Opinion
News



by Michael Sean Winters

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October 30, 2018
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People can be shocked at the murders committed at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, but let no one be surprised. In Western societies, when a people get their blood up, whatever the reason, the Jews will pay the price. Once incubated precisely in the Christian Church, and tied to lousy exegesis, anti-Semitism is surviving into post-Christian society in robust form, now found on the left as well as on the right. I hope our evangelical Christian brothers and sisters reconsider their support for the president whose entire political strategy is built on stoking resentment. Those same evangelical Christians claim to be friends of Israel. But, will they prove to be a friend to Jews?

As our country is torn apart in ways not seen in a very long time, here is an op-ed from the Washington Post in which Tim Shriver, president of Special Olympics, points to one way we can bind up the wounds of our culture: Let students with disabilities compete in sports with their peers. Shriver has long been a hero of mine, a man who sows solidarity wherever he goes. And, part of the secret to his leadership is he empowers others to become agents of their own development.

Bishop Richard Stika of Knoxville, Tennessee, posted a hilarious photo on his Twitter feed. I couldn't agree more.

> pic.twitter.com/qps8XjZhKk
>
> — Bishop Rick Stika (@BishopStika) October 28, 2018

At Politico, Darren Samuelsohn explains how a Democratic majority in the House could undermine the Mueller probe into Russian meddling in the 2016 election. Even more, the Democrats appear poised to undermine themselves in this process. The key issue in this probe is whether or not investigators will find something that transcends partisan divides. Mueller is pursuing the case and the one way for the Dems to nullify the import of his findings is to politicize them in advance. Let him do his work. If he does not find anything that warrants hurling President Donald Trump from office, then make a political argument. But, if he does, why muddy the waters in advance? I am beginning to think Democrats are just plain stupid.

At America, David DeCosse has an excellent essay calling on the need for the bishops to revise their voting guide Faithful Citizenship. His critique is basic and thorough-going but I fear the bishops will not listen and, frankly, given the mess they have made for themselves, I'm not sure how many people will be looking to them for advice on how to vote anyway. Still, the document must be changed. It is filled with shoddy theology thrown together to justify a previously arrived-at political and legal agenda.

From The Root, the NAACP in Georgia is calling for an investigation into irregularities with voting machines in minority precincts in the Peach State. As mentioned yesterday, efforts to suppress the votes of minorities are among the most repugnant forms of racism still with us. Will the bishops speak up against it?

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At Religion News Service, Mark Silk considers the prospect that the current Supreme Court will be fertile ground for traditional believers seeking to separate themselves, à la “the Benedict option,” but without having to actually withdraw from society. I am not so sure. I think this is an area where the chief justice will try and seek some unanimity on the court and that discrimination against gays in the public square is simply too big a pill to swallow.

Nicholas Kristof in the New York Times tackles the liberal hypocrisy being exposed at Ivy League institutions: Instead of awarding the much coveted admissions to the most worthy, “legacy admissions” allow the children of rich, mostly white alumni a leg or two up. And, if Mommy and Daddy give millions of dollars to the schools, that helps too. To call it hypocritical is generous.

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

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