

Readers' FORUM

The Right Temperature

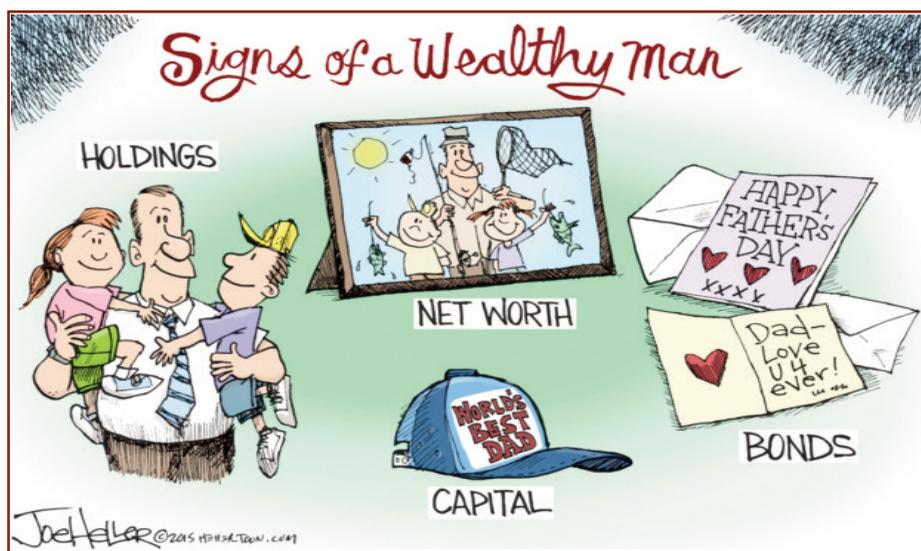
Dear Editor: I would like to second the points made in Mr. Mayhue's June 6 letter (Readers' Forum, Allowing a True Debate), which discusses the strange attraction some left-leaning Catholics evince toward immoral and fascistic governance. By their actions, such Catholics show their open support for partial-birth abortion, euthanasia, active homosexuality, anti-Christian legislation, the revolutionary rush to redefine marriage and legitimize the 'marriage' of homosexual couples, the flagrant disrespect for the laws of the land by 'progressive' politicians, and the ultimately complete secularization of our society. How so? Simply by their voting to empower the Democrat Party which is the active political force behind all these bad things. Jesus told us we could not serve two masters and, as Mr. Mayhue states, to delve into the faulty reasoning behind why such misguided Catholics try to do just this would take a book.

When future generations look back on the global-warming scare of the past 30 years, nothing will shock them more than the extent to which the official temperature records – on which the entire panic ultimately rested – were systematically "adjusted" to show the Earth as

having warmed much more than the actual data justified. Of much more serious significance, however, is the way this wholesale manipulation of the official temperature record has become the real elephant in the room of the greatest and most costly scare the world has known. This really does begin to look like one of the greatest scientific scandals of all time.

And this brings us back to the beginning. Jesus warned about the satanic nature of lies, calling Satan himself the father of lies. People of the secularized liberal worldview believe that lying to promote what they believe is a just cause is a good thing, and the regularity with which Democrats and their support groups resort to lies to gain their ends is what keeps conservative Catholics from believing their phony claims to 'care for the poor' and their phony warnings about the environment.

So why is it that progressive/liberal Catholics share such a near reflexive instinct to believe the secularists of the leftist



Democrat camp? The answer would fill a book, but it is worth one's soul to get it right.

JOHN PRENTIS
Flushing

Pay Attention to Women

Dear Editor: On Wednesday, April 29, Pope Francis addressed the problem of "Pay Equality" for women. While I applaud the pope for speaking out on this important issue, closer to home, Francis can lend a hand to end discrimination by having an open dialogue to empower women in the Catholic Church.

According to all four canonical Gospels, the risen Christ appeared first to his devout, trusted, loyal, faithful disciple, Mary of Magdala.

▲ by Ed Wilkinson

The Editor's Space

Bikers' Pilgrimage Pedalled Vocations

Mission accomplished! The two priests and three seminarians who set out to bicycle their way up the East Coast, from Florida to Long Island, have completed the route and are home safe and secure in the knowledge that their mission of pedalling vocations has been successful.

"It's been an awesome experience," said Father Marc Swartvagher, the new pastor of Our Lady of Grace parish, Howard Beach.

