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Mexican-American Says... Men Of Other Nations Must Fight Corruption In Their Homelands

By DEXTER DUGGAN

PHOENIX — On the same day that a U.S. Border Patrol agent was shot in an area of high illegal-trafficking activity near Arizona's international line with Mexico, a fifth-generation Mexican-American in Phoenix coincidentally noted to The Wanderer that some men of other nations aren't being properly encouraged to fight corruption and suffering in their homelands.

Rudy Pena, a registered Democrat and political conservative, remarked that he has "been around politics all my life," with his father having served as a state representative in the Arizona legislature, and his uncle a six-term Arizona state senator.

Pena said he is working to get his own blog, "The Conservatino," running before elections later this year.

In a Q-and-A interview published below, Pena noted the negligence of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to call "on Catholic men of foreign nations to wage their own moral battle against the actions of corruptible men of their own governments."

Regarding the border agent being wounded, Tucson's Arizona Daily Star posted on June 12 that the Associated Press "reported that a cattle rancher said the shooting happened in a remote part of his ranch that is frequently used by drug and migrant smugglers," while "several bullets also struck the agent's protective vest and that the vest probably saved his life. He also says several people were detained."

Only a wire cattle fence in the area reportedly marks the border.

This continues a long line of violent incidents along an often-weak international line where elitists like the USCCB oppose steps for firm security. The elitists constantly seem to seek new excuses for keeping the crime-ridden border porous.

The Arizona Catholic Conference lobbying group issued a statement the previous week, on June 4, against "separating families at the border."

The statement began by saying the conference's bishops "wish to again express our continued solidarity" with the USCCB "about the critical need to protect immigrant children and families seeking safety from violence by keeping them together. Many of those coming to our borders are fleeing starvation, violence, or death."

The statement acknowledged no other reason for massive illegal crossings, or any other solution — a poor reflection on Latino governments in largely Catholic countries.

The bishops sought to cloak the encouragement of massive illegal immigration with Catholic principles, again ignoring the damage done to all by this illegality.

The conference bishops asserted their moral superiority over others trying to grapple with this problem, saying: "The separation of children from their parents in

these situations, whether as a means of punishment or deterrence, is inhumane and entirely unacceptable.”

The conference blamed the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for enforcing the law.

“The Catholic Church has always placed paramount importance on the value of family life, especially as it relates to parents and their children,” the bishops said. “Similarly, family unity is a cornerstone of the American immigration system. We are, therefore, greatly concerned about actions taken by DHS that may separate already vulnerable children from their parents and the potential harms that may arise.”

The bishops urged people to promote their policies by contacting Congress by using the USCCB “Justice for Immigrants Action Alert.”

On June 1 the USCCB itself issued a statement attempting to equate national security with violation of Catholic principles and contribution to emotional trauma.

It was interesting that the Arizona bishops expressed their — to cite their word — “solidarity” with the USCCB. As bishops become increasingly aware of the severe damage their own porous-borders policies cause, do they grow more grimly determined to warn each other against breaking ranks and climbing down from the dangerous “mass migration” tiger they originally chose to ride?

The USCCB statement said on June 1: “Rupturing the bond between parent and child causes scientifically proven trauma that often leads to irreparable emotional scarring. Accordingly, children should always be placed in the least restrictive setting: a safe, family environment, ideally with their own families.”

The fact that this healthy environment should be attained by necessary reforms in illegal immigrants’ homelands usually seems far from episcopal minds, who instead urge that children must be dragged hundreds or thousands of miles through dangerous territory, to take their chances in an entirely foreign culture.

Meanwhile, the California Catholic Daily website reported on June 11 that the San Diego Catholic Diocese, led by the politically very liberal Bishop Robert McElroy, “will launch a program aimed at keeping asylum-seeking families together.”

The article said that McElroy celebrated a recent border Mass “to launch the ‘Footprints of Tenderness’ initiative, in which a flag and a cross will be walked from the U.S.-Mexico border down to Patagonia, Chile, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of children seeking asylum.”

One of the signatories to the Arizona Catholic Conference statement was the bishop of Phoenix, Thomas Olmsted, who sometimes manages to avoid associating himself with the wilder leftist political positions of other bishops.

Indeed, in 2015 Olmsted issued an apostolic exhortation, *Into the Breach*, urging Catholic men to take up their pressing responsibilities. The “Catholic Vote” website at that time said Olmsted “basically tells Catholic men that they need to stand up and start fighting — for their Church, for their culture, for their families, and for their own souls.”

Here is a lightly edited Q-and-A interview with conservative Phoenix Democrat Rudy Pena. He begins by noting conservatives’ usual suspicions against powerful governments.

Q. What do you think about an orthodox bishop like Bishop Olmsted being involved in this leftist political activism of the USCCB?

A. It's my belief that every political issue is a moral issue. By cause of our Catholic moral convictions, we doubt, distrust, and place minimal faith in the declarations of our government representatives.

We, traditionalist or conservative Catholics, especially men, targeted because of our moral principles, are, often enough, metaphorically grabbed by the shirt collar, intimidated, held in disdain by public officials, coerced to comply by picking up the cross of able-bodied men, to be their personal Simons of Cyrene.

In his letter *Into the Breach*, Bishop Olmsted called us to do battle, to fill the breach where the absence of men created a void in the now-rare chivalrous nature of men, bound to family, by God, for posterity's sake.

It all leaves me inclined to question the intentions of the USCCB, the absence of their influence, declarations, or statements in calling on Catholic men of foreign nations to wage their own moral battle against the actions of corruptible men of their own governments.

It all leaves the impression that the USCCB, in essence, takes comfort in being the state-run religion that strives to be in compliance with liberal government policies.

