

The Catholic Church's Saving Grace: Illegal Aliens

BY DAVE GIBSON

As countless child sex abuse scandals have rocked the Catholic Church over the last several years, American families have been leaving the church in droves. As American men and women whisk away their children from the potential risk of molestation in the Catholic Church, they also take their much needed money. The coffers of U.S. Catholic churches have been running on empty and the church sees the pocketbooks of illegal immigrants as its only hope.

During Pope Benedict XVI's 2008 visit to the United States, he gave many speeches and sermons. Among other things, the Pope admonished Americans to adopt a welcoming attitude toward those who break our laws by entering this country illegally.

Benedict said:

I want to encourage you and your communities to continue to welcome the immigrants who join your ranks today, to share their joys and hopes, to support them in their sorrows and trials and to help them flourish in their new home.

Aiding and abetting

In 2009, it was discovered that the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, a Vatican-based group, which answers directly to the Pope, has made a large donation to help build a shelter for Central Americans on their illegal journey to the United States. The money was given to the Brothers On The Path refuge, located in the Mexican city of Ixtepec.

Between 2005 and 2007, the number of Central American nationals caught by the Border Patrol entering the U.S. illegally has averaged 11 percent of their total apprehensions. While the majority of the 875,000 caught sneaking across the border annually are Mexi-

cans, those coming from countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador are adding to the incredible burden placed on our Border Patrol agents.

Along with the usual problems posed by illegal immigration, a particularly violent gang known as MS-13 hails from El Salvador, but now has many Honduran and Guatemalan members as well. In addition to other parts of the country, MS-13 has been gaining a large presence in Northern Virginia, and Maryland, and is responsible for several machete attacks in the area. In 2005, an Alexandria teenager lost four fingers during a savage encounter with MS-13 members, and a Fairfax man also became a victim of an MS-13 machete attack.

In June 2005, Los Angeles Cardinal Roger Mahony wrote an op-ed piece for the *Los Angeles Times* in which he defended and even encouraged illegal aliens to enter this country. Of course, Mexicans and other Latin Americans are overwhelmingly devout Catholics. Mahony along with the rest of the church's hierarchy is undoubtedly anxious to tap this potential source of income.

In 2006, *Cardinal Mahony directed all priests in his 288 parish archdiocese to simply ignore any federal law which requires anyone working on behalf of the church to inquire into the citizenship of anyone seeking help* (the Catholic church offers assistance to illegal aliens applying for various welfare programs). The directive was given by Mahony in response to the immigration bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in December 2005, which mandated the prosecution of anyone who knowingly aided an illegal alien.

Was the church responsible for killing one of their own?

On August 1, 2010, Prince William County police arrested Carlos A. Martinelly Montano, 24, after he slammed head on into a car in which three Benedictine nuns were traveling. While Sister Denise Mosier was killed instantly, her two companions were taken by helicopter to the hospital with serious injuries.

Sister Charlotte Lange had a metal plate inserted into her right leg and Sister Connie Ruth Lupton spent four months in the hospital, with 14 broken bones.

Dave Gibson, a former legislative aide to a Virginia state senator, has been working as a freelance writer for many years. His work has been published in many newspapers and magazines, including the Washington Times.

As a result of the case, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles no longer accepts federal work authorization cards as proof of legal residence, which is how Martinelly Montano obtained a driver's license even though he was in the middle of deportation proceedings.

Also, in August 2011, Prince William County sued the Department of Homeland Security in an effort to discover what action (if any) the federal agency had taken against the more than 4,000 illegal aliens the county had turned over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for deportation.

The measure was taken after Prince William County police began noticing that the illegal aliens they arrested for various crimes and then turned over to ICE, kept showing up in their jail.

What follows is a list of a of few Montano's offenses:

- April 2009...he was arrested for driving without a license and convicted in June.
- October 2008...he was stopped for driving 55 in a 35 mph zone, and was found to have a .17 blood alcohol level. Montano was sentenced to three years probation and his driver's license was suspended.
- December 2007...he was arrested for being drunk in public.
- July 2007...he was charged with DUI and convicted later that same year.

Though ICE ordered Montano to be deported in March 2009, he continued to have run-ins with the law, and remained free.

According to spokesman Jonathan Perok, *Prince William County Police notified ICE after both his first and second DUI arrests.*

In 2010, Corey Stewart, chairman of the Prince William Board of Supervisors, issued the following statement on the case:

"The despicable thing is that this criminal was ... handed over to ICE twice, and released by ICE twice. He's gone out and killed a nun. That's a perfect example of what's wrong with immigration enforcement in this country. The blame is on representatives in Congress for being so flaccid on the issue, and they continue not to fund the deportation of illegal immigrants in this country."

