Opinion

News



Pope Francis attends a session of the Synod of Bishops on young people, the faith and vocational discernment at the Vatican Oct. 18, 2018. The synod was an example of the "listening church" the pope has tried to build. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



by Michael Sean Winters

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As we get ready for the Vatican's summit on clergy sex abuse of minors, Lou Cameli, writing in America hits the nail on the head when so many commentators have sore thumbs. For all the calls for this kind of reform or that, Pope Francis' effort to build a synodal Church is the only real way to confront the clericalism that made the crisis possible.

At Politico, how support for Israel might divide the Democratic Party. More than anything, the article shows the lack of imagination among politicians and their handlers. It is true that white, evangelical Christians have become both strong supports of Israel and of Trump. But, do most evangelical Christians realize Israel was founded by socialists? As a secular state? Time for a little history lesson. And the Dems should still support Israel.

Relatedly, at the Washington Post, seven MPs leave the Labour Party because of the anti-Semitism and more generalized moral irresponsibility of party leader Jeremy Corbyn.

At the New York Times, Mustafa Aykol on the "creeping liberalism" within American Islam. If it sounds familiar, think of the Americanists in the U.S. Church in the last decades of the 19th century and in the post-WWI period. I predict that a couple of generations hence, some Islamic writers will be bemoaning the loss of their religious identity.

Also at the Times, Thomas Edsal examines the political power of divisive politics, and also some of the issues that I examined last week. But, I think I got to the heart of the matter better than Edsal: Democratic elites are more socially progressive and less economically progressive than the American people. The people decide.

Relatedly, at Politico, a profile of "the most important new Congresswoman" — and it isn't AOC. Michael Kruse examines New Jersey Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill's win last November and her early weeks in Congress as a "moderate." But, Kruse does not explain that there are different ways to be a moderate, and not every Congressperson has Wall Street just across the river. Sherrill seems like a good fit

for her district, but America is not her district.

Finally, at the Washington Post, the great E.J. Dionne on the real national emergency facing the country, the trivialization of our politics. The money quote:

> In counting the many costs of the Trump era, we focus too rarely on the president's success in pushing divisive trivialities and self-interested contrivances to the center of national concern. He manufactures crises and then uses his manufactured crises to create new ones.

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

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