

CELEBRITIES LEARN TO COPE WITH CORONAVIRUS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how celebrities are coping with the coronavirus:

In times of adversity, most Americans turn to God for relief, but there are segments of society that are so thoroughly enmeshed in a culture of secularism that even something as horrific as the coronavirus pandemic is not enough to change them. Hollywood is a case in point. The advice that celebrities are being given is only complicating their condition.

The *Hollywood Reporter* recently interviewed three therapists about the advice they are giving celebrities.

Dennis Palumbo is a former screenwriter-turned-psychotherapist who works almost exclusively with those in the entertainment industry. He tells his patients that they need to adjust to their new environment by letting themselves “process what a change this is” and learn to deal with it. “I think rather than try to get right back on the horse,” he advises, “I would suggest walking alongside the horse for a week.” Besides being hopelessly vague, and therefore almost useless, this is classic self-help advice. Self-help aficionados, of course, have no need for God.

Dr. Jenn Mann is a psychotherapist and host of VH1’s “Couple’s Therapy” and “Family Therapy.” She can’t bring herself to advise her Hollywood patients to pray—that would be too extreme—but she does come close: meditation is okay. But meditation must have an object. Meditation about what? Given her patients’ subculture of self-absorption, we have a good idea it won’t be about anyone save themselves.

Philip Pierce is a producer and Beverly Hills psychologist and

he recommends that his patients “reflect on one’s values, and what is truly meaningful.” Those values, however, are hopelessly secular to begin with, thus doing nothing to alter their condition.

Even those celebrities who have been moved to rethink their relationship with God have a hard time breaking away from their narcissistic condition. For example, Miley Cyrus says the coronavirus pandemic has inspired her to reconsider her rejection of religion.

In a conversation with Hailey Bieber (Justin Bieber’s wife), the “Wrecking Ball” star said, “So I think now you are telling me that I’m allowed to redesign my relationship with God as an adult and make it how it feels most accepting to me would make me feel so less turned off by spirituality.” While it is commendable for Cyrus to have some second thoughts, her statement smacks of self-centeredness.

Hollywood is not wholly unique. We know from many studies that a self-absorbed milieu is characteristic of the media, the arts community, and academia. That is what secularism spawns, and that is not the kind of environment that is particularly helpful at any time, never mind times of adversity. To give those who are already basking in themselves self-centered advice is worse than folly—it is regressive.