Chris Ferrara's victory in the case he represented against the City and State of New York was the first really happy moment I have experienced in these three-and-one-half months of medico-media mayhem. I could not wait to enjoy that victory with my fellow traditionalists at Mass the Sunday after the judge's decision.

But once again I was, as a friend frequently chastises me, "surprised by the obvious". Why, in Heaven's name, should I have thought that the bishops of the State of New York would be thrilled by Chris's victory and make proper use of it? Sure enough, they were not, and did not. Twenty-four hours had not gone by before the following announcement was published: "The New York State Catholic Conference, which represents the bishops of the state, told CNA on Friday that churches would probably continue to follow state health guidelines for reopening, even though they are no longer bound by law to do so." The only thing that seems not to have been accurate in that statement was the word "probably". It was definitely true. Our noble prelates had snatched defeat from victory.

There seem to be only two reasons for this craven episcopal sell-out, both of them rooted in a fear that does no honor to their noble position. The first is fear of lawsuits on the part of unscrupulous fortune hunters claiming that the Church authorities, allowing bigger crowds than the State deems suitable, created a situation where they fell ill with the Plague. The second is a deeper fear: that of offending the Zeitgeist and the Cuomos and Di Blasios that administer its ever more willful, ignorant, perilous, and anti-Catholic demands. Supermarkets do not seem to be terrified by the lawsuits in question; the successors of the Apostles in the United States are. Quite frankly, there is not a single opportunity for secular bootlicking that the bishops seem capable of resisting and which the grotesquely materialist and legalist world in which we live can provide some "practical" explanation for justifying.

Toeing the State line inevitably meant that my first Sunday Reopening Mass was accompanied by a spiritually demoralizing discussion of mask and social distancing etiquette, congregational singing prohibition, and traffic regulations for movements to and from reception of Holy Communion. Surveillance of the behavior of church attendees was obvious, and pews were dutifully sanitized when the Mass was over. Believers were clearly doing exactly what the Governor and the Mayor wanted them to do, victorious court case or not.

Once again, the contrast of this humble, unquestioningly obedient Catholic comportment with what I witnessed later in the afternoon in my neighborhood in Greenwich Village was mindboggling. For unbeknownst to me, what I had seen advertised as a "virtual" Gay Pride Parade had evolved into a massive outdoor spectacle involving thousands upon thousands of provocative marchers representing each of the ever-expanding component elements of the LGBT+ Alliance. I must admit that masks – although not much else – were worn by the

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members of this grotesque crowd. Nevertheless, the social distancing that we Catholics were ordered to respect even in the favorable decision handed down last Friday, and which the authorities at my parish were insistent on being observed, was totally non-existent here. The large number of police that accompanied the carnival were as zealous in demonstrating that they were not bothered by gay, lesbian, and transgender lack of compliance with the supposedly oh-so-important six-foot rule as the overseers at my Mass had been in ensuring that we good little Catholic boys and girls bow to its pointless requirements.

If our bishops had not been so keen to snatch defeat from Chris Ferrara's victory, they might have realized that they could have "had their cake an eat it too". They could have continued to maintain the tyrannical State's 25% congregation limitation with all the utterly irrational anti-virus gyrations intact. Then, they could have redeemed their gutless behavior by organizing a massive procession with the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of New York, celebrating the return of the Mass to the faithful whom they had abandoned during the last three-and-one-half months. This would have "flown the flag of Christ" in the most dramatic manner possible, and prevented the day from being dominated by the banners and soldiers of Sodom and Gomorrah. But to do that, they would have needed some truly Catholic spine. And 55 years of bootlicking to the Zeitgeist and its Autocrats has seemingly blinded them to what that could possibly mean.

Chalk up another one for the Conciliar Church. At least the sell-out is consistent.

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