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Papa Luciani Speaks

by Michael Sean Winters

Distinctly Catholic

It is one of the funnier characteristics of a certain kind of liberal Catholic, that they love to entertain "what if's" to explain why reality has not tended towards their views. So, they wonder, what if Pope John XXIII had lived to see the Council to completion? One obvious answer: the Mass would still be in Latin! The brief pontificate of Albino Luciani, Pope John Paul I, was another such moment. Of course, when Pope John Paul II was first elected, liberals embraced him, hoping his penchant for skiing somehow indicated a desire for theological experimentation. But, within a year, the musings began - if only Papa Luciani had lived. (In Rome, bumper stickers appeared that read: "Paul come back. All is forgiven!")

In a story over at Vatican Insider, we find that the possibility of a liberal heyday under Pope John Paul I was unlikely. "The Lord wants us to obey the hierarchy," he is quoted as saying. Alas, he had a great smile, and he had an undeniable pastoral sensibility. But, he was no liberal.

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