

Pope Pius XI

Pope Pius XI (1857-1939) was Pope from 1922–1939. He is remembered for resolving the “Roman Question”, strengthening Catholic social teaching, condemning totalitarianism, establishing Vatican City, and promoting Catholic Action.

Signing the Lateran Treaty (1929)

Pius XI resolved the long-standing “Roman Question” by signing the Lateran Pacts with the Kingdom of Italy. This created the sovereign Vatican City State, guaranteed the Holy See’s independence, and established a concordat regulating Church–state relations in Italy.

Issuing *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931)

Forty years after Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, Pius XI’s encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* renewed Catholic social teaching, addressing industrial-age problems, condemning capitalist greed and atheistic communism, and reaffirming the dignity of the human person.

Condemnation of Nazism and Communism

He strongly opposed totalitarian ideologies, condemning Nazism in *Mit brennender Sorge* (1937) and Communism in earlier encyclicals, defending human rights and the Church’s moral authority.

Establishing the Feast of Christ the King

Through the encyclical *Quas primas* (1925), Pius XI instituted the *Feast of Christ the King* to affirm Christ’s sovereignty over nations and to counter anti-clericalism.

Promoting Catholic Action

He championed *Catholic Action*, encouraging lay participation in the Church’s mission through religious life, charity, and public witness, without political partisanship

Reflection Questions (more than yes and no – what can I do with this information)

What do I think of when I hear “The Vatican” – a Church?, the Pope?, a Nation in collaboration with others throughout the world? I want to learn more about the structure of the Vatican.

It’s been 95 years since *Quadragesimo Anno* (which simply means “40 years” since *Rerum Novarum*). How am I living a life which rejects greed and seeks to bring charity to others?

What does it mean to me that Christ is my King, and that I seek to be part of his Kingdom, here on earth, and one day in Heaven?

