.

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**Interview with Professor Armellini**

**Rome**

**April 1, 1937**

I find it hard to make an appointment with Professor Armellini. He agrees to see me because of his friendship for Father Stein. Finally I go to the Observatory on the Capitoline Hill, and am fortunate in succeeding, after considerable difficulty, in meeting him. He excuses himself for not having been able to receive me the day before. But he tells me that his daily program is very heavy. Nevertheless, as I must leave the next day, he graciously receives me.

He tells me that the astronomers would not be troubled by the calendar reform, for they still follow the Julian Calendar, and do not count by weeks, months and years. They just count by days, and today, the first of April is the 2 millionth . . . He tells me that Professor Giannini, his friend, is the person best qualified to inform me of the present attitude of the Italian Government toward the calendar reform.

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**Interview with Prof. Amadeo Giannini**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

**Chigi Palace, Rome**

**Easter Time, 1937**

I introduce myself to Professor Giannini in behalf of Professor Armellini. I am given an appointment for seven-thirty in the evening at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Professor Giannini is chairman of the official committee appointed to study the question of calendar reform. This committee is made up of representatives of the various professions practiced in Italy.

Professor Giannini is not at all aware of what is going on at the League of Nations. He is very much surprised when I tell him of the questionnaire that has been sent out to all the Governments throughout the world. I call his attention to the dangers represented by the reform, and during a quarter of an hour he listens to me with interest. Then I ask him for his opinion, for that of the Italian Government, and what reply will be given to the Secretary of the League of Nations.

Professor Giannini tells me that this question is of no importance whatsoever in Italy, and that the general state of minds is unfavorable to the reform. He says that if the question is really presented again, it will be examined by the representatives of the corporations, whom he will call together upon receipt of the questionnaire. I tell him about the real feat of strength over at Geneva.

He asks me: "Do you think the time is well chosen?"

I reply that this question does not interest one person in ten thousand. He agrees and tells me that seven or eight years ago he published an article on this question in the Political and Economical Review and that the reaction was null.

"Moreover, Italy," he says, "is a Catholic country, seeing there are only 48,000 Jews and 100,000 non-Catholic Christians. Henceforth, we are obliged to await the decision of the Church. The bank and the transports oppose the reform, and they are the two corporations that would profit the most from the proposed calendar. But it is evident that if the neighboring States accept the reform, we will be obliged to do likewise. Social life would be impossible with different calendars. I have thoroughly studied the matter, and have arrived at the conclusion that the advantages of the new calendar are not greater than those of the present calendar."

Fatehr Giannini is an high official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and he is chairman of the State Council section. It is really he who will decide the fate of the reform in Italy. Therefore I ask him to permit me to keep in touch with him and to come and see him if I return to Rome. This favor he very readily grants me.

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**Interview with Cardinal Tisserant**  
**Director of the Oriental Institute**  
**Rome**  
**Easter Time, 1937**

Cardinal Tisserant, director of the Oriental Institute, is one of the outstanding men in Rome. He enjoys the confidence of the Holy Father, who promoted him to the rank of cardinal. From the beginning of my interview with him, I feel uneasy, for he is very cold in his attitude toward me. I find it extremely difficult to get on ground that seems agreeable to him. The question of calendar reform really does not appear to interest him: I spoke of it for a few minutes, and then told him I would very much like to have his opinion on the subject. He answered dryly: "I have none."

I talk about Russia, but that does not interest him. After other unsuccessful attempts to get his interest, I finally strike a topic of conversation that brings him out of his reserve. I tell him about my trip to the United States. He tells me that he went there in 1927 and in 1933, and that his first visit to America was a real revelation to him. We agree that Americans, contrary to what is said and believed, are very religious, and much less materialistic than is supposed. He tells me that it would be easy to create a strong movement against the calendar reform in the United States. The Americans take a very lively interest in religious questions.

"At Washington," he says, "I saw a church on every street corner. Those people are the most religious in the world. Their religion is different than ours, but nevertheless no less real and deep." His praise of America and her people is seemingly endless, and he repeats that it is over there that a powerful opposition movement must be created.

I tell him about France and the difficulties I there encounter in trying to interest Monsieur Blums socialist government in this question. He says to me: "Of course, the anti-clericals in France would welcome the change in the calendar. They would be glad to upset the week.

"But remember that Monsieur Blum is a Jew."

I call his attention to the fact that though this man is racially a Jew, he is an atheist by conviction.

He replies: "That is true, but Monsieur Blum will never want to do anything that might sadden his friends, the London bankers."

