

MEDIA SPIN CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO PROTESTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how some media outlets are spinning the Catholic response to the protests:

Public trust in the media is abysmal, but not without reason. To cite the latest example of unprofessional journalism, consider how some media outlets, led by the Associated Press (AP) characterized the Catholic response to the recent protests. The story was picked up by many newspapers and broadcast news outlets.

Nicole Winfield and Elana Schor of AP wrote a piece titled, "Pope Sends Strong Message to US Catholics After Floyd Death." And what is that "strong message"? Not to vote for President Trump. This is a classic case of spinning a story to achieve a political end.

Referring to the protests, AP says that "the intensity and consistency of the Vatican's reaction suggests that, from the pope on down, it is seeking to encourage anti-racism protesters while making a clear statement about where American Catholics should stand ahead of President Donald Trump's bid for a second term in November."

This is a remarkable statement. The clear message is that Pope Francis has entered the presidential race for the White House, giving American Catholics his tacit endorsement of Joe Biden. So where is the evidence?

The reporters quote Anthea Butler saying that the pope "wants to send a very clear message to these conservative Catholics here who are pro-Trumpers that, 'Listen, this is just as much of an issue as abortion is.'"

Butler is a curious choice to ask for a comment. The Ivy League professor is on record saying that “God is a white racist.” If that is her opinion, why would anyone care what she has to say about the pope? Wouldn’t he, the Vicar of Christ on earth, qualify, by extension, as a “white racist” too?

More important, why didn’t the AP reporters simply quote something the pope said that would verify their unsupported thesis?

Winfield and Schor continue by saying “Francis and the Vatican have seized on [George] Floyd’s killing” and that this “suggests a coordinated strategy.” To this end they quote a church historian, Alberto Melloni, who contends, “It’s not like seven people had the same type of reaction” by chance. This, of course, is pure conjecture. He offered no evidence of a “coordinated strategy.”

The reporters cite the pope and others who have condemned racism, saying it is a “life” issue, one that conservative Catholics, “for whom the abortion issue is paramount,” need to acknowledge. But they do. So there is nothing to this.

All Catholics, regardless of their political leanings, recognize that abortion and racism are “intrinsically evil.” Indeed, that was the way the U.S. bishops framed these two issues in their document, “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.” No conservative Catholic has criticized them for doing so.

Proof that there is nothing inherently liberal or conservative about condemning racism can be found by reading the dozens of statements by U.S. bishops on the subject. St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop Bernard Hebda was first to respond on May 27. Two days later, seven bishops chairmen of committees of the bishops’ conference issued a statement. This was followed on May 31 in an eloquent address by Archbishop José

Gomez of Los Angeles and president of the bishops' conference. All condemned racism and violence.

Washington D.C. Archbishop Wilton Gregory is mentioned for his criticism of officials at the St. John Paul II National Shrine who allowed President Trump and his wife to visit there. The event was planned in advance and the site was chosen as an appropriate venue to promote international religious liberty. Yes, it seems clear that Gregory does not like the president, but to suggest that this is part of a "coordinated strategy" is without foundation. Who else followed suit? No one.

The AP journalists also mention that the pope phoned Texas Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso to congratulate him for his role in protesting racism. This happened on June 3rd, the same day Pope Francis made an address where he condemned both racism and violent protests. Seitz said the pope never mentioned the demonstration. More important, what the AP story did not say is critical. Seitz did not join with radicals: he participated in a prayer vigil, kneeling in a park, with priests from his diocese.

Cardinal Kevin Farrell is cited in the AP story for his comments decrying racism. Too bad the reporters didn't quote his remark denouncing attempts to politicize the reaction to the killing of Floyd. The Catholic Church, he said, "does not want to take one side against another." If we do, he maintained, "We end up identifying our Christian faith with the ideological vision of the side we have embraced." Well said.

It is one thing for someone like Joe Scarborough to put words into the mouth of the Holy Father by saying, "The pope is telling him [Trump] to cut it out." That is what this man does for a living—he spins the truth. It is quite another for AP reporters to mislead the public.

