

September 9, 2018 – IS THE POPE CATHOLIC?

"Is the Pope Catholic?"

It's an old one-liner to be used when someone asks a question with a manifestly obvious affirmative answer. Is the Pope Catholic?, does the bear poop in the forest?, is the frog's rear-end watertight? etc., etc.

And yet we can begin to question the Pope's beliefs. When faced with an ocean of pedophiles, he lectures us about an ocean of plastic. John O'Sullivan wonders about the pope's faith.

... So what did the bishops and priests who failed either at chastity or at justice or at both believe? Let me suggest three possible answers.

The first answer is: nothing much. They gradually lost their faith as they went through life and woke up one day to find that they were agnostics who had a decent living in the Church and no prospect in middle age of getting a job of equal worth and satisfaction. It's an easy thing to do in a post-Christian society. No doubt their loss of faith was a problem for them, but in a very human way they managed to keep postponing a decision on what to do about it. Maybe they even enjoyed their job, which they defined as a special kind of social worker helping others or, at a more senior level, a special kind of bureaucrat who could use the Church to advance good causes of a secular kind. Of course, agnostics in clerical garb would find it hard to keep the rules on chastity as age and loneliness wore them down. And if they no longer took the priesthood's disciplines (or the authority sustaining them) seriously, even if they remained personally chaste, they would find it hard to impose those rules on others. Their loyalty would gradually shift from the Christian faith to the Church as an institution, and their first response to scandal would be to conceal the vice to protect the institution.

The second sort of belief is, one trusts, a very niche one. Technically speaking, it may not even be a belief. But something deeper and darker than casual agnosticism is indicated by the behavior of the five Pennsylvania priests who took part in the sacrilegious rape/seduction of a young seminarian in a form that mocked the Crucifixion, and in McCarrick's seduction of seminarians, sustained over many years through his iron determination to keep the privileges and protections of a Prince of the Church. Sexual obsessions are powerful forces, and most of us have felt their power and even given in to them at times. (They also lead us into absurd humiliations, which are the stuff of comedy — we must hope that God's sense of humor is working overtime on Judgment Day.) But these cases went further than most. They mixed the betrayal of innocence with a kind of playing with sacrilege that hints at a more radical evil than surrender to sexual temptation. This may turn out to be exaggerated. I hope so. But some elements in the scandal are a reminder that sin is rejecting God, and the worst sin is consciously and defiantly doing so.

The third belief, humanitarianism, is the most subtle substitute for lost faith because it passes itself off as Christian belief in much the same way that Communism in the 1940s passed itself off as "liberalism in a hurry." It does indeed contain Christian themes — compassion, notably — but as Daniel Mahoney argues in a forthcoming book, it separates these virtues from the Christian realism about human nature that makes them effective and uplifting. It tends to deny evil and to elevate comfort, including psychological comfort, as the highest good. Instead of persuading people to confront their vices and change their lives, therefore, it offers therapy,

welfare dependency, and bureaucratic control as the solutions to social evils. The solutions look like Christian concern, but they produce such results as an underclass, crime, family breakdown, and the spread of abortion and euthanasia. ...

Late last year, in The Federalist, Julie Kelly commented on misplaced priorities. In a letter to world leaders gathered at a United Nations conference earlier this month in Germany, Pope Francis applauded their efforts to "counteract one of the most worrying phenomena our humanity is experiencing." He warned the prestigious group against "falling into the trap of these four perverse attitudes: denial, indifference, resignation and trust in inadequate solutions."

So, what threats and perversions in this broken world was the pope referring to? The sickening, random attacks by murderous Islamic terrorists? Madmen acquiring destructive nuclear weapons? The living hell endured by millions of young girls around the world from prostitution, child marriage, weaponized gang rape, and female genital mutilation? Tyranny in North Korea, famine in the Sudan, oppression in Venezuela?

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At this point, it's hard to tell:

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The pope also denounced as "unacceptable" the privatization of water resources at the expense of the "human right to have access to this good." Environmental protection is a priority of his papacy.

Francis urged politicians to apply "farsighted responsibility" and generosity in dealing with climate change, as well migration policies including about those who "risk their lives at sea in search of a better future."

Nice job of working "refugees" and "migrants" into the remarks as well. Seriously, given the enormous crisis of faith the Catholic laity is currently experiencing, is this really what's on the Pope's mind?

Come back, Benedict, your Church needs you.

John Hinderaker notices that journalists cover for their idiot left-wing friends. They covered for Obama and now they cover for the Pope.

National Review

Is the Pope a Catholic?

