

“THE SUMMER OF HATE” CONTINUES UNABATED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on another spike in church vandalism:

“The Summer of Love,” as the clueless mayor of Seattle put it, has turned into “The Summer of Hate.” Blood in the streets of urban America is a staple on weekends, and the destruction of historic statues—including Catholic ones—is spiking. While the carnage is the work of reckless thugs and left-wing activists, the tone is set by the elites: many either support these assaults or are too spineless to do anything about them.

The police across the nation are acting rationally by not extending themselves. If they do their job as expected, they risk being sued, risking sanctions that put their retirement benefits in jeopardy. The result is mayhem.

A total of 18 people were shot in New York City from mid-day Saturday through Sunday night (a tropical storm kept the killers indoors on Friday). The previous weekend, 64 were shot and 10 were killed.

In Chicago this past weekend, 64 were shot and 13 were killed. Over the previous weekend, 70 were wounded and 17 were murdered.

Other cities seeing a sharp increase in shooting and killings include Philadelphia (a 6-year-old was shot in the chest on July 5); Minneapolis (a pregnant woman was shot this past weekend); and Cleveland (an 8-year-old girl was shot over the 4th of July weekend).

Denver and Louisville have seen the murder rate increase by 40% this year as compared to last year during the same time period. On the 4th of July itself, there was a spate of

killings. In Atlanta an 8-year-old girl was murdered; in Washington D.C. an 11-year-old was killed; and in San Francisco and St. Louis, a 6-year-old and 4-year-old were murdered.

When young people aren't being killed, Catholic property is being destroyed.

Over this past weekend, a statue of Our Blessed Mother was set on fire in Boston and another statue of the Virgin Mary was vandalized in Queens, New York. In Ocala, Florida a man crashed his minivan into a Catholic church while parishioners gathered for Mass; he then poured gasoline in the church's foyer and set the church ablaze.

San Gabriel Mission Church in Los Angeles County was set on fire on July 11, destroying parts of the 249-year-old iconic structure. It was founded by Saint Junípero Serra in 1771, the priest who was a staunch defender of the rights of Indians (statues of Serra have been destroyed in many towns and cities throughout California).

Vandals were charged with a hate crime after they partially disfigured Mission San Jose, a church in Fremont, California. Swastikas and anti-Catholic comments were recently found on the graves of several Dominican friars on the campus of Providence College.

Sacred Heart Catholic school in Gallup, New Mexico was broken into last week and a statue of Jesus was vandalized. A statue outside St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Wasco, California was smashed last month. Church buildings were also attacked in Minnesota, New York, Kentucky, and Colorado.

This astonishing drop in respect for persons and property is the direct result of a culture turned against itself. The grievance culture is literally eating away at the social fabric. Charges of racism are everywhere, the effect of which is to dilute serious expressions of it. Claiming victim status

is chic and pointing fingers is the latest fad.

This kind of cultural madness will continue until and unless political and cultural leaders insist on respect for human life and the heritage of Western civilization. Unfortunately, "The Summer of Hate" has a long way to go.

ASSOCIATED PRESS ANGRY CHURCH GOT PPP MONEY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an Associated Press story on the Catholic Church:

Everyone from Nancy Pelosi's husband to the Los Angeles Lakers has received money from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), but none of the individuals and organizations who have benefited from the congressional legislation angers the Associated Press (AP), except for the Catholic Church. It is livid that a dime went to pay for the Church.

AP did not do an investigation of Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, or Protestant houses of worship, or institutions affiliated with them. But it did probe the Catholic Church. Did the Church do anything illegal? No. Then what's the beef? It got too much money. It also doesn't like the fact that some of the money could be spent on lawsuits.

For instance, AP cites the "dramatic rise in recent clergy sex abuse claims," mentioning former cardinal Theodore McCarrick and the 2018 Pennsylvania grand jury report.

These journalists are embarrassing to their profession.

The sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church took place

between 1965 and 1985. The latest audit of clergy sexual abuse, released a few weeks ago, shows that there were 8 substantiated accusations made against a member of the clergy between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. Given that there are 49,972 clergy members, that means that .016 percent had a substantiated allegation made against them.

McCarrick is a disgrace but one man has nothing to do with the kind of hyperbole that the AP indulges in. The grand jury report was about priests who are mostly either dead or out of ministry.

What is perhaps most striking about the AP story is its disinterest in Hollywood law firms that received PPP money. Dozens of them did so. Maybe AP can find out how much money went to pay off the kids whom the celebrities raped.

The funds received by Catholic dioceses go to pay for an array of services, many of which are vital to the poor. To suggest otherwise is not only unfair, it is malicious.

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NYC AND CHICAGO MAYORS MUST GO

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how much the mayors of New York City and Chicago have in common:

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot share a similar record on their handling of violence, public health and religious liberty. Both are a

disgrace.

Over the 4th of July weekend, 19 persons died of COVID-19 in New York City. During that same period, 64 people were shot and 10 were killed. In Chicago, 9 persons died of the virus over those three days; 64 were wounded and 15 were murdered.

It is hard to know where the blame lies in deaths due to coronavirus, but it is not hard to know who bears responsibility for the violence. Both de Blasio and Lightfoot have made the police the enemy, and everyone knows it, especially the shooters.

When it comes to religious liberty, however, these two mayors sing a different tune. To be exact, they have gone out of their way to punish church-goers for not complying with their public health edicts. Worse, they have done nothing about the public health threat posed by protesters, many of whom were violent.

De Blasio not only endorsed the mobs that took to the streets, he gave them immunity from his contact-tracing mandate. New York employees charged with coronavirus contact-tracing were told that they could not ask anyone if he attended a protest. But they sure could ask if he went to church.

In other words, the mayor decided it was more important to guard the anonymity of someone who picked up COVID-19 while demonstrating side-by-side with thousands of others—in illegal marches—than it was to protect an innocent person from being infected by them.

Religious New Yorkers, however, were told to stay out of church, synagogue, mosque and other houses of worship. They were told they were a threat to public health. Then a federal district judge stepped in and put a temporary stop to de Blasio's game: He accused the mayor (and Gov. Andrew Cuomo) of sending "a clear message that mass protests are deserving of preferential treatment."

Like de Blasio, Lightfoot threw public health concerns to the wind by doing nothing to enforce social distancing among protesters. Church-goers, however, are another story. In May, she threw down the gauntlet. She pledged to fine any church that was open. "This is not playing Russian Roulette. This is playing with a gun that is fully loaded and cocked."

Sadly, real guns go off every weekend in her city, and she has done nothing about it. Blacks kill blacks by the dozens, turning Chicago streets into a bloodbath. Yet Lightfoot will not condemn the killers with the kind of incendiary language she uses against innocent church-goers.

De Blasio and Lightfoot are a threat to public health, public safety, and religious liberty. How much more must they do to their cities before their residents finally rise up and demand justice?

TWO BIG WINS FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on two Supreme Court decisions handed down today:

In the last week of its 2019-2020 term, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered two back-to-back victories for religious liberty; they were both 7-2 decisions. Catholic schools and agencies were the big winners.

The Supreme Court ruled in 2012 that religious schools enjoyed a "ministerial exception" that protected them from lawsuits brought by teachers whom the school said were ministers. Now it has strengthened that decision by holding that lawsuits

alleging employment discrimination—teachers at two Catholic schools claimed they were terminated for discriminatory reasons (age and disability)—are without merit.

“The religious education and formation of students is the very reason for the existence of most private religious schools,” wrote Justice Samuel Alito for the majority, “and therefore the selection and supervision of the teachers upon whom the schools rely to do this work lie at the core of their mission.”

The other case involved the right of the Trump administration to carve an exception for those with sincerely held moral or religious objections from complying with the Obamacare mandate that abortion-inducing drugs and contraception must be provided in all healthcare plans. The Trump administration and the Little Sisters of the Poor, a Catholic nonprofit entity, appealed to the high court to reverse an appeals court decision that denied the exemption.

