

The Assault on Our Children and Our Nation's Need for God

Once again, the unthinkable has happened in our nation. Once again, children have been slaughtered in cold blood, but not as the result of domestic violence or as the unintentional victims of a gang shooting. This time these children—little children, just eight and 10—were praying in a church building. And they were specifically targeted by a killer who was reportedly obsessed with the idea of killing children. Can there be a greater assault on our innocence and sense of safety and protection than this?

In centuries past, church buildings were actually the ultimate place of safety, heralded by the famous cry of, “Sanctuary, sanctuary!”

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That has been replaced today by instructions on how to “run, hide and fight,” with more and more churches relying on internal security (meaning, church members who have the license to carry concealed weapons and who are trained in their use).

But my purpose here is not to debate the issue of gun control. Or the need for more police protection. Or our rampant problems with mental illness. Or the fact that the most recent shooter was a deeply confused, trans-identified individual.

Instead, I want to point to a larger issue, that of our national sickness, our national pain, our national wound.

In short, when children are intentionally gunned down in cold blood, with some killed and others critically wounded, and when this is not an isolated phenomenon, it is a symptom of a

deeper spiritual cancer.

Put another way, with all our talk about MAGA and with the many positive things that are taking place in our nation, we remain a very sick people. Only God can heal us!



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Think of the many school shootings in roughly the last 25 years, from the Columbine massacre in 1999 to the Sandy Hook massacre in 2012, from the Parkland massacre of 2018 to the Uvalde massacre in 2022, and from the Covenant School massacre in 2023 to this week's massacre in Minneapolis (this was a school-based shooting; the students were attending Mass).

Who can imagine the agony of the bereaved families? Or the suffering of the wounded? Or the trauma of the survivors?

Add to this now the horror of church-based shootings, be they due to anti-Christian biases or to domestic disputes. Either way, such shootings were virtually unheard over the decades.

That's why the Wedgewood Baptist massacre in 1999 was so shocking. There had been no mass church shootings in decades. Even after 1999, there were no mass shootings in church buildings until 2015.

Since then, the pattern has changed:

2015: Emanuel AME Church, Charleston, SC (9 killed)

2017: First Baptist Church, Sutherland Springs, TX (26 killed)

2017: Burnette Chapel Church of Christ, Antioch, TN (1 killed, 7 wounded)

2019: West Freeway Church of Christ, White Settlement, TX (2 killed)

2022: Geneva Presbyterian Church, Laguna Woods, CA (1 killed, 5 wounded).

And what of the Tree of Life synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh in 2018 (11 killed; 6 wounded) and the Poway, CA synagogue shooting in 2019 (1 killed; 3 wounded)?

Again, I am not focusing here on the question of gun control or mental illness or police security, or other related issues.

Something is profoundly wrong in a country where several hundred children have been slaughtered in cold blood in their own school buildings—including elementary schools—in recent decades, while others have been slaughtered in their houses of worship.

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Over 25 centuries ago, as the Lord was bringing judgment on Jerusalem, He said through the prophet Ezekiel, “The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great; the land is full of blood and the city is full of corruption” (Ezek 9:9, TLV).

About 150 years earlier, the Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah, telling His people why He would not listen to their prayers: “When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you. When you multiply prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood!” (Isa 1:15, TLV)

How does the Lord feel about all the bloodshed in our nation? And note that I have not said a word about the ongoing termination of innocent lives in the womb or of our national murder rate.

It is true that the Spirit is moving powerfully among young people in America today. And it is true, that in some

important ways, we are turning in the right direction.

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But let us not for a moment gloss over the unspeakable tragedy that just took place at a Catholic Church in Minnesota, and let us not become hardened to the cry of the innocent.

Let their trauma and loss become our burden, and let us fall on our faces and cry out, "God, have mercy on our nation and send revival to Your people—starting with me!" As many have said for years now, it is a matter of revival or we die.

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