In an ironic twist of fate, at the time of the fatal wreck, Montano was actually being defended by Hogar Immigrant Services, a division of Catholic Charities in the Arlington Diocese.

In February 2012, Prince William County Circuit Court Judge Lon Farris sentenced Martinelly Montano to 20 years in prison for the murder of Sister Denise, as

well as for a host of other charges. The Bolivian national could have received up to 70 years behind bars.

Pedophile Priests

For decades, the Catholic Church shielded and protected child-molesting priests. As complaints would come pouring in from parents threatening to involve the police, the church would simply ship the offending priests off on sabbatical, eventually pawning them off on another unsuspecting parish where the process would begin anew.

Of course, that practice is nothing more than aiding and abetting known criminals, and the enormous toll of lives destroyed by this disgusting and cowardly exercise by the Catholic Church will never be fully known.

The Catholic Church has been forced to pay out millions to the victims of pedophile priests. Fed up with the hypocrisy and disregard for the lives of innocent children, many Americans have fled the Church. In the Boston Archdiocese alone, 65 churches have been forced to close their doors due to a sharp decline in parishioners.

Boston was once considered the center of the American Catholic society. Catholic worshipers in that city were shocked to learn of the outrageous behavior displayed by Cardinal Bernard Law and the offending priests he protected for so many years. One priest that Law moved around to several different parishes was Father Paul Shanley.

As it turned out, *Fr. Shanley was not only a molester, but an advocate for NAMBLA (North American Man-Boy Love Association).* While Shanley was eventually convicted of child rape, Cardinal Law was rewarded by Pope John Paul II, who brought him to Rome where he now holds a prominent position within the Vatican.

For many American Catholics, it became obvious that their church would never take seriously the issue of children being victimized by child-raping priests. It also became obvious that the church would never take true responsibility for the role the leaders of the church played in harboring these monsters.

It is little wonder that so many now well-informed American Catholics refuse to ever return their children, along with their donations to the church.

The illegal aliens represent exactly what the Catholic Church needs right now...largely uneducated and devoted worshipers with jobs. The illegal aliens will fill the now-darkened parishes throughout the U.S.

Most of these people speak very little English, and most lack even an elementary school education, and are much more likely to keep their mouths shut once the priests begin to have their way with their children.

The shell game of shifting pedophile priests around the country will begin again, and the faithful will continue to fork over ten percent of their wages to the church.

Open-border lobbying efforts

- The Catholic Church helped to organize the massive illegal alien rallies seen in recent years around the nation.

The March 2006 rally held in Washington, D.C. was sponsored by, among others, the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Justice and Service, Catholic Charities of the Arlington Diocese, and the Catholic Social Justice Lobby Network. Baltimore churches St. Michael and St. Patrick even sent a bus convoy filled with illegal aliens to the rally.

A high-ranking official with the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, named Father Jose Hoyos played to the crowd when he said: "I want to pray for all the representatives and the senators and the president of the United States, because *if they were Christians they would not pass this kind of law.*"

- In 2010, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) committee on immigration met to discuss how the church could help push forward so-called "comprehensive immigration reform" (i.e., amnesty). Bishop John C. Wester, chair of the committee, characterized the USCCB's lobbying efforts as "a full-court press" on immigration reform.

Wester told reporters: "We certainly honor the laws of the land and we're grateful for them, but we do believe the system is no longer able to deal with the immigration realities we face today. We have great need for labor and invite immigrants to work, but then call it trespassing. We need temporary workers, but don't have sufficient visas."

Though Wester claimed the Catholic Church has respect for our laws, he was quick to justify the actions of those who enter this nation illegally. The bishop said: "What part of illegal don't you understand?" is a quick sound bite. But *if someone is breaking the law, you need to look at why the person's breaking the law.*"

- Bishop William Skylstad, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in October 2006, wrote an open letter to then-President Bush asking him to veto the Secure Fence Act which authorized construction of 700 miles of fences and barriers along the U.S./Mexican border.

A portion of that letter follows:

"To be clear, the U.S. Catholic bishops are supportive of efforts to enforce immigration law and secure our borders, so long as the mechanisms and strategies applied toward this end protect human dignity and protect human life.

However, we are opposed to this legislation because we believe it could lead to the deaths of migrants attempting to enter the United States and increased smuggling-related violence along our border. We also believe it would send the wrong signal to our

peaceful neighbor to the south, Mexico, as well as the international community. Finally, we do not believe it will solve the problem of illegal immigration faced by our nation.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently found that migrant deaths have doubled since 1995, about the time that the government initiated a series of border enforcement initiatives designed to stem illegal entries at ports-of-entry and other traditional crossing routes. Since that time, close to 3,000 migrants have died in remote portions of the southwest region of the country.

