

Pilate Lives! Boston College Washes Its Hands of the Blood of the Innocent

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Like Pilate, Boston College washes its hands, not because it believes that the killing of over 100,000 civilians and the maiming of hundreds of thousands more is right, good or moral, but because it serves Boston College's political-financial self-interests to do so. There is nothing complex about Pilate's motives in approving the death of Jesus, despite being morally certain that an innocent person is being destroyed. Cooperation in the killing of Jesus simply served his interest at the moment. There is nothing novel with Pilate, who after honoring the request to have Jesus killed, then exculpates himself with "I am innocent of this man's blood" (MT 27:24-25). After which he makes a symbolic public display of his self-proclaimed innocence by symbolically washing his hands of the moral reality of the situation in which he is taking part. "I am not responsible, I didn't kill anybody," is the universal refrain of the Christian moral quisling. But, as Rev. George Zabelka, the Catholic Chaplain to the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Bomb Group, wrote thirty years after his blessing of the crews that killed and maimed hundreds of thousands of civilians by dropping the first atomic bombs:

To fail to speak to the utter moral corruption of the mass destruction of civilians was to fail as a Christian and a priest...Modern war and oppression are carried out by a long chain of individuals, each doing his or her job meticulously while simultaneously refusing to look at the end results of his or her work. There is no state or corporate evil that is not the result of personal sinfulness. In August of 1945, I, as a Christian and as a priest, served not as an agent of reconciliation but as an instrument of retaliation, revenge and homicide. My explicit and tacit approval of what was being done that summer

(1945) was clearly visible for anyone to see. The fact that I was not physically on the planes is morally irrelevant. I played an important and necessary role in this sacrilege—and I played it meticulously...Let's be honest, to justify an evil is to promote an evil...[W]here more is required, priestly silence is sinful, because silence gives consent and consent motivates toward the evil.

And, what if a priest or a Christian or a Catholic institution goes beyond silence to explicitly honoring the perpetrator of what is gravely intrinsically evil, i.e., unjustified homicide—murder? Condoleezza Rice is one of the people primarily responsible for the planning, the execution and the propagandizing—as just—a war that has led to the large-scale destruction of the civilian population of Iraq. For Boston College, a Catholic University, to honor such a person is morally tantamount to honoring the most monetarily successful legal abortionist in the United States because he began his life in poverty but graduated summa cum laude from Harvard. It is an absolute of Catholic moral theology that the unjustified destruction of human life is gravely intrinsically evil on all occasions and is therefore never morally permissible—whether that destruction takes place in utero or extra-utero, whether done alone or with a group, whether done by the rich, powerful and highly educated or the poor, dispossessed and illiterate.

The powers-that-be at Boston College hope that all this "fuss" about Ms. Rice will die out with the next news cycle and the end of the academic year—as well it may. But the moral reality is that unless those few people at Boston College who made this decision either repent or else are removed from their places

in the administration or on the Board of Directors, the spirit of Pilate will continue to be a controlling spirit at Boston College, albeit camouflaged beneath reams of Catholic rhetoric and ritual.

May it be hoped and prayed for that Boston College's faculty, students and alumni do not let this Catholic institutional endorsement of the destruction of the innocent be swallowed up in forgetfulness. For after Ms. Rice departs, the spirit that she embodies, and that brought her to Boston College, will still be operative here. The Boston College Catholic and Christian community have a severe moral obligation to find out precisely where that spirit has taken hold at B.C. and to exorcise it—for while it maybe symbolized by Pilate's washing his hands while proclaiming "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," (MT 27:24), the spirit of Pilate is in reality the spirit of

the one that Jesus says "is a liar and murderer from the beginning (Jn 8:44).

Finally, by what standard of morality that can be found in Hebrew Scriptures, Christian Scriptures or Catholic Natural Law does Boston College permit itself to bypass the question that was asked about Jesus, "What harm has He done" (MT 27:24; MK15:14), as this question relates to the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians killed and maimed? What harm have they done that deserves this? By what standard of morality does it permit itself to evade the same question regarding Ms. Rice: "What harm has she done?" By what standard of morality that can be found in Hebrew Scriptures, Christian Scriptures or Catholic Natural Law does Boston College morally permit itself to be a microphone for Ms. Rice, instead of the voice of God's anawim in Iraq?