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The Eisenhower Memorial Controversy

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Distinctly Catholic

There is a storm brewing in Washington and, mercifully, it has nothing to do with conscience protections. The design for a monument to President Dwight Eisenhower as come in for criticism, especially from Eisenhower's family who think the architect, Frank Gehry, took one line for a forgettable speech by Ike and made it the basis for a monument design that is oddly discordant with Eisenhower's life. The family is right - the design is deplorable.

This is the second issue surrounding the design of projects in the monumental core of DC. Officials finally agreed to change the words etched into the monument to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The words were not a direct quote and they made King sound like a "twit" according to Maya Angelou.

Where are the great architects of our day capable of designing monuments that are dignified and, well, mounmental, without being boring? Who is the Bernini of our day? The churches of Rome are filled with monuments he designed, each of them differant and all of them provocative and, most importantly, all of them beautiful. Alas, we seem stuck with impressionistic garbage from Gehry and a socialist realist portrayal of the only Baptist minister to earn a spot on the Mall.

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