Q. Is it that the USCCB expects all bishops to get in line for its Democratic Party work?

A. That is and has been my suspicion for years, decades. In the illegal-immigration battle, the USCCB seemingly plays political cards of compromise. It becomes the clenched-fisted and defiant image of every moral issue...to implement and justify political leveraging by religion — using the very government-provided circumstance against the legitimate plight of the migrant himself, keeping him in migratory limbo.

In my estimation, the majority of our bishops are complicit in fostering government complications of the illegal-migration crisis, perhaps to serve the hand that may regain the power to feed them.

Q. When Bishop Olmsted was first introduced to the media when he arrived here in Phoenix in 2003, he already was a member of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, so he believed in it back then. But nothing has happened since to make him doubt the wisdom of the open-borders invasion?

A. With illegal immigration remaining a relevant moral issue since 1983, Bishop Olmsted could be biding his time, watching this new, bold, and seemingly fearless (Trump) administration. He is witnessing an administration unwilling to bend to sophomoric insult, false implications, and intentionally omitted context, being led by the most unorthodox politician that this country may ever see.

Is there a greater strategy behind all this? In light of all the praise of *Into the Breach* calling men to bring their moral convictions to do battle, I am a bit taken aback by the bishop's alliance to a greater left-leaning cause in false piety.

Q. At the outset of the Arizona Catholic Conference statement, our bishops refer to standing in "solidarity" with the USCCB. Where do these bishops think we are, in the Polish shipyards of the 1980s?

A. By no means should solidarity be misconstrued regarding what is morally right and what is morally wrong in the long term. The official statement of being in solidarity with the USCCB has the familiar liberal face of implying bigotry and racism as a preemptive warning.

Godly Justice

Q. What comments do you have on the bishops' statement about not separating families at the border? Do the bishops think the families should simply cross in? Or that the kids should be jailed, too?

A. It goes back to Into the Breach. Where were the fathers, the men of these nations in economic and quality-of-life conflict, when it was decided to place their own offspring onto a path of unknown outcomes? Where are those fathers, those men now?

Where is the Catholic clarion call to the fathers, the men of these dangerous, government-provided circumstances, calling on them to rise in solidarity to defend and bring their people home?

Q. Why are entire families trying to cross the border illegally? Why do the parents expose their children this way? They're certainly not all fleeing starvation or gunmen.

A. It's the willful abuse of falsely offering them trust and hope that could deliver nothing more than the disappointing likelihood of being sent back to their nations of origin.

I know that the overwhelming majority of migrants seeking refuge are humble, trusting, and genuinely wanting an escape from government-induced hardships, seeking a better life. But it comes at the high price of being taken advantage of.

And in being honest in our convictions and seeing that it is what it is, the relationship between the USCCB and the idealists of liberalism and progressivism is one that enables human traffickers and facilitates for them several strides beyond the reach of immigration-law enforcement.

Q. Do the bishops expect that entire families will simply be admitted into the U.S. without authorization, after so many millions more already have arrived illegally? Do the bishops not see the damage this causes to various nations' and citizens' well-being?

A. Could it do the world Godly justice to see the Catholic Church incorporate a worldwide social teaching, as in the historic example of the revolutionary freedoms fought and sacrificed for in the founding of America, the most generous nation in the world?

And why shouldn't the concept of standing one's ground, against government-induced circumstances that sustain tyranny, not be an ideal to be embraced every bit as one embraces and defends his religion?

It could be a sin of rash judgment to question the motive of Bishop Robert McElroy and others who are very vocal in their frequent political comments under the cloak of morality. With my personal experience of the Hispanic Catholics living in San Diego, when Bishop McElroy first came to San Diego I asked him if he were going to appoint auxiliary bishops who spoke Spanish and were multicultural in their outlook,

since I had worked exclusively among the immigrant communities for the first 22 years of priesthood, including 3 years in missionary work among the poor in Honduras.

Bishop McElroy said he did not speak Spanish. Indeed his last priestly assignment was in wealthy English speaking San Mateo. He had done chancery work, and spent time in graduate studies. He also said that he did not know at that time whether any priests of Hispanic origin in San Diego might be good auxiliaries. I replied that I was not speaking of any native born Spanish speaker, but of several priests whom I named, who had become bilingual and worked as I did in large Spanish speaking parishes, exhibiting love, dedication, and integration into life with the immigrants.

In 2016 when I advised my 300 parish families to vote Catholic regarding the 5 life non negotiables of abortion, sexuality and marriage, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, cloning, and sample prudential issues that were being discussed of gun control, unlimited refugees with religions hostile to Christianity, unlimited immigration, and fiscal responsibility, Bishop McElroy told me that my teaching to my people was not Catholic, anti gay, and anti Muslim.

Now, why the sudden outrage after so many years of isolation from Hispanics and other illegal immigrants other than remote association through articles in America magazine? Because there was no evidence of a life in and among the struggling peoples, just an advocacy for issues, could it be that there be a need for a pedigree for future ecclesiastical advancement, or some other reason?

And Tucson Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger, who proposed canonical penalties on those who violate his morality, I am told is not imbued in Hispanic language or culture.

Mr. Peña has sound insight, and puts into words the experiences of many Americans of various ethnic origins. In taking the words of Mr. Peña to prayer along with statements from the bishops and the Holy Father, I am discovering in my conscience an alignment more with the experience of Mr. Peña rather than the outrage of Catholic hierarchs to whom I grant respect but not agreement in conscience which they insist all must follow, at least as long as it agrees with their pronouncements on so many issues such as sexuality, communion, and so forth. I would advise each Catholic to do the same consulting Jesus in how He speaks to you on all issues.

**— Fr. Richard Perozich June 22, 2018
St. Thomas More, St. John Fisher, St. Paulinus of Nola**