MAKING SENSE OF THE ACLU'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Bill Donohue

The ACLU's first response to COVID-19, issued March 2, stated that "individual rights must sometimes give way to the greater good." It argued that "people can sometimes be deprived of their liberty through quarantine," noting "this is how it should be."

This is not an indefensible position. But it is strange coming from an organization that has consistently rejected the need to balance individual rights with the common good. Roger Baldwin, the founder of the ACLU, said he would not serve on a jury because he did not want to be part of convicting anyone. When I asked him how society could function without punishing offenders, he answered, "That's your problem."

The ACLU's interest in protecting the public health is also new. In the 1980s, it passed a policy against state laws that criminalized the intentional transmission of AIDS to an innocent unsuspecting person. When I asked one of its officials, Gara LaMarche, to explain, all he could say was "homosexuals have rights."

If the public health is now a concern for the ACLU, it should have called for an independent investigation of New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's March 25 order sending hospitalized nursing home patients with the virus back to their residence; AP estimates that his edict resulted in the deaths of 4,500 patients. The ACLU has said nothing. Indeed, its New York affiliate commended him for leading a "valiant effort to protect New Yorkers from the coronavirus. His actions have

undoubtedly saved lives.” It was referring to his release of prisoners, not his treatment of nursing home patients.

One might expect that the health-conscious ACLU would support President Trump’s ban on travel from China, but instead it opposed it. “These measures are extraordinary incursions on liberty and fly in the face of considerable evidence that travel bans and quarantines can do more harm than good.” Yet when it came to the internment of 110,000 Japanese Americans during World War II—that surely represented “extraordinary incursions on liberty”—the national office supported it (the Northern California affiliate did not).

If ever there was a government ruling that the ACLU might be expected to oppose it would be the stay-at-home orders issued by governors. But it did not. The ACLU of Minnesota said that “measures like this have overwhelming support from public health experts trying to protect our collective well-being during this unparalleled crisis.” When the Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down the governor’s extension of a stay-at-home order, the Wisconsin affiliate condemned the court for ignoring health warnings, thus “jeopardizing the health of all Wisconsinites.”

The one exception to the stay-at-home measures it supported was when protesters took to the streets following the death of George Floyd. That was okay, even though thousands of people were jammed together in tight quarters, clearly violating the ACLU’s demand for social distancing. All of a sudden, public health considerations were shelved. Never once did it condemn the destruction of property or the looting. It saved its anger for the police.

“Snitch patrols” in New York City and Los Angeles have been authorized by their mayors: they urge residents to turn in anyone who violates social distancing rules by calling a government hotline. The New York mayor even ordered the police to arrest swimmers. “Anyone tries to get in the water,” said

Bill de Blasio, “they’ll be taken right out of the water.” The ACLU has said not a word.

Illegal aliens and prisoners have occupied much of the ACLU’s resources during this time. Its second statement on the virus called on the Trump administration not to enforce immigration laws. This was quickly followed with a call to release “vulnerable people from immigrant detention, jails, and prisons.” It sued California Gov. Gavin Newsom for not reducing the population in all of these facilities. In states throughout the nation, it based its position on social distancing needs—not public safety—and even developed its own epidemiological model to project the death toll in jails.

While some of these measures are novel, at bottom they are consistent with the ACLU’s policies on prisons. In 1972, it launched the National Prison Project, dedicated to strengthening the rights of prisoners. This initiative was sparked by University of Virginia professor and ACLU operative Philip Hirschkop. Three years earlier he co-authored an article, “The Unconstitutionality of Prison Life”; the title accurately conveyed his goal and that of the ACLU as well.

In the 1980s, the ACLU made its first foray into economic rights. It stunned traditional civil libertarians who considered this an egalitarian social justice matter, not a civil liberties issue. So it was hardly surprising that its response to coronavirus would include a demand for paid leave, singling out McDonald’s workers as a victimized group.

