

## BULLETIN -- AUGUST 27

**Your agenda are showing.** That's because "agenda" are plural. The Latin word simply means "things to do," or "things to accomplish." In English, we usually tend to make the word "agenda" singular, meaning a whole list of to-do's. And in the case of the media (also a plural noun), it appears that there are indeed many things they wish to accomplish.

During the previous administration, it seemed that the media had anointed themselves as the presidential cheering section. Even when the President spoke more like the Community-Organizer-in-Chief than the head of the executive branch, there was rarely an editorial word of criticism from the mainstream TV or newspaper outlets. On September 11, 2012, there was an attack on the U.S. compound in Benghazi, Libya, resulting in the death of our ambassador and others with him. When the President and his Secretary of State felt the need to conceal the truth regarding the attack, they blamed it on a video, *Innocence of Muslims*, and claimed that it was responsible for inciting the killers to violence. Within a couple weeks, federal authorities had arrested and imprisoned the Coptic Christian man, an Egyptian immigrant, whom they blamed for making the video. Although he indeed was guilty of parole violations, it was subsequently shown that the video had absolutely no effect on inciting anything; and probably would never have been the object of *anyone's* attention had it not been used to conveniently construct a story out of whole cloth. Yet the administration continued to parade that story before the media, before Congress, and before the grieving families of those murdered, long after it became apparent that there was no substance to it. Not a critical word from the media.

During the most recent presidential campaign, there were ongoing investigations that focused on the credibility of the candidate who was the decided favorite of the media. Even during the one-on-one debates, there were reports that certain of the questions had been fed in advance to the media candidate. No one in the media bothered to even investigate or counter that story, so sure were they of the outcome of the election. And then came election night.

My theory is that the difficulties with the media which have become a chronic feature of the current presidency are the responsibility of both parties. The media and their minions continue to be so enraged that they got the election outcome so wrong, that there is *nothing* the current President can ever say or do which will not be reported in the worst possible light. When you decide to hate someone with your whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, that person easily becomes the focus of all evil. Reading column after column of so-called "objective" (or is it "obsessive"?) journalism since November, I am convinced of the truth of the saying, "What you say about others often tells more about *you* than it does about *them*."

On the other hand, the penchant of the Chief Executive to not let a sling or arrow pass without graphically drawing attention to it and attempting a retort is a distraction from the business of government. The recent allegation that all who work for or even voted for the President must either renounce and reject him and call for his removal or stand guilty of racism is sheer theatrics. Those businessmen who resigned from White House advisory councils are playing CYA, hoodwinked by the frantic chatter of the current news cycle. The economy, the accusations of collusion with Russia, the nuclear

threats from North Korea, all were instantly forgotten when the media decide to pounce on yet another opportunity to work to dethrone someone THEY did not elect. What a country! And, could one say, what a lack of character! “On many sides.”

What should be our response? I think the most helpful thing we all can do at this point is to turn the rhetoric and emotion down and GET BACK TO WORK. Realize that the media have an agenda, and it’s not only to bring you the news. This generation of journalists, like many of their colleagues in other fields, seems to have a need to convince everyone to adopt their way of seeing things. And if we don’t? Well, we must hate them. That’s the only possible answer to why people might disagree with us. Forget history (we have), disparage other opinions (we do), and continue to insist that we each have our own truth (we will), as much as that last part cancels out the other two. It’s a bland, horrible world toward which the media and their allies are leading us -- a world where abortion eliminates the unborn; world leaders model childlessness (see next item); and euthanasia eliminates the elderly, the infirm, and the inconvenient. No wonder Muslims see it as ripe for the picking. So, again we say, GET BACK TO WORK. And GET BACK TO FAITH. St. Benedict had it right, and still does: *Ora et labora!* (“Pray and work!”) Both are indispensable for what we have to do together.

**A childless Christian Europe.** You might have read about the demographics of the disappearing European peoples. Most of Europe’s countries are no longer reproducing themselves, and a few have already reached the point of no return. Think of it: no more Hansel and Gretel, no more Heidi -- only the children of Hamelin, following an angered Pied Piper into the unknown depths of a mountain, never to be seen again. How Europeans got there is not a mystery--they almost all thumbed their collective noses at Blessed Pope Paul VI and *Humanae Vitae*, and swallowed The Pill which guaranteed them unlimited sexual license without the bother of “fearing” pregnancy. And now they’re just biding their time, growing old with their pets till the doctor comes in to administer the fatal injection. And apparently most of them have no problem with this.

The current leadership of Europe both personifies and mirrors this “death of a civilization.” What do the present leaders of England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Romania, Scotland, Sweden, and Switzerland have in common? Among the 13 of them, no children! No wonder the specter of what lies ahead for Europe seems to mean so little to some of them. No wonder President Erdogan of Turkey has encouraged Turkish families to have five children. No wonder Islamic imams are urging the faithful to breed children to conquer Europe. All they’ll have to do is move in, and of course, they are. The European countries are collapsing: without population, having forsaken their Christian values, and abandoning their own cultures. What will they have to pass on to future generations? Oh, whoops, that’s right. Fuhgeddaboutit.

**Thank you** for your continuing generosity in making your gifts and fulfilling your pledges to the 2017-18 Catholic Services Appeal. We have received a check for **\$5,078.33** from the Diocese to use in our own parish apostolates. This means that once again, we have surpassed our target and can put your charity to work right here at SS. Peter & Paul in our worship and in works of Christian service, Catholic education, and religious training. God bless you!

Fr. Den

**Thought for the week:** If you take pride in being able to immediately identify the biggest jerk in the room at any gathering or meeting, it's probably you.