



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time-Year A-June 21st 2020

***Readings: Jeremiah 20: 10-13, Psalm 68, Romans 5: 12-15,
Matthew 10: 26-33***

‘Every hair of your head is numbered’...

Funny how little things strike you differently at different times.

I don’t pay much attention to my coiffure in normal times, get out of the shower and towel it dry- done. However, lockdown/lockup/lock in has made me sit up and take notice. The barbers are shut so I invested in a Philip’s personal sheep-shearing kit and had, ambition since a small boy, my first Grade 6 crewcut. People have noticed and not all their comments have been kind.

But it got me thinking about this bit of Biblical hyperbole – or is it?

Certainly it would take a while to count up just what I had shed recently on my bathroom floor. But then again, this is God we’re talking about.

It’s not such a problem for Him. Let me give you a ‘for instance’. I just Googled ‘HAIR’. Google gave me eight thousand million hits in just 0.7 second. That’s more than the current population of the world and all from just one little human device. Not even in the same league as God.

I thought about this amazing new culture of knowledge and the corresponding renewed and consequent sense of the immensity of God.

He really knows ALL about me and He doesn’t need ‘cookies’ or a ‘webcam’. He knows my strengths and my weaknesses, my preferences,

what I buy into etc. etc. This is, at once, both terrifying and reassuring. He knows I'm a sinner – that's why He sent Jesus to die for me. He may be disappointed by my regular 'goofs' but He probably isn't too surprised. He made me as a creature and He is transforming me into a beloved son. I'll buy that. His judgement will come at the end of all this, not, mercifully, halfway through or on what I did forty years ago.

All this was washing around in my mind as I watched the recent news and the unfolding unrest in the wake of the Minneapolis murder. The victim, George Floyd was no stranger to the police but mainly for petty drug offences. The call out that led to his unresisting arrest was for allegedly passing a fake \$20 bill. No-one who watched the video could be in doubt as to the degree of senseless brutality that occasioned Mr. Floyd's death. So far we are singing from the same hymn sheet.

What happened next is all too predictable. The outrage of the community and peaceful protest was hijacked by the usual suspects, the criminal fraternity, the terminally alienated and, most significantly, the forces of extreme politics and harbingers of the totalitarian state.

The liberal news media characterises these warring factions as Left and Right. In reality they are the same creature. The hard left Marxists (Soviet style) are indistinguishable from the Neo –Fascists (National Socialist model) in their approach. Both know full well that they can never win at the ballot box and, from the French Revolution onwards, such movements have always seen their greatest hope in disorder on the streets and the infiltration of the institutions. Neither faction is a friend of democracy. Both are advocates of the dehumanising totalitarian state. It is not rocket science. We have been here before.

So began the disorder of ripping down statues, urinating on memorials etc. etc. I have no difficulty with the removal of statues – by the community, as the result of democratic process. I do have a problem with arbitrary mob rule. And so, if it goes on, will all of us. We are in danger of entering the age of a new puritanism, except that it will not have even

the pretence of godliness and will echo the artificial rage of the iconoclasts. The Taliban and the 17th C vandals who destroyed the saints and Our Lady's statues in the great churches are from the same brood as the professional haters who disfigure our streets and threaten our democratic freedoms. As I write this there is to be committee to discern whether historical blue plaques advertise anyone who has ever uttered a dodgy comment. G K Chesterton will be out but, in the absence of any racial motive presumably Christie will be erected in 10 Rillington Place. When we pretend to know all about a person, we play God in a very dangerous way.

Will we remove from our galleries any work by an artist deemed to be immoral? Goodbye Caravaggio and welcome vast tracts of empty wall. Will we delete the great Dylan song, Hurricane, which sang an innocent black man out of jail because he uses the 'N' word, the street lingo of the time? Will every adulterer or thief be struck from the public record? Will I be coruscated for the immature nonsense I spouted when I was eighteen – thank God there was no internet then?

If puritanism is allowed to flourish then we will no longer record history. We will be on the short road to tyranny. All tyrannies like to abolish history and start with Year Zero. What follows, by perverse tradition, is an unimaginable death toll.

As we rightly mourn the death of a murdered man, we may want to affirm that 'Black lives matter' and I would want to add that, for a Christian, ALL LIVES MATTER. That is the Christian view and the Catholic teaching. (Politicians in America have been jeered for saying this). And I would be more impressed by the sincerity of the street mob if any of them had ever joined my ninety two year old friend, Frank, quietly praying the Rosary outside the local clinic where the abortionists, paid for by you and me, were dismembering and hoovering out their quota of the 209,000 babies murdered last year by the very State in which we live.

God knows the hairs of my head. He knows all about me and yet He is

merciful. The history of Man, when he pretends to know it all, is less encouraging. The democratic process is an imperfect but understandable way of saying, ALL LIVES MATTER.

When that process fails or is allowed to be swept aside by the totalitarian lobby, death always supervenes and in unspeakable horror. Therefore, I beg to oppose.