On moral issues, the ACLU sued Arkansas to keep abortion services ongoing during the pandemic. Paradoxically, it said that incarcerated pregnant women should not only be released from prisons and jails, they should be “prioritized for release.” It never explained why these women were entitled to preferential treatment.

When the ACLU was founded in 1920, it listed among its ten

objectives every right encoded in the First Amendment except for the free exercise of religion. So it was only fitting to learn that executive director Anthony Romero told a reporter that he rejected every request to open up churches. Yet when the New York affiliate learned that Cuomo allowed for gatherings of up to 10 people for religious services and Memorial Day celebrations, it sued on behalf of a protester, citing preference for people of faith and veterans. Religious liberty was conveniently used as leverage, not as a right worth defending.

The ACLU's selective departure from traditional civil libertarian policies is a reflection of its origins. The popular notion that the ACLU was founded as a non-partisan defender of individual rights is pure myth.

When the *American Mercury* published a critical article on the ACLU in 1936, it threatened a libel suit. After an initial dustup, both sides agreed to have H.L. Mencken render a judgment. He decided there was nothing libelous about it. The free speech champions instantly branded him a fascist.

The ACLU was founded to defend the rights of labor, not free speech. It was so far left that it supported Stalin's totalitarian regime. Baldwin even admitted that "Communism is the goal." Big government was never a problem.

After moving to the center in the 1940s and 1950s, the ACLU turned left again. More recently, under Romero, it has condemned the free speech rights of board members who publicly disagree with its policies and has kept files on contrarian officials, seeking to purge dissidents. Principled civil libertarians such as Alan Dershowitz, Michael Myers and Wendy Kaminer have thrown in the towel. The late Nat Hentoff was also incensed.

If we add to the ACLU's left-wing agenda its almost hysterical hatred of President Trump, its COVID-19 policies make a great

deal of sense.

HBO PULLS “GONE WITH THE WIND” BUT KEEPS MAHER

Catholic League president Bill Donohue and Rabbi Aryeh Spero, president of the Conference of Jewish Affairs, issued the following joint statement today on HBO’s duplicity:

The corporate boys are so anxious to prove that they are not racists that they are flexing their moralistic muscles beyond recognition.

WarnerMedia, which is owned by AT&T, has said that it will pull “Gone With the Wind” from its HBO Max package. It objects to the film’s “racist depictions.”

It is too bad HBO is not opposed to “anti-Catholic depictions” as well. If it were, it would have shut down Bill Maher’s HBO show years ago (just type his name into the search engine of the Catholic League for scores of examples). Indeed, Maher has even welcomed known anti-Semites on his show, such as Rep. Ihan Omar; he defended her against charges of bigotry.

We call on everyone to ask WarnerMedia to treat Catholics and Jews the same way it treats African Americans. It can begin by insisting that Maher stop with his bigoted commentaries. To object to “Gone With the Wind” but not Bill Maher is illogical and indefensible.

WarnerMedia needs to condemn *all expressions of bigotry*, not just some.

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CATHOLIC SENSIBILITIES MATTER

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Seth Meyers:

Seth Meyers likes to tell his nightly viewers how indignant he is about bigotry. Recently he has been railing, night after night, about police brutality, professing his allegiance to racial justice and racial equality.

The man is a phony. While condemning some forms of bigotry, he promotes other expressions of it.

Last night, Meyers spoke about the end of the stay-at-home mandates and the opening up of the economy. After admitting that "I'm not even Catholic," he joked about priests performing a baptism, closing with, "maybe when this is all over priests should, you know, still keep that 6-foot distance. I don't know, maybe it could be a win-win."

Meyers also lashed out this week against the "privileged and the powerful." That would certainly include him. As a member of the pampered class, the deep-seated bigotry he embodies is something he attributes to others. He is a classic case of a totally insincere opponent of bigotry. No one should take him seriously until he condemns religious bigotry the way he condemns racial bigotry.

