Opinion
News



by Michael Sean Winters

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At America magazine, Gerry O'Connell on Cardinal Angelo Scola's recent comments taking on the critics of Pope Francis and reminding them that "the pope is the pope." It would be nice if additional members of the Sacred College — and other bishops, too — follow Scola's lead and publicly repudiate their brothers in the episcopate who are so keen to criticize Francis and undermine the unity of the church.

Several right-wing websites are inviting people to complain to Bishop Oscar Solis of Salt Lake City because he denied Communion to a man and his daughter who insisted on receiving on the tongue. Good for the bishop. The man and his daughter are the only persons in the church who are not wearing a mask, risking the health of everyone else. Be sure to send Solis a note complimenting him for standing up for life and against foolishness.

At the Atlantic, Wilfred Codrington III makes the case for a "Third Reconstruction," that is, an explicit effort by the federal government to address racism. The first Reconstruction failed miserably and the second, starting with Harry Truman's decision to desegregate the military in 1948, *Brown* v. *Board of Education* in 1952 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, succeeded in some ways and failed in others. Who

can doubt Codrington is correct in suggesting it is time for another try at beating racism out of American public life?

There is morally obtuse and then there is Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas who compared protesters in Portland, Oregon, to Confederates bombing Fort Sumter in an appearance on "Fox & Friends." The blip ends before you can tell if the other guests pulled out all their hair, but I think we know the answer. At Fox News these days, you would not know there is a pandemic, only that there are protesters. In fact, there are very few protesters who vandalize property but I think I have seen the same storefront window in Portland get broken two dozen times on Fox, so maybe the hosts are confused.

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In The New York Times, a report on Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's effort to obstruct an inquiry into his and his wife's misuse of public monies. I actually think we need to revisit ethics laws to reflect reality: Of course, a time might arise when the person best positioned to walk the dog happens to be a staffer. But the instinct for cover-up in this administration is what is more frightening because it betokens a lack of accountability.

From our friends at the Anti-Defamation League, a reminder that the Rev. Louis Farrakhan continues to spread his venomous anti-Semitism and it continues to get picked up by celebrities and others. In his July Fourth speech, the preacher referred to Jews collectively as "Satan" and encouraged his listeners to "fight Satan the arch deceiver [and] the imposter Jews who are worthy of the chastisement of God." Nice.

From urban affairs magazine City Journal, Notre Dame's Nicole Garnett makes the case for Catholic schools in light of the Supreme Court decision in *Espinoza* v. *Montana*. What a grim irony that the man who claims he is "the best [president] in the history of the Church" has, with his incompetent response to the coronavirus, brought Catholic education to its most dire situation ever. We survived decades of persecution and prejudice, but hundreds of Catholic schools will not be able to reopen because, unlike other countries, the virus is still spreading and killing at an alarming rate.

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

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