Justice Clarence Thomas, who authored the court’s ruling, said the Trump administration “had the authority to provide exemptions from the regulatory contraceptive requirements for employees with religious and conscientious objections.”

These two victories, alongside the Supreme Court’s decision last week allowing Catholic schools to benefit from tuition-tax credit scholarship programs, will do much to safeguard the religious rights of Catholic institutions, as well as those of other religious organizations.

Contrary to the foes of religious liberty—and there are many seated in elite institutions—it is not religious entities that have been encroaching on the state; rather, it is the state that has been encroaching on religion.

It is high time that state operatives with an animus against religion, especially Catholicism, were put in their place. It can’t happen too often given their dogmatic zeal to destroy

the First Amendment provisions guaranteeing religious liberty.

POLL ON ABORTION IS BAD NEWS FOR BIDEN

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a Gallup poll on abortion that does not bode well for Joe Biden:

A new Gallup survey on abortion reveals that this is an issue that should worry Joe Biden. It found that 24% of Americans say that the candidate they will vote for must share their position on abortion. Significantly, this was true of 30% of those who are pro-life, but only 19% of those who are pro-abortion. Trump is pro-life and Biden is pro-abortion.

Independents, as compared to Republicans and Democrats, are more likely not to rate abortion as a threshold issue. But even here the news for Biden is not auspicious.

A CBS poll released last month found that 79% of Republicans and 33% of Democrats said abortion should be restricted or banned. For Independents, the figure was 58%. In other words, the majority of Independents do not share Biden's position that abortion should be unrestricted.

The key issue, of course, is whether abortion is the taking of an innocent human life or not. A study released in 2019 reported that 96% of 5,500 biologists surveyed said that life begins at fertilization. This is Trump's position as well. Biden says it is his too, but he adamantly refuses to endorse it as a matter of public policy.

"I'm prepared to accept at the moment of conception there's

human life and being,” Biden said in 2015, “but I’m not prepared to say that to other God-fearing, non-God-fearing people that have a different view.”

It is preposterous to say that the issue of when life begins can be dissolved to a mere “view.” Science does not take a “view” on this subject: it declares, on the basis of empirical evidence, that life begins at conception. Similarly, science offers proof—it is not a “view”—that the earth is round.

On the subject of abortion, Biden is on the wrong side of the public (including Independents), the wrong side of science, the wrong side of history, and the wrong side of morality.

ANTI-CATHOLICISM SPIKES IN CALIFORNIA

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the status of Catholicism in California:

Anti-Catholicism is sweeping California. Attacks on Catholic statues, public complaints about Catholics attending Mass, the selective enforcement of executive orders on religious gatherings, and politicians seeking to intimidate priests and bishops, are commonplace.

A mob of anti-Catholics celebrated the 4th of July by destroying a statue of St. Junípero Serra in Sacramento, the state’s capitol. The statue was set on fire and smashed with sledgehammers. Though Serra did more to defend the rights of Indians in the 18th century against Spanish colonizers than all the protesters have ever done for American Indians today, Serra is a demon. That is why statues of him were previously

destroyed in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

What's feeding this frenzy? Citing COVID-19 concerns, restrictive measures on religious gatherings have been mandated throughout the state. The tone has been set by politicians: There is one rule for people of faith and another for protesters. This has not been lost on the anti-Catholics. Protesters by the thousands, many of them violent, have been allowed to march in big cities across California—without a permit—as public health officials and politicians said nary a word.

According to the *New York Times*, 1,300 epidemiologists and health workers from across the nation recently signed a letter saying that those who protested stay-at-home orders were “rooted in white nationalism and run contrary to respect for Black Lives Matter.” But when it comes to the protesters, they said, “we do not condemn these gatherings as risky for Covid-19 transmission. We support them as vital to the national public health.”