Catholic sensibilities matter.

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CRITICS OBJECT TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY GAINS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on critics of recent gains in religious liberty:

Three law professors, one from Cornell, Nelson Tebbe, and two from the University of Virginia, Micah Schwartzman and Richard Schragger, wrote an article in the June 8 edition of the *New York Times* decrying the “quiet demise of the already ailing separation of church and state.”

This is a false alarm. The proximate cause of their worry is the distribution of federal funds to religious bodies authorized by the Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

The professors contend that the establishment clause of the First Amendment “has long been thought to prohibit direct government support for religion.” Their evidence? Madison’s opposition to public funds allotted for clergy salaries, Jefferson’s hostility to public monies for religion (as stated in 1785), and a 1947 Supreme Court decision barring funds for religious purposes.

In fact, we have a long history of direct government support for religion. For instance, we have had paid chaplains in the House and Senate since the beginning of the Republic.

Madison, who wrote the First Amendment, explicitly said that the establishment clause meant that the federal government could not establish a national church and could not show favoritism of one religion over another. Furthermore, his 1785 *Memorial and Remonstrance* was simply an argument against the

government granting tax support for only one religion.

Jefferson's perspective on religion was mixed, but he certainly had no problem, as president, giving the Kaskaskias Indians \$300 worth of federal funds to build a Catholic church. The "separation of church and state" professors would be aghast at a dime for a Catholic school playground.

The 1947 Supreme Court decision, *Everson v. Board of Education*, was a controversial 5-4 ruling that applied the establishment clause to the states—this was unprecedented—holding that public funds could be spent on public transportation in New Jersey for private religious schools (almost all were Catholic), but not much more. Writing for the majority was Justice Hugo Black, a former member of the Ku Klux Klan who openly expressed his hatred for Catholicism. The erudite professors failed to mention this inconvenient fact.

Enter the Small Business Administration (SBA). It made it clear that religious institutions would not be discriminated against in the PPP. It expressly said that "faith-based organizations are eligible to receive SBA loans regardless of whether they provide secular social services." It also said that "loans under the program can be used to pay the salaries of ministers and other staff engaged in the religious mission of institutions."

The SBA's PPP was included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. It was unanimously passed in the Senate and was approved via a voice vote, without opposition, in the House.

In other words, the Trump administration's efforts (the SBA ruling), together with the legislation passed by the Congress (the CARES Act), put these two branches of government on the same page, almost unheard of these days. They clearly enhanced religious liberty, without leading to the "quiet demise" of

the First Amendment's religious liberty protections. False alarms do no one any good.

WHITE LIBERALS NEED TO PONY UP

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how white liberals are responding to the protests:

It is fascinating to see how white liberals are responding to the protests and the quest for racial equality. They are long on sermons but short on remedies, though that doesn't mean they have nothing to say. They do. It's just that their ideas are either tired or amount to nothing more than grandstanding. Their intellectual universe is small, as well as silly.

On June 5, the Human Rights Campaign, which is a pro-homosexual organization, decided to jump on the racial justice bandwagon—even though this issue has nothing to do with its mission—by enlisting “more than 100 prominent faith leaders” condemning President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence.

They did a really good job of that, but unfortunately the one thing this crowd lacked was diversity: almost all the signatories (most of whom no one ever heard of) were mainline Protestants. There were two nuns, two rabbis, one Mormon and one Muslim. There is greater diversity in a laundromat.

What is their plan of action? They don't have one. They said they will do “everything in our power for the defense of Black lives.” That was it.

Ben & Jerry's sells ice cream. It also sells the idea that we are a racist society. Here's what it wants to do about it: 1) the president must disavow white supremacy (not Antifa) 2) we need a commission to study slavery and segregation 3) we need a national task force to end racial violence 4) we need to reinvigorate the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

More declarations, more commissions, more studies, more laws—that's the totality of their plan of action. They forgot to add workshops and break-out sessions. They accomplish a lot.