The Cardinal becomes very communicative. Our conversation has been longer than I had dared hope. It seems to me the time has come for me to leave. I get up. He accompanies me over to the door, and there we exchange a few ideas concerning methods to employ in trying to get the French Government to reject the proposed calendar reform.

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**Interview with Monignor Fontenelle**  
**Vatican City**  
**March 31, 1937**

I am introduced to Monsignor Fontenelle, and he receives me with the greatest cordiality. I am immediately aware that he has been told a lot about me, and the atmosphere is excellent. I tell him the object of my visit. I make known to him my fears regarding the campaign being carried on in the Catholic Church in favor of calendar reform. After I have informed him of what is being done in France in this respect, he gives me his opinion on the matter.

His opinion is very clear. He tells me that he is entirely in harmony with the viewpoint I have just expressed. Man ought not to touch the week, which is as sacred as the Ark of God, and is of Biblical origin. He deals at length with the question of the day of rest. He tells me that Sunday is a sacred day in that it commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that it would be absurd to make any change that would break up the weekly cycle. I had very much insisted on the disappearance of the memorial of the Lord's resurrection if Sunday were to

each year fall on a different day. He speaks at length of the holiness of the day of rest.

During the course of our conversation, we bring up the question of Easter and holy days in general. I tell him that in Paris society circles people would say: “Life would become very uniform” every time that I presented the calendar question.

Monsignor Fontenelle insists very much on the poetry of life. He says that the yearly changes in the dates of some of these holy days have their own value. “If the calendar becomes fixed,” says he “the poetry will vanish.” He lays stress upon the imponderable things that exert their influence in life. We must avoid mechanical life. Such a life would have no more beauty, but be all grey. As it is, life has none too many agreeable things.

A little later, he comes back to the Biblical theme and says with the emphasis: That which is Biblical must not be touched.”

He mentions Russia of today and the French Revolution. The decades did not last long, and a new calendar would also be called to disappear. He points out the very great difficulties that arose in the time of Pope Victor when a regular date was set for Easter. Monsignor Fontenelle declares that these same difficulties would again arise. He adds: “If a popular referendum were taken, there would be very few voices in favor of changing the calendar.”

Before I left Rome, Monsignor Fontenelle called me over the phone, and we had an interesting conversation. He has just written a book about Pope Pius XI, and he wants to present me with a copy of this book containing a special dedication. He asks me to come and see him again when I return to Rome.

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**Interview with Monsignor Pizzardo**  
**Rome**  
**Easter Time, 1937**

Monsignor Pizzardo is one of the most active men at the Vatican, and one of the most outstanding. Every day he has a conference with the Pope and Monsignor Pacelli. I have a letter of introduction for him. I arrive at the Vatican at 9:30 o'clock. I am told that Monsignor Pizzardo is with the pope and that he will not leave the Holy Father's apartments until about noon. I tell his secretary that I will be back at noon.

Monsignor Pizzardo receives me very cordially. It is very apparent that he has been given excellent information regarding me, and that he has been asked to give me satisfaction. He is a very lively man, and expresses himself straightforwardly. He talks very much and extremely fluently. Right at the beginning of our conversation, he invites me to another parlor where we will be more comfortable. From this room on the fifth floor of the Vatican, one has a magnificent view of Rome, but we proceed with our conversation. I put the whole matter before him. He seems already very well acquainted with it. I had been told that he was the man at the Vatican who knew the most about it, and this was also my impression after all my various interviews.

Monsignor Pizzardo has noticed that the promoters of the reform have in view material advantages alone.

"It is a strictly commercial question," he tells me, "that is at stake. It is a matter of selling hats and clothes. In giving Easter a fixed date of their choice, they will perhaps fare better in their business."

As I insist, he specifies that spiritual things should always overrule those that are material. Moreover, Easter is associated with a certain tradition that must not be overlooked, and that it might be dangerous to even touch.

I bring up the matter of the blank day, and I am under the impression that he is more opposed to it than to any change affecting Easter. He recognizes that nothing

in the dogmas of the Church is against a change in the calendar. Assigning a fixed date to Easter, and making a calendar with four equal quarters, could be accepted by the Church, but for many reasons the Church will very likely finally oppose any such plan. I insist very much on the creation of the week as indicated in the second chapter of Genesis, and he admits that the weekly cycle is a sacred thing one would do better in leaving alone. He does not have the same conviction as Monsignor Fontenelle, therefore I concentrate all my efforts on the Biblical side of the question.