Francis himself is accused of participating in the cover-up of abuse by priests.

by John O'Sullivan

No one can have much to add to National Review Online's coverage of the crisis in the Catholic Church. Michael Brendan Dougherty, Kathryn Lopez, and other colleagues have covered all the shocking events fully and with a kind of angry or hurt conscientiousness: the nature and extent of the sexual abuse; the quiet shuttling of pedophile priests from one parish to another; the legalistic bullying and manipulation of victims and their families; the placing of the Church's political and financial interests above justice and charity; the fact that bishops showed greater concern, even tenderness, towards clerical abusers than towards those they abused; and the repeated assurances that these abuses were being corrected when in fact they were being concealed and smoothed over. These revelations have been deeply disturbing, and anyone predicting them a few years ago would have been dismissed — as indeed some critics of the bishops were dismissed — as dealing in fantasies of sexual perversion and blasphemy.

Despite the sensational nature of the revelations, however, we all had the eerie sense that there might be worse to come. And it came last weekend in the form of the statement by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former apostolic nuncio to the United States, on the Vatican's handling of sexual misconduct by priests that implicated Pope Francis and other senior churchmen in the concealment of such abuses. Archbishop Viganò's allegations are, for the moment, allegations. But they are extremely serious ones — either a malicious character assassination of the pope and other senior churchmen or a deeply shocking revelation of corruption and wickedness at the highest levels of Catholicism. They are also sufficiently detailed as to be open to either refutation or confirmation by the bishops and Vatican officials accused or exonerated in them. Unusually for criticisms of the Church, especially such grave ones, they have received some support from leading clerics in America, Rome, and elsewhere.

The pope himself was "ambushed" by questions from the media as he returned from his visit to Ireland. His response, leaving it to the journalists to judge the archbishop's charges for themselves, was ambiguous. He may have felt that the charges were self-evidently false and malicious and that it was beneath his dignity to respond to them. But he cannot leave it there. There is no way that the Church can avoid dealing with them promptly, openly, and candidly.

After all, Archbishop Viganò is a distinguished churchman. He is at the end of his career. He can have no this-worldly ambition. So what is he doing and why? Others more knowledgeable may offer better explanations, but I can suggest only four: Viganò is lying; he is sincere but mentally ill; he is an innocent manipulated by others; he is telling the truth in whole or in part.

The faithful need to know which explanation is correct. Given what we already know from the McCarrick case and the Pennsylvania grand-jury report, the fourth must be granted a real possibility. If so, it may still be that Viganò's motives are corrupt — i.e., he wants to topple a liberal Pope. But if his charges are true, they are such a serious matter that his motives are of interest mainly to God. His statement must therefore lead to serious investigations, which, since the allegations involve crimes as well as sins, will inevitably be conducted by secular authorities as well as church ones. In the next few years, therefore, we seem likely to learn a great deal more about evil in the garb of priestly virtue and episcopal authority. And that raises a question that has not yet been given the same attention as sexual abuse and its cover-up above.

In his *New York Times* column on the McCarrick case — a month and an age ago — Ross Douthat said of the former cardinal that after the clerical-abuse scandal in Boston broke, "the Washington archbishop became the avuncular, reassuring media point person for his fellow bishops, issuing statements of concern and condemnation that if he really feared the punishments of hell would have turned to ashes in his mouth." Those words were striking, indeed piercing. What did McCarrick believe? What does he believe? Did the punishments of hell feature in his mind at all? What did bishops and other senior clerics think they were doing when they either passed predator priests on to other parishes after a brief psychological counseling or turned a blind eye to sex parties in the seminaries? Are they really Catholics? Or Christians of some other kind? Or men who had lost their faith almost without realizing the fact? Or men who had adapted Catholicism to other philosophies, which had promptly digested it? Or something worse?

I imagine that most church officials believed in the orthodox doctrines of Catholic Christianity and either knew little of what was going on in their dioceses or misread its real character. They would be skeptical of the allegations brought to them, especially since many of those making them were afraid to go on the record, and accepted other explanations. They will now be horrified by their own credulity and anxious to make amends. Maybe their own faith is even at risk as a result. After all, the metastasizing scandal is leading Catholics in the pews to doubt their faith and even, in a spirit of bitterness at what now seems false self-sacrifice, to reject it angrily. Faithful bishops and priests will not be completely immune to this overwhelming disillusionment.

So what did the bishops and priests who failed either at chastity or at justice or at both believe? Let me suggest three possible answers.

The first answer is: nothing much. They gradually lost their faith as they went through life and woke up one day to find that they were agnostics who had a decent living in the Church and no prospect in middle age of getting a job of equal worth and satisfaction. It's an easy thing to do in a post-Christian society. No doubt their loss of faith was a problem for them, but in a very human way they managed to keep postponing a decision on what to do about it. Maybe they even enjoyed their job, which they defined as a special kind of social worker helping others or, at a more senior level, a special kind of bureaucrat who could use the Church to advance good causes of a secular kind. Of course, agnostics in clerical garb would find it hard to keep the rules on chastity as age and loneliness wore them down. And if they no longer took the priesthood's disciplines (or the authority sustaining them) seriously, even if they remained personally chaste, they would find it hard to impose those rules on others. Their loyalty would gradually shift from the Christian faith to the Church as an institution, and their first response to scandal would be to conceal the vice to protect the institution.