The mayor of Sacramento, Darrell Steinberg, shares the same position. He said in late May that he supported the Sacramento City Council's refusal to impose a curfew after two nights of violence and looting. He contended that it would be useless to do so because “those who are perpetrating looting and violence would probably ignore the curfew anyway.” But in early April he said it may be permissible to have the police disperse church-goers if they assembled in prayer.

Meanwhile, public officials in San Francisco are now doing a headcount of Catholics attending Mass. The San Francisco city attorney, Dennis Herrera, says he has received complaints that more than 12 Catholics have been seen at a Mass. He sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Archdiocese of San Francisco ordering it to stop indoor religious services.

Herrera did not say whether he has done a headcount of

Protestants going to church, Jews going to synagogues, or Muslims going to mosques. But we do know that his office is fielding complaints from the public that one Catholic church actually held six Masses in one day! Why Herrera did not send in a SWAT team remains a puzzle.

We know who is contacting Herrera's office, and we know they are not public health fanatics. Moreover, we wouldn't be surprised to learn that some of them were among the 1,300 doctors and health care workers who signed the letter giving the protesters a pass while condemning everyone else who refused to abide by their highly politicized directives.

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TOPPLING RELIGIOUS STATUES IS VINTAGE LEFT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the destruction of religious statues:

The smashing of religious statues is all the rage. While the extent of the vandalism is new, the ideological forces that unleashed it started a generation ago.

If there is one date that marks the beginning of this crusade it is January 15, 1987. That was the day when Rev. Jesse Jackson marched with hundreds of protesters on the campus of Stanford University screaming, "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Western Civ has got to go." They were protesting a humanities program known as "Western Culture." The demonstrators insisted it must be shelved, claiming it lacked "diversity."

The multicultural assault on Western civilization has only gotten worse. Pope Benedict XVI noted that this politicization of higher education has led to "a peculiar Western self-hatred that is nothing short of pathological." Now it is in full throttle, and the results are in the street.

It is impossible to attack Western civilization without attacking its Judeo-Christian heritage. The Left knows this and it is this hatred that is animating its activism. The mob has been very busy as of late.

Shaun King wants all statues of Jesus and Mary taken down. Though this black activist does not teach at Harvard Law School, he has been granted office space there to promote his agenda. Jesus "and his European mother," as he likes to say, represent "a gross form of white supremacy." Ironically, King's birth certificate identifies his father as white, a fact that has not gone down well with his open-minded friends at Black Lives Matter.

Protesters in St. Louis don't like the city's namesake and want it removed (imagine if they lived in Corpus Christi!). Swastikas and anti-Catholic scribbling was found on the graves of several Dominican friars; their headstones are located on the campus of Providence College. Statues of Saint Junípero Serra, who championed Indian rights, have been smashed in several towns in California. The mob is also going after non-Catholics.

Salinas, California is mandating that an evangelical church sell its downtown property, arguing that it doesn't fit in with the town's new look. A memorial fountain in Santa Rosa dedicated to survivors of the Holocaust was partially destroyed a few weeks ago. A statue of Brigham Young was vandalized on the university campus that is named after the leader of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In Montana, a man attached a chain to his pickup truck and pulled down a Ten Commandments monument, leaving what was left of it

on the street.

The mob is comprised of nihilists. Unlike the Marxists of old, who had a blueprint for the future (flawed though it was), today's activists just want to tear down. Most of them cannot seriously endorse communism any more (though Black Lives Matter still does), and they cannot point to Eastern civilization as worthy of emulation. Having no ideology or cultural model to offer, they settle for destroying our Judeo-Christian heritage.

None of this is inevitable. It happens because, with few exceptions, our spineless elites are capitulating to their demands all across the country. Make no mistake about it, they would stand up to white supremacists (which they should), but they will not stand up to these left-wing anarchists. Many of these decision makers are simply cowards, but not all of them: some are literally cheering the nihilists on.

In a free society, if people don't police themselves, the police will do it for them. And if the police are enfeebled, the result is mob rule. There really aren't too many choices.