

The Catholic Church Heils Hitler by James J. Murphy



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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH is a baffling enigma to most inquirers. A study of its teachings and practices allures some, but confuses many. Little wonder that confusion results, for it is full of contradictions and does, indeed, make some very strange bedfellows: Diamond Jim Brady and Francis of Assisi; Texas Guinan and the Little Flower. It buried Rudolph Valentino with solemn rites but burnt Savanarola at the stake.

What is the explanation of the Church's apparent contradictions? The explanation is that the contradictions are not apparent but real. The contradiction is between theory and practice, between pretense and reality. The Roman Church, for example, prates of patriotism and civic duty but in practice it has winked for decades at the basest political corruption of "Catholic" cities like New York and Chicago. It would have you believe, too, that it is "the bulwark of democracy", while its very organization is authoritarian, dominated by one supreme monarch, with every underling prelate an appointee and a despot in his own little realm. It poses, likewise, as a contemner of "filthy lucre" but every one "on the inside" knows that money is the "Open Sesame" of the Roman Curia. This holds good whether you are given a papal title (a la Duchess Brady) or permission to marry a divorcee (a la Maureen O'Sullivan) or even simple permission to say mass aboard an ocean liner. As the saying goes, "no money. no mass – no dollars, no monsignore."

However despicable these contradictions in the lives of individuals may be,

they are trifles when compared to the wholesale betrayal of mankind that we shall now proceed to prove: that the Roman Church, in direct and violent contradiction of its official teaching, stood by in silence, save for a few diplomatic gestures, and allowed the fascist Madman of Europe to drench the world in blood.

When, you may ask, does the Church of Rome consider a war lawful and justifiable? Let one of her Jesuit spokesmen answer. In the Catholic Encyclopedia, a work of unimpeachable authority, Father Charles Macksey, S.J., Professor of Ethics at the Gregorian University in Rome, says:¹

“A war, to be just, must be waged by a Sovereign Power for the security of a perfect right of its own (or of another invoking its protection) against foreign violation in a case where there is no other means available to secure or repair the right.”

“So, too, the need of one state of more territory for its surplus population gives it no right to seize the superabundant and undeveloped territory of another.”

“The foundation of the right of war is a right violated or threatened, not a mere ethical duty neglected.”

According to the unexcelled authority of St. Augustine, the followers of St. Thomas Aquinas and Francisco de Victoria, a war is unjust and immoral unless it fulfills each of the ten following conditions:²

“1. Gross injustice on the part of one, and only one, of the contending parties;

“2. Gross formal moral guilt on one side – material wrong is not sufficient;

“3. Undoubted knowledge of this guilt;

“4. That war should be declared only when every means to prevent it has failed:

“5. Guilt and punishment must be proportionate. Punishment exceeding the measure of guilt is unjust and unallowable;

“6. Moral certainty that the side of justice will win;

“7. Right intention to further by the war that which is good and to shun that which is evil;

“8. War must be rightly conducted: restrained within the limits of justice and love;

"9. Avoidance of unnecessary upheaval of countries not immediately concerned and of the Christian community.

"10. Declaration of war by lawful authority exercised in the name of God."

The classic Jesuit authority in matters theological, Suarez, says:

"The State that declares war must have no manner of doubt; the grounds of its right must be clearer than day. Mistakes are inexcusable. To declare war is to pass sentence of death and to do that with a doubting conscience is a mortal sin."

"According to unanimous Catholic teaching all wars are unjust when undertaken for national or dynastic interests, from covetousness or lust of conquest."³

"Even if others take a laxer view of an offensive war, all Catholic moralists condemn a war undertaken for any reason short of gross injustice."⁴

"If we consider the conditions which justify a war from the standard of Catholic morality, we find that war is almost an impossibility."⁵

Such is the Christian code of ethics flaunted by the Church, in times of peace, to put on parade her "steadfast devotion to principles." This is mere theory and pretense. In practice, how craven and cowardly is her retreat in time of imminent war. She slinks under cover and cloaks her theoretical ethics in deepest silence. The Pope waits till war is declared and then confines himself to a series of sterile platitudes on the "misfortunes of war," instead of standing up in the full power of his authority to decry injustice and denounce the war as monstrous and unallowable.

