

NEWS

Cdl Schönborn uses coronavirus pandemic to push 'ecological' questions

'Do we really need to have 200,000 airplanes in the air every day?' he asked.

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Cardinal Christoph Schönborn in a March 22, 2020 interview with ORF Fan [HD].

ORF Fan [HD] / Youtube screen grab

By Martin Bürger

VIENNA, Austria, April 1, 2020 (LifeSiteNews) – Cardinal Christoph Schönborn has evaded the question of the COVID-19 pandemic being a chastisement or punishment from God, trying to frame it as an “ecological” issue.

“Of course the question arises, is our lifestyle adapted to the world? The ecological question. I would first leave out the question of God,” the Cardinal said in a televised interview on March 22.

Schönborn explained that for centuries, people have asked why God permits evil. “With the plague, of course, people liked to say that this is now the scourge of God, this is God’s punishment. This is a question that everyone can ask themselves in any crisis situation.”

Pressestunde mit Kardinal Christoph Schönborn, Erzbischof von Wien (...)



The Archbishop of Vienna asked during the interview, “If I used to smoke 50 cigarettes a day and then get cancer, the question naturally arises: was this a punishment for living carelessly?”

In talking about the “ecological question,” the Austrian encouraged viewers to use the current pandemic as a time for reflection.

“Is it really necessary to fly to London for the weekend to go shopping? Is it really necessary to spend the Christmas holidays in the Maldives? Is it really necessary that we have huge cruise ships with 4,000 people on board that pollute the seas in a dramatic way? Do we really need to have 200,000 airplanes in the air every day?”

Those questions, Schönborn said, lead to a deeper question: “Is God trying to tell us something with this? Does he perhaps want to remind us that he has entrusted creation to us, and not given it to us to devastate it?”

Schönborn’s comments on this topic reflect those of Pope Francis who has linked the coronavirus pandemic to a response from the planet to environmental pollution. The Pope told a Spanish journalist last week that he believes that the virus outbreak is nature “having a fit” in response to environmental pollution. During his homily at the March 29 Urbi et Orbi ceremony, the Pope returned to this theme, saying that men had ignored the “cry of [...] our ailing planet.”

“We carried on regardless, thinking we would stay healthy in a world that was sick,” he said.

Recently, Bishop Athanasius Schneider was not afraid of calling the coronavirus pandemic “a divine intervention to chastise and purify the sinful world and also the Church.”

The auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Mary Most Holy in Astana, Kazakhstan, quoted from the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible. “I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching ... that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.”

“I am convinced,” Schneider commented, “that Christ would repeat the same words to Pope Francis and to the other bishops who allowed the idolatrous veneration of the Pachamama and who implicitly approved sexual relationships outside a valid marriage, by allowing the so-called ‘divorced and remarried’ who are sexually active to receive Holy Communion.”

The bishop, who grew up in the Soviet Union before coming to Germany in 1973, said the current situation “is so unique and serious that one can discover behind all of this a deeper meaning.”

Receiving Holy Communion in the hand, a practice disobediently adopted in some parts of the world and then officially permitted by Pope Paul VI roughly 50 years ago, “has led to an unintentional and intentional desecration [of] the Eucharistic Body of Christ on an unprecedented scale. For over fifty years, the Body of Christ had been (mostly unintentionally) trampled by the feet of clergy and laity in Catholic churches around the world. The stealing of sacred Hosts has also been increasing at an alarming rate.”

According to Schneider, taking the Eucharist “directly with one’s own hands and fingers resembles ever more the gesture of taking common food.”

For many people, he said, this practice led to a weakened faith in the real presence. “The Eucharistic presence of Christ has, over time, unconsciously become for these faithful a kind of holy bread or symbol.”

The current situation, wherein many parts of the world no public Masses are said, and Holy Communion cannot be received by the faithful, “could be understood by the Pope and bishops as a divine rebuke for the past fifty years of Eucharistic desecrations and trivializations and, at the same time, as a merciful appeal for an authentic Eucharistic conversion of the entire Church.”

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, in a March 29 interview with Michael Matt of *The Remnant*, linked the coronavirus to chastisement from God for sin while calling on Pope Francis to “convert” for having brought into the Church the “terrible sacrilege” of the idolatry of Pachamama.

“The Pope, the Hierarchy, and all Bishops, Priests and Religious must immediately and absolutely convert,” he said.

“[These clerics] have even committed acts of unprecedented gravity, such as we saw with the adoration of the pachamama idol in the Vatican itself,” he said.

“Indeed, I think Our Lord has rightly become indignant at the great multitude of scandals committed by those who ought to be setting a good example, because they are Shepherds, to the flocks to whom they have been entrusted.”

Other Catholic leaders – for instance, John Smeaton, chief executive of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, the first and largest pro-life organization in the United Kingdom – have offered similar assessments.

Smeaton called the coronavirus pandemic a “chastisement” for abortion and other sins.

In the same interview, Cardinal Schönborn talked about the role of women in the Church, saying he was “surprised” and “disappointed” by the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Querida Amazonia*.

“The big question remains open. The question of the role of women in positions of leadership within the Church remains a wound, an open question,” he said.