McDonald's sells hamburgers. Last week it also sold the idea that white people are promoting the "systemic oppression" of black people. It knows something about this subject. In January of this year it was sued by black executives over "systematic" racial discrimination.

Sr. Joan Chittister is one liberal who does have an action plan. "Every family, every white person in the country, needs to reach out and make a black friend." What if that black person is pro-Trump? Would he count?

Kirsten Powers is suffering from the pangs of white guilt. Her prescription for racial justice is for every white person—they are *all* racists—to repent. She gets the ball rolling. "I'll start: I repent for my lack of action. I repent for my lack of urgency. I repent for not listening more. I repent for lacking humility." Instead of repenting for "my lack of action," she should tell us exactly what actions she will now take. She never does, settling for breast beating.

Powers is not alone in professing her sins in public. In Bethesda, Maryland a huge crowd of white people, mostly young women, recently fell to their knees in an outdoor ceremony purging themselves of their "white privileged" status. On command, they said in unison such things as, "I will use my

voice in the most uplifting way possible,” and “And do everything in my power to educate my community.”

This was nothing more than a grand display of self-righteousness. These rich white people—only the wealthy live in Bethesda—feel morally superior to the rest of us. Their meaningless public gestures do absolutely nothing to improve the conditions of blacks. It’s all about them.

White liberals have created many of the problems facing African Americans. It was they who promoted the welfare state in the 1960s—at a time of declining unemployment and poverty—inviting fathers to abandon their families. It is they who condemn black families to inner-city public schools and work against school choice. It is they who want to disable the police force and empty the jails, allowing crime to spike in black neighborhoods.

No one should take white liberals seriously unless they have some skin in the game. They should begin by liquidating their assets, selling their investments and emptying their bank accounts. Then they should “make a black friend” by giving their money to minority-owned business owners whose stores have been destroyed by white terrorists in the name of racial equality. It’s time for them to pony up and stop with the moralizing

PROTESTS, NOT RELIGIOUS SERVICES, OKAY IN NYC

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on what is allowed and not allowed in New York City during coronavirus:

“Anyone who tries to get in the water, they’ll be taken right out of the water.” That’s what New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio recently said about his corona virus policy. Who will take them out of the ocean? The cops. Can there be beach parties? Not unless everyone is at least six feet away from each other. If they are not, the cops will get them as well.

What if the beach-goers swell to the thousands and take to the streets, standing arm-in-arm, to protest racial injustice? Is that okay? Yes. Shouldn’t the cops enforce social distancing? No, not at all. What if the protesters get violent? No problem, the cops will go easy.

What if, instead of protesting, a very small group of people want to go to a church, synagogue, mosque, or temple? They don’t want to protest, just pray. They pledge to stay six feet apart. They promise not to engage in violence. Can they do so? No.

This is the mentality of Bill de Blasio, formerly known as Warren de Blasio-Wilhelm, and before that Warren Wilhelm, Jr. His inconsistent identity is not typical of his policies. He is very consistent there.

When a reporter for a Jewish newspaper asked him how he can justify throngs taking to the streets in a mass assembly, but cannot approve of a small church service, he got indignant. “Four hundred years of American racism, I’m sorry, that is not the same question as the understandably aggrieved store owner or the devout religious person who wants to go back to services.”

In other words, de Blasio decided to “privilege” protesters, many of whom suffer the pangs of “white privilege” (it is not the sons and daughters of the working class who are trashing the city), all because he thinks that protesting racism justifies jettisoning his shutdown.

What if the object of the protest was his racism? He has

repeatedly promoted policies that discriminate against Asian Americans by denying them their earned seats in New York's elite public schools. He likes racial quotas. His contempt for these "people of color" surely merits a protest. Would he allow it?

Would he allow black and Hispanic parents to protest his racism? Many minorities want school choice, and they overwhelmingly favor charter schools. Private, parochial, and charter public schools are doing more to promote upward social mobility than the public schools ever have. Why does he always seek to deny black and brown New Yorkers the same avenue to success that white rich people have? Would he give the green light to a protest against his racially discriminatory policies?

