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Pope Francis talks with Dublin Archbishop Diarmuid Martin as he meets an Irish delegation of families during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican March 21. At the audience, the pope confirmed that he will visit Ireland Aug. 25-26 during the World Meeting of Families. (CNS/Paul Haring)



by Michael Sean Winters

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I admit that I am often confused by some of the editorial decisions made at the venerable magazine, and my former employer, America. But this editorial supporting the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court is really odd. Is "send it back to the state legislatures" really the most profound moral position the editors could discern? And the editorial fails to take account of the sociocultural challenges an overturning of *Roe* v. *Wade* would entail. Nor do they consider what other laws would fall if the core jurisprudence of *Roe* were questioned, e.g., *Obergefell* v. *Hodges*.

At the National Catholic Register, a report on a parallel meeting in Dublin to the World Meeting of Families. The big meeting is being organized by the pope and his team. The other meeting is being organized by, well, we used to call people whose organizing principle was dissent from the Roman pontiff Protestants, but somehow, in this case, I think that would be casting a slur against our Protestant friends.

Speaking of the pope, the Holy Father gave an extraordinary Angelus address on Sunday. He said that missionary disciples must be "sober and poor" and not "all-powerful managers, or irreplaceable functionaries, or divas on tour." I wonder if he had any particular *cappa magna*-wearing prelates in mind?

At FiveThirtyEight.com, Perry Bacon on how perceptions of the party to which you do not belong tend be wildly exaggerated. For example, Republicans think lesbian, gay or bisexual people constitute 38 percent of the Democratic Party, when the actual number is 6 percent, and Democrats think 44 percent of Republicans earn more than $250,000 per year, when the actual number is 2 percent. Identity politics is here to stay, reinforced by bad information.

Speaking of bad information, The Guardian has a wonderful takedown of President Donald Trump's attempt to call his interview with The Sun "fake news." He just repeats things, hoping that enough people will eventually conclude they are true, or

the facts will be so confused no one has any confidence in the facts. Dictatorship of relativism indeed.

According to this report in the Washington Examiner, Hillary Clinton delivered the keynote at the American Federation of Teachers convention last weekend. "There have been indications that Clinton wants to make a third try for president and a recent poll showed that her campaign would be welcomed by Democrats," the report indicates. OMG. This is the dumbest idea I have ever heard in my life. The Dems seem determined to hand Trump a second term.

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Clintonistas are not the only delusional Democrats. Nancy Pelosi dismissed calls from, among others, Congressman Seth Moulton, for some new leaders of the House Democrats. She labeled the former Marine and others who call for a change "inconsequential." Funny. As soon as I read that, a picture entered my mind of President George Bush on board the USS Abraham Lincoln with a "Mission Accomplished" banner behind him.

From the file marked "they deserve each other," Planned Parenthood in Colorado is asking the Trump administration to help bust its union. In part, this is just one more example of how the left no longer pays attention to the importance of organized labor — for example, the failure to check that a hotel is union or preferring non-union Uber to union-driven cabs. But, at a deeper level, Trump and Planned Parenthood share a shrunken sense of solidarity and, just so, they deserve each other.

Yesterday, I wrote about the long-term cost of Trump's antics at the NATO summit. This article in The Washington Post looks at the degree to which our allies are increasingly turning to Moscow as a reliable partner. The president of the United States continues to help Russia achieve its geostrategic goals. Who can doubt the plausibility of the claim that this is merely a consequence of Trump's unhinged narcissism? But I increasingly think there is an even more likely explanation: Is the president suborned?

[Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.]

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