Then he asks me to permit him to put a question to me, and asks for my opinion regarding the sterilization of the race as the Nazis look at it. We talk at length about sterilization. He appears delighted when I tell him that sterilization is a pitiful method that will never produce interesting results, and that the source of the trouble is what should be dealt with. Then I explain our health reform, and I tell him that only spiritual, moral and physiological education could warrant decisive results. He seems delighted, and before we separate he shows me the beautiful rooms on the fifth floor of the Vatican from which one has such a magnificent view over Rome and the country roundabout.

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**Interview with Cardinal Pacelli**  
**Secretary of State of the Vatican**  
**Rome**  
**April 2, 1937**

Both in Paris and in Rome I had been told: the man to get in touch with is Cardinal Pacelli. But that is not an easy thing to do. Only ambassadors, ministers plenipotentiary and cardinals are received by him. The Mother Superior of the Janiculum Hill Convent, who knows Cardinal Pacelli, went twice to the Vatican in an effort to obtain a hearing for me, but obtained none. She went a third time, and then advised me to talk the matter over seriously with Monsignor Pizzardo.

This prelate tells me to present myself Thursday morning at Cardinal Pacelli's apartments. He promises to intervene in my favor and to ask the Cardinal to receive me. After some difficulty, I am admitted to the Cardinal's anteroom. But, after waiting there a long time, I learn that Monsignor Pacelli has left the Vatican to go and bid farewell to Cardinal Baudrillart.

The following day, Friday, I go back to see Monsignor Pizzardo, and I arrive at his place just in the nick of time, for he is precisely on the point of leaving his office to confer with the Pope and Cardinal Pacelli. He himself conducts me to the Cardinal's apartments, and tells me to wait. Two hours later he returns and tells me he hopes I will not have to wait long and that he has earnestly entreated the Cardinal to receive me.

The Cardinal receives first of all the cardinals and ministers plenipotentiary. There are four of us in the waiting room: a count, two nuns, and a fourth person whose name we do not hear. All four, we have waited a long time. Finally, only one of the four is admitted, and by the grace of God and of the Cardinal, I am that one. My satisfaction is very great at the thought that I am going to be able to present the calendar question to Cardinal Pacelli himself.

He receives me very cordially, but says little. He listens very much. I talk to him first of two friends we have in common, and then I enter upon the subject of calendar reform.

"I have wanted to see you," I tell him, "to call your attention to what is now going on in the League of Nations."

Without omitting a detail, I give him the entire history of the case at Geneva. I am really surprised by the religious attention with which he listens to me. He truly looks as though he were being informed of things he knew not of. So I insist on the grave consequence that would follow the victory of materialism over spiritual things, and before bringing my discourse to a close, I make bold and tell him just what I think should be the attitude of the Church in this matter.

“Your Eminence,” I add, “if the Church does nothing, the reform will probably be accepted by the majority of the Governments, and once the vote has been taken, it will be very difficult to turn back, for in their pride the Governments will not want to recognize that they have made a mistake.”

To this the Cardinal replies: “Yes, it will be very difficult.”

I also tell him that if the Church does nothing except to not accept a reform that has been voted for without her participation – which is very likely – there will then be two calendars, and consequently an extremely complicated situation. Complaints will arise from all parts, I tell him, and the Church will be accused for not having raised her voice at the opportune moment.

The Cardinal asks me some questions. I answer each of them clearly.

He declares in a most cordial manner: “I am very grateful to you, Doctor, for having given me all this information.” Then he asks me: “But what is their real reason for wanting a change in the calendar?”

I give him the reasons I know of, and I make use of this opportunity to tell him about Miss Achelis who has already come to the Vatican and won to her cause Father Gianfranceschi. She was not received by bishops or cardinals, but she won to her point of view a very influential father. I tell him Miss Achelis is a mystic for whom the calendar question has become a real religion. I warn him of her visit to Europe during the latter part of April and the beginning of May. She will come to Paris, will go to Geneva, and perhaps also to Rome. A faint but very significant smile passes over the Cardinal’s face, and I receive the impression that in Rome Miss Achelis will find the Vatican door closed.

Again the Cardinal-Secretary of State says with conviction: “Doctor, I am very grateful to you for the information that you have given me.”

I decide the interview has lasted long enough and that the Cardinal must not be longer tired. I rise. He accompanies me to the door, and then stands still. We look

at each other and I ask him to allow me to give him a little advice. I tell him that he should take care of his health and not overwork.

He replies that his life is in the hands of God, that he leaves it with Him to number his days, but that he will not bother about his health.

I tell him that I disagree with his attitude, and our conversation continues a little longer. The atmosphere becomes most cordial. The Cardinal gives me a warm handshake and invites me to come and see him again later if I pass through Rome.

The interview is finished, and I have just half an hour in which to catch my train and leave for Berne.