For 1,400 miles, the men rode as a pack, each one taking turns in the lead to block the headwind, each one offering words of encouragement when the road ahead seemed interminable.

Along the way, they experienced what they refer to as "radical hospitality." People took them into their homes and offered meals and shelter. Parishes organized greeting parties and celebrated Masses of thanksgiving. Young people turned out to attend seminars about vocations to religious life.

Seminarian Stephen Rooney, of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, came up with this brainstorm. Last summer, he cycled across the U.S. on a mission to support affordable housing. But something was missing for the college seminarian. It was purely a secular trip. There was no spir-

itual bond, no prayer.

He started talking up his concept of a bike pilgrimage for vocations and began recruiting a team.

Father Joe Fitzgerald, vocations director for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, was on board. A former Olympic athlete – he won a gold medal as part of the team handball squad in Atlanta – he brought his fitness and team concept to the mission.

"We got through it as a team," said Father Joe as he prepared to speak to young people about the adventure.

A little prayer also went a long way. Each start to the day was marked by prayer for safety and later a prayer of thanksgiving was offered when they arrived at their destination, whether it was in a rural driveway or on a concrete sidewalk.

Not to say there weren't some close calls. Each rider averaged two flats. One day, a bike's chain became mangled into a design none of the men had ever seen before. Occasionally, someone would fall. One of the seminarians got sideswiped and required some minor medical attention. And seminarian Dominik Wegiel will never forget the van that came to a screeching halt about a foot from his rear tire.

There was also reason to celebrate. Tory, driver of the support vehicle, received the sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone in the Diocese of Charleston, S.C. Rooney was the proud sponsor.

After almost a month on the road, the bikers

finally arrived in New York last weekend, with a stop at St. Patrick's Cathedral, and an overnight at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie; then on to St. Joseph's Co-Cathedral, Prospect Heights, and overnight hospitality from St. Brendan's rectory, Midwood; and finally the last leg out to Long Island where they were greeted by Bishop William Murphy in Rockville Centre.

In Brooklyn, the team was met by Auxiliary Bishop Octavio Cisneros and Auxiliary Bishop-elect James Massa, who were concelebrants at a Mass of thanksgiving at St. Joseph's Co-Cathedral.

"They did it because they trusted God," commented Bishop Cisneros. "Our cyclists embarked on the journey to raise consciousness in each of us as we respond to the call of God. They all did it with the same faith that God calls us to respond to greatness and to proclaim the Kingdom of God."

"Jesus was the thread that kept us united," said Father Joe.

He told the story about how one evening they stayed at a local YMCA. They asked the director if there was anything she wanted them to pray for. Not used to the question, her response was emotional. She asked for prayers for "our young people."

"You never know when you get to be Christ to others and others get to be Christ to you," said Father Joe.

"Our theme was 'Make Disciples of All Nations,'" said Father Swartvagher, "Hopefully, we have sown the seeds of a few vocations."

She was the first to testify to the resurrection of Jesus, making her the first Christian. That in itself makes Mary Magdalene the most important disciple in the movement of Jesus!

For 2,000 years, the Catholic faithful have been conditioned to believe that “men” have a monopoly on piety. I find that to be discriminatory and prejudiced.

Fact check: Few characters in the New Testament have been so sorely miscast as Mary Magdalene, whose reputation as a prostitute did not originate in the Bible but in a sixth century sermon by Pope Gregory.

ERNIE TERGA
Elmhurst

The Great Professor Catanello

Dear Editor: I would like to express this heartfelt tribute to the late Bishop Ignatius Catanello, who was my professor in New Testament Theology during the Fall 1973 at St. John's University. I fondly recall Father Catanello as a warm and flexible professor, whose course reflected on select New Testament chapters and verses that were significant in Christology and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In music, where the “hook” captures the listener’s attention, the hook in Father Catanello’s course was his moving recitation of “the way of love” in St. Paul’s 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13, “But I shall show you a still more excellent way . . . So faith, hope, love remain, these three, but the greatest of these is love.”

That evening, having been so spiritually moved in class that day, I sat both my parents down and read that chapter aloud before them. This was the profound quality not only of St. Paul’s eloquent words, but also of Father Catanello’s pastoral ministry in the college classroom!

Father Catanello was as patient as a saint with my apostasy at the time, and gave me an “A” in the course, so I give him an “A” as he rests in eternal peace in Heaven with all of God’s angels and saints, particularly Bishop Ford of Brooklyn.

