



A Vatican cleric blessing the Fascist army on its way to commit the crime of genocide in Ethiopia.

## URGENT APPEAL TO POPE BENEDICT XVI

June 18, 2008

Your Holiness,

Re: Unimaginable Crime Committed Against Ethiopia

It is with the highest respect and humility that I, a Christian, submit this appeal to Your Holiness with the hope and belief that you will consider the case carefully and, God willing, take the appropriate positive action.

It is unimaginable that a major Christian entity would be complicit in a crime of genocide that would result in the killing of one million innocent people! Yet, it is a well known fact that that was what precisely happened to Ethiopia.

I have no doubt that Your Holiness is aware that, with the blessing of the Vatican, Mussolini's Fascist army invaded and occupied Ethiopia during 1935-41 and perpetrated the crime of genocide in which 1 million innocent Ethiopians perished. In Addis Ababa alone, within a matter of a few hours, 30,000 people were murdered by the Fascist occupiers. Furthermore, 300 priests, monks and nuns were killed by the Fascists at the famous Debre Libanos monastery. The Fascist atrocity is also a personal matter to me as among the million victims were my grandfather, Grazmach (title) Gessesse Fanta, and my uncle, Merid Gessesse. In addition, 2000 churches and

525,000 homes were destroyed. The mustard gas that was sprayed by droves of Fascist planes throughout Ethiopia devastated not only hundreds of thousands of people but also millions of animals as well as the environment.

Should there be any doubt as to the complicity of the Vatican in the Fascists' atrocious deeds, one need only refer to the statement by Pope Pius XI who had declared that Mussolini was a man that had been sent by Providence and the signing of the Lateran Treaty between the Fascist party and the Catholic Church.

One should also refer to Pope Pius' congratulatory message upon the Fascists' occupation of Ethiopia:

“The triumphant joy of an entire, great and good people over a place which, it is hoped and intended, will be an effective contribution and prelude to the true place in Europe and the World.”

The Pope's joy was expressed in a more cogent and graphic declaration by the Archbishop of Torano with the following words:

“The war against Ethiopia should be considered as a holy war, a crusade” (as Italian victory would) “open Ethiopia, a country of infidels and schismatics, to the expansion of the Catholic Faith.”

It must be mentioned that the Archbishop's statement was rather strange considering the fact that according to the bible, the Acts, Chapter 8 vs 26-39, Ethiopians started accepting Christianity only a few months after Jesus Christ's resurrection. On his way back from Jerusalem in his carriage, the Ethiopian Minister of Finance accepted Christ and was baptized at Gaza by Philip. It is well known that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is one of the oldest Christian entities. Islam had also been accepted in Ethiopia right at the outset. Therefore, the statement by the Archbishop was not only inappropriate but also deserving of condemnation because of its blatant support to the Fascist crime in Ethiopia.

It is with a great sense of admiration that I refer to the Vatican's apology for the holocaust committed by the Nazis against the Jews. As an example, here is how your predecessor, Pope Paul II, expressed his apology:

BBC: “The Vatican has apologized to Jews on behalf of the entire Roman Catholic community for failing to speak out against the Nazi holocaust during World War II. In his letter accompanying the apology, the Pope (Pope Paul II) said: “the Holocaust remained an indelible stain on the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”

I am sure that Your Holiness will recall that soon after your election, you visited Cologne’s main synagogue where you described the extermination of 6 million Jews as an “unimaginable crime”.

Immediately following your visit to the Synagogue and your apology there hit the world news, I submitted my humble appeal to Your Holiness in my attached letter dated August 25, 2005 pleading for a similar Christian recognition and apology for the heinous crime committed against Ethiopia. The Ethiopian people including myself are still awaiting Your Holiness’ response.

In the mean time, Your Holiness may be aware of the fact that an entity known as the Global Alliance for Justice, the Ethiopian Cause ([www.globalallianceforethiopia.org](http://www.globalallianceforethiopia.org)) has been established. The Alliance has launched an international petition for a Vatican apology to Ethiopia. Hundreds of supporters have already signed the petition. It would be interesting to note that one of the signers, Mr. John Polifronio (No. 60 in the website’s list of petition signers), a person of Italian origin, and currently residing in California, USA, has submitted the following remarks:

“I’m an Italian, born during this atrocity, and wish to express my profoundest horror that this was done by members of the government, who were from the country of my origins. No apology can possibly begin to deal with this inhumanity directed at the Ethiopian people. I’m filled with revulsion and sorrow at discovering the extent of the Italian government’s involvement during the period 1935-41 in these hideously inhuman actions.”

Your Holiness,

It is evident that the Fascist crime committed against Ethiopia with the support of the Vatican is not less “unimaginable” than the one committed by the Nazis against the Jews. Therefore, this appeal is submitted to Your Holiness, with the fullest respect and humility, to offer the Vatican’s formal

apology to the Ethiopian people to bring justice and fairness to a cause that has remained an open wound for so long.

Respectfully yours,

Kidane Alemayehu  
A Christian