

## Where Have All the Bishops Gone?

*The institutional Church is hard and implacable. Humans with their pain are sacrificed to abstract principles. The institutional Church is ruled by power, rather than mercy. As the saints and wise men and women warn us: where power prevails, love vanishes and mercy disappears.*

—LEONARDO BOFF, 3/4/16

Today marks the thirteenth anniversary of the beginning of the U.S. war on Iraq. The consequences of this lying, murderous, high-tech assault on the people of Iraq, who in no way threatened the people of the U.S., has left to date millions of innocent children, women, men dead or maimed in body and/or mind for life in Iraq, across the entire Middle East and in the U.S. Yet, from March 20, 2003 to March 20, 2016 we have yet to hear a denunciation of this mega-evil from the Catholic Bishops of the U.S. Nor, with but a single exception, have we heard any bishop tell his people that this war is radically inconsistent with the teachings of Jesus or even the spiritually fraudulent Catholic Just War Theory. To the contrary, the Catholic Bishops of the U.S. by their mutually agreed upon collective and calculated silence have misled Catholics into believing from the beginning that this mass slaughter of the people of Iraq and its neighbors as well as the daily micro-activities and atrocities of this war are compatible with the teachings of Jesus and the will of God as revealed by the Word of God Incarnate in either the Gospels or Natural Law.

The invasion of Iraq by the U.S. was shown from its opening homicide live and in color on television from Baghdad. Here is what everyone, including the U.S. Catholic Bishops, saw in real time on March 20, 2003:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neDgVb9YHcA> .

There is only one condemnation in all the documents of the Second Vatican Council that occurs in *Gaudium et Spes*, The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, SECTION 80. It reads as follows:

*“Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their people is a crime against God and humanity. It merits our unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.”*

Baghdad at the beginning of the U.S. bombing was a city of 3.8 million souls. Not only did the U.S. Catholic Bishops refuse to unequivocally and unhesitatingly condemn the March 20, 2003 bombing of

Baghdad the day of the evil when they saw it on television, they have said nothing during the thirteen years since, as Catholics have committed and/or supported crime after crime against God and humanity, thousands of times over, in Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries to the tune of killing and maiming millions of Iraqis and other Middle Eastern people.

There is no explanation, for this obstinate, steely-eyed, pitiless refusal of the Catholic Bishops of the U.S. to denounce this mega-evil and to tell their U.S. Catholic population that participation in this ongoing debauchery of soul, mind and body is a grave offense against God that is as deserving of excommunication as the unjust destruction of human life in the womb, other than what Leonardo Boff states above.

However, an *institutional Church is hard and implacable* is because the men who control it are hard and implacable. The Catholic episcopacy in the U.S. and in all probability in many other places, including Rome, has been for a long time, the hard business of hard men watching-over the hard property rights of a multi-trillion dollar financial empire, using religious cant and chant to camouflage what is taking place behind the veils of piety. This is why the U.S. Catholic Bishops individually and as a unit have agreed to discipline themselves, and each other, to being spiritual and moral mutes, regarding the carnage in the Middle East that the U.S. began on March 20, 2003 and has orchestrated continually to March 20, 2016.

As a Catholic I ask the Catholic Bishops of the U.S. when is enough human butchery and support for human butchery by those Catholics in your spiritual and moral care, enough? When do you stop playing the Catholic politicians pro-abortionists' game of "I am personally against the war but others have to make their own decision about it?"

You are Bishops. When Catholics, who, say, are Mafia enforcers, are throwing people into a pool of piranhas to torture them, are breaking people's legs to collect protection "insurance," are killing innocent people because they are in the way of another territorial takeover by the local Mafia Godfather, is silenced from your *Sedia* all that is required of you, the spiritual and moral overseer of your Church and of your flock's immortal souls? Is it not true that in matters of gravely intrinsic evil, e.g., the unjust killing of human beings, where more is required silence can be mortally sinful? After a certain amount of time passes does not silence towards an intrinsically grave evil imply consent to that evil, and thereby make the silent one—if he has a divinely ordained commission from Jesus to teach what Jesus taught—complicit with that evil and an enhancer of that evil? Is it not true that to justify an evil is to promote an evil? Does silence not give consent? Of course it does.

Would the U.S. Bishops be so unanimously and universally tight-lipped before their Catholic people on their moral obligation not to take part in the murderous bloodbath that started on March 20, 2003 and continue to destroy bodies, minds, souls and spirits right down to today, March 20, 2016, if people and institutions of great wealth and political power, who are magnanimous contributors to the wealth and power of the institutional Catholic Church, were not the wheelers and dealers behind the war, and profiting today and for many, many tomorrows from the war? Of course they wouldn't.

At a bare minimum, the ordinary people of Iraq, both Muslim and Catholic, deserve a public apology from the U.S. Catholic Bishops for their mercilessness towards them over the last thirteen years. At a bare minimum the ordinary people in the Catholic Church of the U.S. deserve a public apology from the U.S. Catholic Bishops for their obdurate and stiff-necked silence, which was the direct result of their placing concern for the power and wealth of the institutional Catholic Church of the U.S. above the truth of Jesus, and therefore above Christlike love for them. However, I would estimate, that short of a miracle on the scale of the parting of the sea for Moses, a mass conversion of the U.S. Catholic Hierarchy to the teaching of Jesus' on violence and enmity, is impossible. So, on March 20, 2023, the twentieth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq by the U.S., the episcopal silence that began on March 20, 2003 will still be the order of the day in regards to the Iraq War, which by then will have been extended into massacring Africans and plundering and pillaging their mineral rich continent.

So, no repentant apology will be forthcoming soon from the U.S. Bishops—to either the sons and daughters of the *Father of all* in Iraq or to the Catholics of their dioceses whose immortal souls were placed in their care. And, the consequence of this failure to repent and apologize will be as it always has been, namely, that the unnamed and unacknowledged evil will perpetuate itself with evermore absurd justifications and with lavish zeal within the Church's Hierarchy.

If only the Catholic Hierarchy of the U.S. could prepare Catholic boys and girls to simply and courageously follow the Nonviolent Jesus of the Gospels and His Way of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies as well as they prepare them to be enforcers and cannon fodder for the upcoming evil and murderous schemes of those who control the state, the human condition in both its temporal and eternal dimensions would be closer to what God created it and redeemed it to become and to be.

—EMMANUEL CHARLES MCCARTHY