Culture



Left: Pope Leo XIV leads his weekly general audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican Jan. 28, 2026. Right: U.S. comedian and writer Stephen Colbert speaks with reporters in the Lapidary Gallery of the Apostolic Palace, after meeting Pope Francis during an audience June 14, 2024. (CNS photos/Lola Gomez)

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If anyone can get a late night interview with Pope Leo XIV, it's Stephen Colbert. But that doesn't mean it'll be easy.

During a guest appearance on "Late Night with Seth Meyers" Jan. 27, America's second most famous Catholic revealed two secrets: the date of his final show and the interview he hopes to land before that time comes.

When CBS's cancellation of "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" was announced last July, the broadcast company claimed the decision was a financial one. But the fact that the termination came right after Colbert called out on air a "big, fat bribe" between CBS's parent company and President Donald Trump did not escape public notice.

Chatting with Meyers, Colbert announced that his final show will be May 21, prompting Meyers to ask which "dream guest" the veteran talk show host would want to book before then. Colbert didn't hesitate: "The pope," he said simply. "American pope!"

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Longtime viewers weren't surprised. Colbert is well known for his devotion to the Catholic faith, frequently backing up his political commentary with Scripture and asking guests thought-provoking questions about God in between comedic jabs.

Stirring the pot, Meyers wryly opined that the "new pope's the one you want," compared to Pope Francis, who "would not have been a good talk show guest."

"He would have been an infallible talk show guest," Colbert disputed before joking that Meyers was right to decline the chance to meet Francis in 2024, referring to the papal audience attended by over 100 international comedians. "This attitude does not go across in the Apostolic Palace," he teased. "Those Swiss Guards will take that halberd and just take you down, in their big pantaloons and everything."

With only four months until May 21, Colbert better be praying for divine intervention if he wants to get Pope Leo on air. But, hey, unlikelier miracles have happened.