



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on April 2, 2015

Silence Is Betrayal: Death of Jesus, Drone Kills, Abortion

“On the night he was betrayed”

These words from the apostle Paul’s account of the Last Supper (I Corinthians 11:23) are repeated regularly in Communion services in Christian churches throughout the world. They are remembered especially on Holy Thursday when the faithful recall the Lord’s institution of the Eucharist “on the night He was betrayed.”

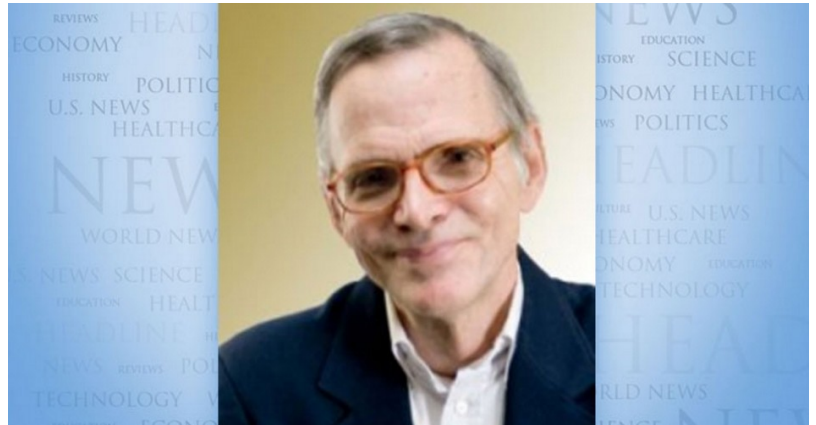
Betrayed by whom, though? By Judas, obviously, whom our Lord recognizes later at His arrest as “my betrayer.” Peter also comes to mind. Though he did not turn Jesus over to the temple authorities for “30 pieces of silver” as Judas did, his three-fold denial of Christ did not speak well of his fidelity. The boldness he showed in the Garden of Gethsemane, wielding a sword against those who came to arrest Jesus, had deserted him entirely in the courtyard, leaving him to weep at his own cowardice.

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And what of the other apostles? We don’t find them explicitly betraying or denying Jesus, though they all “voted with their feet” against Him by fleeing at His arrest. We heard on Palm Sunday that there were several witnesses against Jesus at His sham trial and that their testimonies contradicted one another. Were there no witnesses for the accused? Was there not one to come forward and testify to His miraculous healings and other works of mercy? None to refute the false charge that He urged people not to pay taxes to Caesar or that He had called for a literal tearing down of the temple where faithful Jews worshipped? Jesus had many followers, and the Gospel of Luke tells us that many followed Him even as He carried the cross to Calvary. But none apparently could or would speak up for Him when his earthly life hung in the balance.

In 1967, as Americans continued to fight a seemingly endless war in southeast Asia, a group called Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam issued a statement with a message about the necessity of speaking out against continuing the war: “A time comes when silence is betrayal.”

Is this not such a time? As Americans living in the richest, most powerful country in the world, we take pride in being a civilized people and we recoil in revulsion at the barbarism of those in distant lands who cut off people’s heads and who maliciously set fire to a prisoner, burning him to death. But we are mostly silent about our nation’s unmanned bombers, the drones appropriately named “Predator” and “Reaper,” firing missiles, aptly named “Hellfire,” that time and again blow to pieces innocent noncombatants, burning their remains beyond recognition. That sort of high-tech barbarism, carried out in our name, seems not to bother the vast majority of Americans or, if it does, we are careful not to say





so.

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Every year, roughly 1.5 million babies are aborted in the United States — torn limb from limb in the womb, burned to death with saline poisoning or, in some cases, dragged feet first out of the womb while their tiny skulls are crushed by the friendly physician known as the “abortion provider.” It averages out to more than 4,000 innocent human beings killed each day, far more than were killed at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the infamous terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Yet our consciences have become numbed to the routine killings in hospitals and abortion clinics, by “medical procedures” that a mere half-century ago (the “dark ages,” according to abortion rights advocates) were outlawed in every state of the union. Yet even politicians who say they are “pro-life” are, with few exceptions, careful not to mention the subject in their campaigns for election. We hear the commercials for candidates who are happy to tell us they are “pro-choice,” or will defend “a woman’s right to choose.” Where are the ads from pro-life candidates denying there is a “right” to deliberately choose death for another human being?

An openly pro-life stand is unpopular, such candidates reason, and would cost them votes. So they are happy to treat the right to life as an item to check off on a questionnaire from a pro-life organization, to feature in targeted mailings to members of such groups, and perhaps even to speak about at a gathering of abortion opponents. But to the general public they maintain a discreet silence on the subject, never bothering to ask themselves if perhaps the reason the pro-life position is not more popular with the electorate is that the vast majority of voters never hear it defended. G.K. Chesterton wrote that the modern world is in danger of producing men too “modest” to believe in the multiplication table. If even “pro-life” candidates are too timid to affirm something as basic as the right to life, the nation is in serious trouble.

“A time comes when silence is betrayal.”

We all know people who not only vote for, but actively support and work for, candidates and office-holders who are proud to support the “right to choose” death for other human beings. We have grown accustomed to seeing such people in the pews each weekend, standing and affirming their belief in “the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life.” Perhaps they somehow fail to see the contradiction. That should remind us of George Orwell’s observation that sometimes the first duty of intelligent people is the restatement of the obvious.

We also know people who openly and actively support the right to life. A small number of them stand for that God-given right by bearing witness to it on sidewalks outside abortion clinics, despite the harassment and abuse they often endure from passersby. Why is it only a small number? When only one of the 10 cured of leprosy returned to give thanks to Jesus, he asked, “Where are the other nine?” Where are the rest of us who believe in the right to life, are opposed to the massacre of the pre-born by the millions, but are content to remain silent about it?

“A time comes when silence is betrayal.”

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing,” is a famous statement attributed to 18th-century British statesman Edmund Burke. It is still true today. Despite the determined and often heroic efforts of pro-life activists, the culture of death prevails in America because too many good people are doing and saying nothing. “A time comes when silence is betrayal.” This is such a time.



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