

## DO YOUR JOB PART 9

To paraphrase an old saying, “*The only organizations that hide things are organizations with things to hide.*” It is generally recognized what is most secretive in an institution is what is most dangerous to those who live within its jurisdiction or scope of influence. The institutional Catholic Church keeps an iron curtain around the processes by which bishops are selected and by which popes are elected. The Vatican keeps an iron grip on the keys to its archives, because if Catholics became aware of the atrocities large and small that have emanated from institutionalizing the Church as a form of organization that requires and justifies the use of violent dominative power against Catholics and non-Catholics alike, they would be outraged and cry out that this way of structuring the institutional Church ended. But the damage, physical, moral and spiritual, done to human beings by an institutional Church that has for over a millennium and a half adopted the model of violent secular power structures as its organizational blueprint is for the most part kept hidden from the public in the off-limits Vatican Archives.

True what modern secular history has exposed about the continuous and monstrous atrocities, large and small, that are the product of organizing the institutional Catholic Church around a principle that Jesus Himself rejects— violence—is substantial and significant. But it is a drop in the historical bucket in terms of the immensity of physical, moral and spiritual harm that this manner of organizing the institutional Church has brought down on Catholics and others. And to make matters infinitely worst, it has all been morally justified by the Bishop-CEOs as necessary for carrying out Jesus’ commission to His Apostles and Jesus’ mission of eternal salvation to all humanity.

What arrant nonsense! Nothing, absolutely nothing, that Jesus commissions His Apostles (bishops) to do and nothing, absolutely nothing, the Church must do to be an extension of Christ and His mission in time and space requires the use of violence internal or external to the institutional Church. Whatever requires the use of violence to succeed is not something that is needed to fulfill the commission Jesus gives to the Apostles and is not something needed for pursuing and implementing the mission Jesus gives the Church. To say as I have heard so many bishops and priests say, “*The Church needs wealth and secular (violent dominative) power to carry out its work for Christ in the world,*” is to speak a falsehood. It absolutely does not need such means. Indeed, such means obstruct and hobble the Church from serving Catholics and all human beings, as Jesus desires they be served.

In the world—world used here in the pejorative sense—men and women of great secular (violent dominative) power do not voluntarily relinquish it. It has to be taken from them by people who have access to a greater power of violence. A Christian who believes that the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospels who teaches a Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies is the Messiah and God Incarnate cannot use violent power to wrest the power of violence from the hands of those who have it in the Church or in the state. To try to do so would make the Christian a living witness against his or her own professed truth, namely, that the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospels is the Messiah and God Incarnate. But, a Christian who believes in the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospels cannot just sit on his or her hands and do nothing while gross untruth is being propagated far and wide as the truth of Jesus. Since in everyday consciousness silence gives consent, the Christian who believes in the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospels, who says with Peter, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,*” (Jn 6:68) cannot merely standby as his or her fellow Christians, regardless of rank in the institutional Church, teach that the opposite of what Jesus taught as the truth of Jesus, saying in effect that they “*have the words to eternal life.*” This would not only be complicity in false witness, it would also be cowardliness and an absence of personal human integrity in relations to the most important matter confronting each human being and all humanity—his or her future beyond death and its relationship to his or her choices in life before death.

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The history of Christian men imprisoning themselves in an institution whose logic requires that they use violence against their fellow Christians is long, continuous, sorrowful and tragic. A bishop to be a bishop must choose to accept the offer of the power of the kingdoms of the world to be a bishop of an institution, a diocese, that has as part of its *modus operandi* violence in various forms. At times in Church history there has been a shortage of priests here or there for one reason or another. But, the lines to become a bishop have always stretched around the block. And, why not? The *libido dominandi*, the lust for power, the lust to rule others, is one of the all-pervading consequences of the Fall and hence is a temptation that any man or woman may have to face in small matters or in large.

The Church is an institution with its own instruments of violence—Canons #1311-1399 of the CODE OF CANON LAW deal with the penalties and punishments administered by the Church on fellow Christians. It also has total access to the state's instruments of violence. Having the power to call upon call on God's violence and the state's violence is the *libido dominandi's* dream scenario. The state, the Church and a violent "God" to morally approve of the state's and Church's violence is an unmatched troika of violence for the unleashed *libido dominandi* to have at its disposal. The possibility of achieving controlling dominative power in such an institution as the Church must cause certain personality types to salivate psychologically and to be willing to make any sacrifice of self or of others to become king of the hill in the Christian *ecclesia*. A monarchical bishop in an institution organized around wealth and the willingness to employ violence cannot carry out Jesus' commission to "*teach them to obey all that I have commanded you.*"