As for religious services, we know where his heart is. This is a man who raised money for the communists in Nicaragua when he was young, and traveled, illegally, to Castro's Cuba for his honeymoon, lying to his own children about where it took place (he told them it was in Canada). This is not the biography of a man of faith.

De Blasio boycotted the St. Patrick's Day Parade for years because he did not like the house rules for marching, and refused to criticize the owner of the Empire State Building for refusing to light the towers in blue and white in honor of Mother Teresa's centenary. More recently, he lashed out at Rev. Franklin Graham—who brought medical staff to Central Park to attend to coronavirus patients—because the minister thinks marriage should be between a man and a woman.

This is the profile of an extremist. He throws the health of New Yorkers overboard to allow for a jammed protest he likes, and then invokes his health edict to ban people of faith from attending their house of worship. No wonder he is increasingly viewed with contempt.

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SCURRILOUS ATTACKS ON BISHOP DIMARZIO

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on accusations against Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio:

Cardinal George Pell of Australia was recently acquitted of sexually abusing minors, accusations that were totally without foundation from the beginning. In this country, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio is now being accused, for the second time, of abusing a minor. In the end, the smart money is on these charges being found as bogus as the ones against Pell.

Last November, attorney Mitchell Garabedian made a big public splash when he said he was going to file suit against DiMarzio for abusing Mark Matzek in the 1970s. But he never did. It was all for show: His goal was to smear DiMarzio's good reputation. Now Garabedian—whom I have dealt with and found to be unethical—claims he has found another victim, Samier Tadros.

Bishop DiMarzio categorically denies both accusations and his lawyer, Joseph Hayden, says, "We have uncovered conclusive evidence of Bishop DiMarzio's innocence." No lawyer, aside from those like Garabedian, would put his name on the line with such an unequivocal statement unless he knew his case was a slam dunk.

Some things just don't add up. Why would anyone wait a half century to bring a lawsuit? How is it possible that the

parents of these boys never knew about it—Tadros says the abuse started when he was 6 years old and happened “repeatedly”—especially given its alleged serial nature?

The Associated Press broke this latest story. What makes this interesting is that Garabedian chose Michael Rezendes of AP to go public. The two men are from Boston, and know each other well. Rezendes was a reporter who worked on the “Spotlight” team of the *Boston Globe* that found wrongdoing in the Boston archdiocese, and Garabedian’s role in it was featured in the movie by the same name; he was played by Stanley Tucci.

Rezendes showed his true colors by citing, as authoritative, the *National Catholic Reporter*. He called it “an independent Catholic newspaper.” In fact, the only thing independent about it is its independence from the teachings of the Catholic Church. Worse, its attack on the Church’s teachings on sexuality helped to foment the sexual abuse crisis that Rezendes covered.

Rezendes then offers a quote from BishopAccountability, a website known for leaving the names of accused priests found innocent on its list of accused priests. It has also smeared Cardinal Timothy Dolan, and has never accepted my challenge to provide evidence that he was hiding dozens of molesting priests.

Bishop DiMarzio is being singled out because he has fought unjust legislation that was targeted at the Catholic Church, bills that allowed the public schools to get off scot-free. New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey, who represented a district in the Brooklyn diocese, was the one who pushed for a suspension of the statute of limitations for sexual abuse crimes, permitting a free ride to the public sector.

In 2016, this former office holder accused DiMarzio of offering her a \$5,000 bribe. But it was all a lie. She admitted she was wrong about the date of their meeting—by

three years—and wrong about the venue. She was also wrong about her accusation, which was undercut by witnesses at the meeting.

There are some very vicious people out to destroy Bishop DiMarzio. He is a good man who has given his life to the Catholic Church.

The Catholic League was right about Cardinal Pell and we will be proven right about Bishop DiMarzio. Let him know of your support.

