Opinion
News



by Michael Sean Winters

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October 3, 2019
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On NPR's Weekend Edition, my colleague Joshua McElwee was interviewed by Scott Simon regarding the Holy Father's comments about not liking adjectives and adverbs when they are used to draw nasty distinctions, e.g., labeling an opinion as "orthodox," implying that contrary opinions are heterodox. Per usual, Josh did a great — even an orthodox — job explaining what makes Pope Francis tick, and why so many of us love him so very, very much.

On Twitter, Cardinal-designate Jesuit Fr. Michael Czerny shares the image he will place on the holy card to be distributed to the consistory on Saturday. It is a painting made by his grandmother Anna Hayek. Should we ask? Was she related to Friedrich?

At Working Class Perspectives, Steven High reports on a recent conference of those engaged in deindustrialization studies. He notes four major conclusions from the report, of which I wish to call attention to item No. 3: We tend not to focus on large vibrant metropolitan cities when considering the ill effects of deindustrialization because gentrification often makes the unseemly reality opaque. This is a keen

observation and shows why we really need interdisciplinary studies that recognize the way dominant social trends are shaped by, and shape, other social developments. It is all interrelated.

At CNN, a glimmer of hope: Chris Cillizza makes the point that we should not assume, at this stage, the Republicans in the Senate will necessarily stick with President Donald Trump. They have stuck with him so far, but we do not know how bad things will look once more hearings are done and more evidence is unearthed. Sen. Mitch McConnell is no Lowell Weicker, and it is safe to assume that McConnell will never, ever be motivated by ambitions other than those which are Machiavellian, but if Trump's approval rating among Republicans starts to plummet, all bets are off.

In The New York Times, Michael D. Shear and Julie Hirschfeld Davis report that Trump asked his advisers about the possibility of building a moat along the border wall and filling it with alligators and snakes. He also inquired about shooting migrants in the legs. Sadly, was anyone really surprised when reading this story? What will it take for the rest of the Republican Party to jump ship?

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Still considering South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg for the presidency? Here is another reason to choose someone else: He has lousy taste in TV shows and superheroes. In fact, his comments about why he identifies with Spiderman are kinda scary. Samantha Grasso at Splinter has the story.

Jessye Norman has gone to God. She was a diva in the best sense of the word. Her death comes a few days before the first anniversary of the death of the great Monserrat Caballe. It is all too sad. Norman was the most statuesque singer of her era, able to command a stage, indeed to make the world her stage. If you doubt it, consider that when France celebrated its *bicentenaire*, and they wanted someone to sing *La Marseillaise* at the main celebration, instead of turning to one of many great French singers, they turned to Jessye. Who else could appear draped in a huge tent of a *tricoleur* dress at the foot of the obelisk in the Place de la Concorde? Here is the video.

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

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