As to the Catholic Church's plea of being a "neutral witness," the fact must be faced that such an attitude must be considered the meanest and most despicable that could possibly be adapted in the face of the problems of social morality and individual conscience which the War has brought to the fore – all the more so on the part of an authority that professes to have been established by Christ to point out the way of righteousness and justice to all nations! Devout Catholics have turned in their distress toward the throne of Peter and discovered, to their confusion, that the throne is empty.

No one has a right to be neutral in moral questions. Whoever in such questions pretends to be indifferent is in reality siding with him who is in the wrong. "He that soweth not, scattereth." As Theodore Roosevelt once said: "There is no meaner moral attitude than that of a timid and selfish neutrality between right and wrong."⁶

We need waste no time in proving that Hitler viciously violated every principle of neutrality sponsored and endorsed in the moral code of the Catholic Church. It is evident to even the most casual observer that in attacking Poland, Hitler not only failed to fulfill the ten conditions of a just war but openly defied every single one of them. It is clear to even the uneducated man-of-the-street that in raping and ravaging Poland he has ruthlessly and viciously flouted every tenet of decency, justice and

humanity.

What shame that the Church of Rome broke faith! In the struggle of Might against Right, she faltered and quailed and denied in practice her own moral principles. The self-declared "Mystical Body of Christ" stood aside and allowed her members to murder each other with fiendish fury while she turned not a hand to stop them. This on the part of the Church which forbids the dueling of two men under pain of excommunication! The Church's "diplomatic protests" and meaningless lamentations are just so much "eyewash." Her hands are not tied, her duty is clear. Her strength is not in worldly diplomacy but in spiritual weapons. A single indictment of the injustice and sinfulness of this mass murder and the forces of the power-mad Fascists would be crippled. Under threat of excommunication and interdict 100,000,000 Catholics in fascist countries would refuse to take up arms to kill their brethren, peace would flourish again and European civilization would be snatched from the brink of destruction.

But no! The Church of Rome, formed and fashioned in the crucible of authoritarianism, seeks her fascist ends by not only tolerating this bestial slaughter but crowning it with her blessing. The Catholic Church in Germany, through a Pastoral Letter from the bishops to all the faithful, authoritatively declared:

"In this decisive hour we admonish our Catholic soldiers to do their duty in obedience to the Fuchrer and be ready to sacrifice their whole individuality. We appeal to the Faithful to join in ardent prayers that Divine Providence may lead this war to blessed success."⁷

The Catholic periodicals of Germany exhort their readers, by a front- page illustration, that as Saint Michael slew the dragon, so, too, should they fight this holy war and slay the modern dragons of democracy.

Once again, as throughout her history, the Church of the Vatican has thrown her weight on the side of authoritarianism. Little matter whether it is that of a monarchy or of a dictatorship. Nor does it matter that in so doing she tramples in mud and gore the very principles of her moral code. Political machine that she is (in her inner circle), she never takes promises or principles too seriously – at best, they are but means to an end, and, at times they are even obstacles. It is the ends that count – the means are immaterial – and the ends are always fascist.

"At the end of the nineteenth century, the three most important countries were those that chiefly belonged to the conquests of the Reformation: and the entire confer of gravity, moving from the Mediterranean nations to the Oceanic, from the Latin to the Teuton, had also passed from the Catholic to the Protestant." – Lord Acton, Cambridge Lectures on Modern History.

1. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Article "War", Vol. XI. p. 550.↵
2. The Church and War by Franziskus Stratmann of the Dominican Order. P. J. Kennedy & Sons. Cf. Summa Theologica. II-II. 40 and 108.↵
3. The Church and War by Franzlskus Stratmann. p. 75.↵
4. Ibidem.↵

5. Ibidem. p. 73.↵

6. Quoted from La Guerre et la Religion par Alfred Lotsy. Introduction. p. IX.↵

7. New York Times. September 24. 1939.↵

(End of article.)

Also see: [German Catholic bishops admit they were 'complicit' in Nazi crimes](#).