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BIGOTRY FLARES AMIDST PROTEST

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a rash of anti-Christian assaults:

We have the coronavirus pandemic going on at the same time as rioting in the streets of urban America. Though churches had absolutely nothing to do with the killing of George Floyd, they have been targeted by thugs. Anti-Catholic remarks have also aired on TV.

St. John Episcopal Church, across the street from the White House, was set on fire, as was the Catholic Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. Churches were vandalized near the University of Mississippi, and the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Denver was also trashed. St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia, had obscene words inscribed on

its exterior and on its sidewalk, respectively. Windows were smashed in Dallas at St. Jude Chapel, and at the Cathedral of the Assumption in Louisville.

Bill Maher, whose bigotry against priests is pathological, told his sick fans a “joke” about a priest who put children in danger because he was seen walking “within 500 feet of a school.”

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HYPING POLICE BRUTALITY IS A CRIME

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on police brutality:

No one supports police brutality, and when it occurs it must be punished. But listening to media reports recently, the impression being given is that it is a regular occurrence. This is false, malicious, and dangerous.

A few days ago, the *New York Times* ran a piece on two concurrent crises facing the nation: coronavirus and “police violence.” Similarly, news reports are constantly talking about the problem with “the police.”

We have approximately 900,000 police officers in the United States. One of them, Derek Chauvin, indefensibly killed George Floyd. This innocent black man was not killed, as Yahoo News said, by “Minneapolis police.” He was killed by a Minneapolis policeman. That is not a small difference.

If it is wrong, indeed, bigoted, to make sweeping generalizations about minority groups—condemning all for the deeds of a few—it must be equally wrong to make sweeping generalizations about the police. It is also bigoted.

In most of the big cities, minorities are the majority of the police force. Their color is blue, not white, black, or brown. They deserve the same exemption from collective condemnations afforded every race and ethnic group. Instead, important segments in education, the media, and the entertainment industry generalize from the individual to the collective.

We all know about the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014. What many remember is that a racist cop killed him. The public perception is seriously flawed.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) under the Obama administration conducted two investigations into this matter. It concluded that the police officer, Darren Wilson, was telling the truth and that he acted in self defense. Many of the witnesses appeared to have lied.

Jonathan Capehart, an opinion writer for the *Washington Post*, read the DOJ reports and concluded that they “forced me to deal with two uncomfortable truths: Brown never surrendered with his hands up, and Wilson was justified in shooting Brown.” Capehart is black.

In 2016, Roland G. Fryer Jr., an economics professor at Harvard University, addressed the results of a large-scale study on the extent of racial bias in police shootings. He and a team of researchers spent 3,000 hours collecting data for a paper prepared for the National Bureau of Economic Research. They examined more than 1,000 shootings in 10 major police departments in Texas, Florida and California.

“On the most extreme use of force—officer-involved shootings—we find no racial differences in either the raw data or when contextual factors are taken into account,” he said.

"It is the most surprising result of my career." Fryer is black.

Researchers from Michigan State University and Arizona State University published a paper in 2019 (it appeared online in 2018) titled, "Is There Evidence of Racial Disparity in Police Use of Deadly Force?" They collected data for a two-year period, 2015 and 2016. "When adjusting for crime, we find no systemic evidence of anti-Black disparities in fatal shootings, fatal shootings of unarmed citizens, or fatal shootings involving misidentification of harmless objects."

Larry Elder offered his thoughts on the paper's findings. "A new study on racial disparities in police conduct found that differences in offending by suspects, not racism, explains officers' responses." Reflecting on the larger issue of black crime, he said, "The No. 1 cause of preventable death for young black men is homicide [for young white men it is accidents], usually committed by another young black man, not a cop." Elder is black.

We have an entire generation of young people growing up believing that police brutality is a regular occurrence. They are being fed a false narrative in the colleges and universities, one that is further amplified by the media. This is poisoning the public mind and is grossly unfair to the police. Hyping police brutality is a crime.