Opinion
Letters to the Editor



by NCR Staff

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The Vatican announced Nov. 11 that Pope Francis had effectively fired Texas Bishop Joseph Strickland. In recent years, the firebrand prelate questioned the safety of the coronavirus vaccines, called synodality "garbage," and endorsed a video that attacked Francis himself as a "diabolically disoriented clown," reported NCR staff reporter Brian Fraga. Following are NCR reader responses to this story with letters that have been edited for length and clarity.

Thank you, thank you, thank you Pope Francis!

ERIC L. HOOVER
Pontiac, Michigan

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I am in the Diocese of Austin, a neighbor to the Tyler Diocese that just lost their Bishop Strickland. I am a Catholic that is happy with the decision of Pope Francis to remove Strickland. And still, as many people rejoice in the replacement of Strickland, please know that in Texas, if not the entire church, bishops' accountability is still very much lacking.

ANNE M. LATOUR
Bryan, Texas

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"Pope Francis axes firebrand Texas Bishop Strickland, darling of right-wing Twitter," this headline tells me all I need to know about your site. You must be the woke darlings of the left-wing media. Strickland defends the faith of the church as given to us, not the new, woke church presented by the pope.

GAY BOSTON
Hurst, Texas

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Now Strickland and his "true believers" can join the Society of St. Pius X. Or maybe he can simply disappear from the Catholic Church.

RICHARD CRANK
Topeka, Kansas

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I am not impressed with our current pope interfering with a bishop who remains true to the course. Where is Saint John Paul II when we need him?

CHARLES LOPRESTO
Phoenix, Arizona

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No one who is acquainted with the rhetoric of Bishop Strickland should be surprised by this outcome. Although not alone, Strickland appeared to be the most vocal of a number of prelates who seem to think the Catholic Church in America is a distinct entity from the universal church. Our culture is polarized and the polemics pervade our political discussions. However, it is not in the interests of the church to allow clerics to add to that divisiveness by politicizing the church. Hopefully, the removal of Strickland will send a clear message to the USCCB that verbally questioning Pope Francis' vision is perhaps permissible in a synodal environment. However, overt slander and arguments to divide the faithful is not something the Vatican should allow even though expressions of different opinions are something a synodal church would otherwise encourage.

CHARLES A. LEGUERN
Granger, Indiana