In our estimation, the erection of a border fence would force immigrants, desperate to find employment to support their families, to seek alternative and more dangerous ways to enter the country, contributing to an increase in deaths, including among women and children. It also would drive migrants to depend upon unscrupulous smugglers, who would exploit them and, in some cases, place them in dangerous situations which may cause them harm."

- In August 2011, the leadership of New Mexico's Catholic Church issued a statement condemning Gov. Susana Martinez' plan to repeal the law which allowed foreign nationals, including illegal aliens to obtain driver's licenses.

The statement, entitled "Licenses for All Drivers: A Matter of Mercy, Fairness, and Safety," was signed by Santa Fe Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan, Las Cruces Bishop Ricardo Ramirez, and Gallup Bishop James S. Wall.

The statement read:

We are in favor of allowing individuals without Social Security numbers to obtain licenses provided that they present other acceptable forms of identification, such as a valid passport, consular identification card, or other recognized government-issued documents, currently required by present law.

Allen Sanchez, with the NM Conference of Catholic Bishops, told reporters: "The bishops have thought about this long and hard, and have chosen to make a statement because this is an issue of security, but it's also about family security."

Churches in this country are considered to be non-profit, charitable organizations, and as such, are exempt from taxes. However, as a condition of that status, they are prohibited from engaging in political activities (endorsing candidates, lobbying, etc.).

- In July 2010, Bishop Gerald Kicanas, speaking on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, addressed the House Judiciary subcommittee, and made the following statement: "Immigration is ultimately a humanitarian issue since it impacts the basic rights and

dignity of millions of persons and their families. As such, it has moral implications, especially how it impacts the basic survival and decency of life experienced by human beings like us.... Our current immigration system fails to meet the moral test of protecting the basic rights and dignity of the human person.”

“Because of a broken system, immigrant families are being separated. Migrant workers are subject to exploitation by unscrupulous employers, and those attempting to find work by coming north are being abused and taken advantage of by human smugglers. It is our view that the best way to secure our southern border is through (comprehensive) immigration reform.”

While Kicanas, who is the head of the archdiocese in Tucson, claimed that over the last ten years, thousands of men, women, and children have died in the desert trying to cross into this country...*he failed to mention the thousands of Americans who have been killed by illegal aliens, as well as the tens of thousands of children who have been raped by Mexican men.*

- In November 2011, Catholic leaders in Kansas asked the state legislature not to pass any immigration enforcement measures during that year’s legislative session.

Rev. Joseph Naumann, archbishop of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, and Bishop Scott Jones, Bishop of the United Methodist Church, held a news conference to urge that illegal aliens be allowed to gain legal status in this country.

Archbishop Naumann said:

“Our immigration policies are so restrictive. It makes it relatively impossible to legally immigrate to this country. There have to be ways to help them achieve legal status here, if not citizenship, perhaps a worker program that will allow them to achieve legal status.”

The news conference was attended by Renee Slinkard, of the Tea Party Immigration Coalition, who asked the religious leaders why they wanted to encourage and even reward those who enter this country illegally “when we are faced with all this terrorism, crime, human trafficking.”

Naumann responded by saying that those he characterizes as “bad actors” should be deported, but that

most of those who disregard our immigration laws have no “ill intent.”

Naumann, along with several other Catholic leaders, also signed an open letter asking once again that Congress pass so-called “comprehensive immigration reform,” which would result in an amnesty granted to millions of illegal aliens.

If the Catholic Church is going to use the pulpit to lobby for political change, they must be treated as any other lobbyist group attempting to influence our elected representatives.

The time has come to force the church to decide whether it is either a church or a political organization. If it chooses the latter, the taxpayers should not be asked to subsidize their lobbying activities.

Of course, it is not as if the church is without resources. In both 2010 and 2011, the Vatican reported budget surpluses of more than 20 million Euros (\$27.2 million USD).

Furthermore, the Vatican owns an art collection thought to be worth several hundreds of billions of dollars. Housed within Vatican City are more than 50 art galleries, including works from Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael.

In 2011, the Vatican museums received more than 6 million visitors. Full-price admission to the museums is currently listed at 16 Euros (\$21.76 USD).

It is now an accepted fact that as World War II ended in Europe, the Catholic Church helped Nazis escape prosecution to begin new lives in South America. It is also well known that, for decades, the church chose to protect child-molesting priests over innocent children. Now, to save itself, that same Catholic Church is encouraging an illegal invasion of this country. Is it any wonder that this church has become irrelevant to most Americans? ■

Endnotes

1. The Vatican’s Financial Empire in Charts, The Daily Intelligencer (<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2013/03/vaticans-financial-empire-in-charts.html>)
2. Vatican Museums, Tickets and Hours. (http://mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/z-Info/MV_Info_Orari.html)