JOSEPH N. MANAGO
Flushing

The Exercise of Authority

Dear Editor: An article in The Tablet (June 6) revealed that some European bishops desire that the Synod consider Church teaching as not immovable and develop with time. They think that indissolubility of marriage is utopia and advocate greater liberalism in its application.

Among our core faith values is that God is Truth and Pure. This is absolute truism and needs no fine-tuning. Divine Revelations (Sacred Scripture and Tradition) dictate the moral tone and discipline of our spirituality.

The Synod must avoid the negative influence of the ubiquitous social media in accordance with Rom 12:2 – “Do not conform to this age.” The Church must be compassionate like Christ, her groom. God is not hard-nosed. Otherwise, the Prodigal Son and the good thief wouldn’t have been spared. But don’t forget: Each of them demonstrated remorse and then received mercy.

Exercise of Magisterium at the Synod should have a compassionate agenda without devaluation of Truth and agree with God’s Word. Such Magisterium must listen prayerfully to the Spirit as at the first Jerusalem Council. The people of God must not acquiesce to debased popular culture and the dictatorship of relativism.

VICTOR ENEMUO
Jamaica

We welcome letters to the Readers’ Forum, but they must include (for verification purposes) the writer’s name, address and phone number. This includes letters sent via email. The name may be withheld upon request. Letters signed simply “Name Withheld” are not considered for print. Letters should be as brief as possible, and, of course, all letters are subject to editing. Letters containing the proviso “Do Not Edit” also are not considered for print. Email letters to ewilkinson@desalesmedia.org.

As The Tablet Sees It

Threat in Albany

A threat to resurrect the elimination of the statute of limitations for church workers accused of sexual abuse is nothing more than a continuation of the dirtiest politics in Albany.

Coming on the next to last day of the Assembly’s scheduled session, the proposal was nothing more than a threat of retaliation to the Church because of its firm support for the Education Tax Credit proposal that it has been backing.

This statute of limitations bill had been dead for years and its main sponsor, Queens Assemblywoman Marge Markey, who is a supporter of the Education Tax Credit, has said publicly

that she had no idea that it was going to be reintroduced.

The Catholic Church will not be intimidated and will not back down in its fight for the rights of parents to choose the right schools for their children. A church official said this week, “We will continue to fight for the Education Tax Credit for as many sessions as necessary until it’s enacted.”

Meanwhile we urge state representatives to debate and work in good faith so that something good can be achieved in Albany – something more than the inertia we’ve become accustomed to seeing.

Encyclical’s Authority

Many in the Church have been buzzing even before its release about Pope Francis’ new encyclical, “Laudato Si” (“Praised Be You”). Some have been angrily denouncing the work, stating that it is another liberal attempt to draw attention to the problem of global warming. They don’t want the pope to become another “Al Gore” or to be speaking on issues that perhaps he does not have the competency to speak.

Still others are excited and pleased, thinking that this will solidify the Church’s position on ecology and environmental issues and are so happy that Francis is the first pope to do so.

The Holy Father has the right to address the issue of the environment, because the care for the environment is a moral issue. The pope will not make the claims of a scientific authority (although he has consulted with many experts in this field and has a background in science himself). He is asking us to remember the key role of stewardship over the Earth and the goods of creation. Our Holy Father is asking us to take seriously our responsibility, one that each and every one of us has, to care for our common home.

As for why the environment rather than other important issues, let’s be realistic. As a teacher, as a preacher, the Holy Father can’t address every issue in every single encyclical. We know very well the Holy Father’s opinions on the persecution of Christians; we know the pope’s views on gender identity and human sexuality; we know Francis’ views concerning the traditional family. He’s spoken on them time and time again in homilies, Wednesday audiences, in papal speeches, and at Sunday angeluses. He can only do one thing at a time and at this time, he has chosen to address ecology.

Finally, for those who think that Francis is a radical for speaking on the environment, he is far from the first pope to do so. Blessed Paul VI spoke on the topic; St. John Paul did as well; and no pope has given more time over to the environment than our pontiff-emeritus, Benedict XVI. And, on top of that, no pope had implemented more practical, green initiatives at the Vatican than Benedict!

So, Pope Francis is not being a crazy radical; no, he is consistent with his predecessors.

As Others See It

“Don’t forget the poor. If we do all these wonderful things, and don’t obviously remember the poor, we’re losing the star moment of this extraordinary Holy Father.”

– Cardinal Theodore McCarrick
At U.S. Bishops’ National Meeting