The contrived theology beneath all of this, which allows for a collective episcopal pseudo-peace on mind among monarchical bishops ruling Church institutions constructed in imitation of secular models of dominance institutions, e.g. states, corporations, is summed up in the Christian Orwellianism, "*To dominate is to sever.*"

In his homily at his first episcopal ordinations as Pope, Francis said to the newly ordained bishops, "*Keep in mind that you were selected to serve, not to dominate.*" This is exactly what Jesus teaches in the Gospels. It is a clarion warning that the evil called the *libido dominandi*, the lust for power, the lust to rule others, never ceases to lurk in the psyche of the one who leads in a Christian community.

Now, what the Pope Francis said is incontestably Gospel truth. The problem is this is coming from someone who is the last absolute political dictator of a recognized state (Vatican City State) on earth, one who has absolute dominative jurisdictional, executive, legislative and juridical power over every aspect of the institutional Catholic Church, e.g. its wealth, its personnel, etc. "*Keep in mind that you were selected to serve, not to dominate,*" is a nice sound bite but it is blatantly inconsistent with the daily *modus operandi* of the Papacy or of any bishop of any diocese. The pre-arranged organization into which a man becomes pope or a man becomes a bishop requires that he not serve as Jesus his leader served but rather rule as the leaders of this world's political, financial, military, etc. institutions rule. He is to be a monarch-CEO employing secular and canonical dominative power to get done what he wants done in that segment of the institutional Church, his diocese, which he rules with violent secular legal power and with violent institutional Church canonical power as his always available default option.

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It is taken-for-granted knowledge that the institutional Church is a power structure, one of the great power structures of the world, that operates internally and externally no differently from any other institutional power structure of the world. For a pope to tell a bishop not to dominate in such a structure, as Pope Francis did, is disingenuous. It is taken-for-granted knowledge for 1700 years that the bishop has the right to use violent dominative power against Catholics and others to the extent that he can garner it and get away with using it.

As CEO the bishop does his job like every other CEO. Since the organizations they all run are structured in a way that requires the use of violence against people, they all act the same. Catholic bishops, when the long hidden evidence of clerical child abuse became public, acted no differently than the CEOs did in the cigarette industry once what they were hiding about the dangers of cigarette smoking gradually began to surface, namely, that cigarette smoking kills millions of people yearly. And, as the truth about cigarette smoking became more and more visible the cigarette CEOs calculatingly began to smear and ridicule the messengers, and delegitimize, make light of and ignore, via multimillion-dollar public relations campaigns, what the objective evidence was logically communicating. The cigarette industry's CEOs carried on this charade of denial and obfuscation effectively for twenty-five years, with little concern for the millions worldwide who were being destroyed by the product they were giving to people and enticing people to use.

There is no doubt the CEOs of the various cigarette companies did their job as corporate CEOs here, even though they sent millions of people to early deaths over those twenty-five years. Their CEO job was to ensure the survival of their institution, which included "Protecting the Brand" from being publicly impugned. This they did with religious zeal—whole heart, whole soul, whole mind and whole strength—using every deception they could conjure up or purchase to present falsehood as objective truth and objective truth as falsehood.

And when the evidence became publicly overwhelming that cigarette smoking destroyed the health and life of people by the millions yearly, the CEOs of the cigarette corporation did not stop making, promoting and selling cigarettes to the already addicted and the young, but simply altered the lies and deceptive methods they employed to keep old customers and attract new ones. Now instead of professing that cigarettes did not do grave harm to people's health, they printed a notice on each pack warning that cigarette smoking may be dangerous to peoples' health. Then they blistered the media with insidious multi-million dollar advertisements to emotionally motivate non-smokers, especially the young people, into taking up smoking, e.g., the Joe Carmel campaign. The CEOs of the cigarette corporations no longer tried to deny the objective evidence before them or the truth of the warning on their own packs of cigarettes; they just ignored it, and established crafty programs and processes to divert people's attention from what was in black and white before them and its serious consequences.

The CEOs of the cigarette corporations were murders and deceivers but as CEOs they did their job. Now, what about the CEOs of the Church, Inc.? Is it not sheer fantasy to believe that the CEO-bishops of the institutional Church, as it is presently structured and as it presently operates, will ever proclaim what Jesus proclaims about violence, that is, that the Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies is an imperative obligation of discipleship and not merely an available option, if the disciple cannot think of a better way of responding to violence and enmity?

(To be continued)

-Emmanuel Charles McCarthy