

# IS BORDER CHIEF NOMINEE ANTI-CATHOLIC?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a Biden pick to police the U.S. border:

President Joe Biden has nominated Tucson Police Chief Chris Magnus to be the head of Customs and Border Protection. The Senate will have to confirm him. He needs to be asked about some disturbing remarks he made two years ago about Covington Catholic High School students.

After a March for Life rally in the nation's capital, Nick Sandmann, a Covington Catholic student, was taunted by an Indian activist, Nathan Phillips. Although Phillips beat his drum in the student's face, Sandmann did not retaliate. All he did was smile. Immediately, many pundits and the media attacked Sandmann for disrespecting Phillips. Among those who jumped on the bandwagon was Magnus.

When more complete videos became available, most of Sandmann's critics regretted their rush to judgment. It was Phillips who baited Sandmann, not the other way around. What made Magnus different from the other critics was his determination to collectivize the guilt—he indicted all the Covington Catholic students.

Surely Magnus knew the students were Catholic—it was all over the media—so why did he indict their status? On January 19, 2019, he tweeted, "What kind of parenting or school experience leads to this?" He called out their behavior, which was completely passive, saying what they did was "cruel & wrong."

Had these been public school students, it is not likely Magnus would have questioned their upbringing. But these students were raised by Catholic parents and attended a Catholic school.

After Magnus saw more video clips, he stuck to his guns. Two days after his first tweet, he blamed the Catholic students for acting like a “mob”—even though the videos proved they did nothing wrong. He also said this was a “Totally avoidable” event, putting the onus on them.

Magnus is not an ordinary cop. He is a left-wing activist who participated in a Black Lives Matter protest *while in uniform* when he headed the Richmond, California police department in 2014. This earned him the rebuke of local law enforcement unions and his own police force. While in the same job, he was accused by a records clerk of “cultivating a gay environment.” In 2015, Magnus was accused by a male officer of sexual harassment and for using racial slurs.

Magnus needs to explain himself. Not only was his judgment in the Covington Catholic case seriously flawed, the comments he made about the students’ family and school deserve to be probed. What was he getting at when he asked about the “parenting or school experience” of these Catholic students?

We are contacting all members of the U.S. Senate. Because Magnus is likely to first appear before the Senate Finance Committee, we urge everyone to contact Senator Mike Crapo, the Ranking Member.

Contact his legislative director, Molly Carpenter:  
[molly\\_carpenter@crapo.senate.gov](mailto:molly_carpenter@crapo.senate.gov)