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behavior of the five Pennsylvania priests who took part in the sacrilegious rape/seduction of a young seminarian in a form that mocked the Crucifixion, and in McCarrick's seduction of seminarians, sustained over many years through his iron determination to keep the privileges and protections of a Prince of the Church. Sexual obsessions are powerful forces, and most of us have felt their power and even given in to them at times. (They also lead us into absurd humiliations, which are the stuff of comedy — we must hope that God's sense of humor is working overtime on Judgment Day.) But these cases went further than most. They mixed the betrayal of innocence with a kind of playing with sacrilege that hints at a more radical evil than surrender to sexual temptation. This may turn out to be exaggerated. I hope so. But some elements in the scandal are a reminder that sin is rejecting God, and the worst sin is consciously and defiantly doing so.

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In the early stages of the sex-abuse scandal in Boston, bishops and priests showed a naïve faith in Freud rather than God and thought that deeply rooted pedophilia could be massaged away with a few courses of psychiatric counseling. Some of the cases in Pennsylvania show bishops expressing more concern for a predator priest than for his victim. We shouldn't dismiss either reaction entirely; psychiatry has a role in getting people to recognize and conquer their vices, and a religious superior has a duty to care for the souls of his pastors who have fallen into grave sins. But those considerations should come a long way after getting sexual offenders, especially priestly ones, to recognize the grave harm they have done to others and helping their victims to overcome that spiritual and psychological harm.

Even after all that's happened, some bishops don't seem to grasp such simple points. Archbishop Blaise Cupich of Chicago sounded like a *SNL* parody of a secular humanitarian politician when he said: "The pope has a bigger agenda. He's got to get on with other things, of talking about the environment and protecting migrants and carrying on the work of the church. We're not going to go down a rabbit hole on this." This is an unbelievably trivial response to the Church's moral crisis. Suppose that Viganò's charges are false, where is the righteous anger of those unjustly accused that should animate Cupich's words? Suppose the charges are true, on the other hand, where is the bitter shame and determination to cleanse the Augean stables? Instead the archbishop blandly elevates a few contemporary political causes — one of which he describes with inadvertent candor as "talking about the environment" — above the grave sins plausibly committed by churchmen against the innocent, the public, and the Church. It's all very tepid, nothing much to repent here, move along now. Apart from a few references to the instruction to McCarrick that he now live a life of prayer and penance — the first such instruction having lapsed — there has been very little sign of anguish, shame, repentance, and restitution on the part of those who have been credibly accused of protecting sins and sinners from justice.

If we are going to see a proper accounting of these things, it looks as if it will have to be delivered through the criminal-justice system. That has already happened in some of the cases revealed in the Pennsylvania report. Three hundred priests have been accused, with some

convicted; a few still face trial, and many are dead. But the case that now really counts is that of McCarrick. It is unlikely that he will face prosecution for his seduction of seminarians. As one Italian religious journalist has observed indulgently, the seminarians were above the age of consent and suffered no actual violence even if they experienced pressure and distress. That's a very worldly standard for a bishop to rely on for protection on a sex charge, even in post-Christian Italy and America, and it would play very badly with public opinion, but it's probably enough to keep him out of court. Nor will he face human justice in the case of the minor child of family friends whom he both baptized and seduced. The statute of limitations has run out.

That is something he may now regret. It would be an opportunity of a kind, after all. If he were to plead not guilty and hire a ruthlessly brilliant lawyer to mount a scorched-earth defense on his behalf, he would be doing what any other white-collar criminal does in similar circumstances. A guilty plea, on the other hand, would be evidence of penitence, shame, and desire to make amends — far more so than retreating into a monastery for prayer and penance. And because child abusers face a hard time in prison, it would require real courage in addition to the humiliations that he would inevitably suffer. It would also tell us that McCarrick fears the punishments of the next world far more than the pains and humiliations of prison in this one.

And that would be a start.

The Federalist

Pope's Fixation On Climate Change Endangers His Authority And Entrenches Poverty

At a time of feckless world leadership, this powerful religious leader chooses to push politically loaded climate orthodoxy instead of addressing legitimate problems.

by Julie Kelly Nov. 28, 2017

In a letter to world leaders gathered at a United Nations conference earlier this month in Germany, Pope Francis applauded their efforts to "counteract one of the most worrying phenomena our humanity is experiencing." He warned the prestigious group against "falling into the trap of these four perverse attitudes: denial, indifference, resignation and trust in inadequate solutions."

So, what threats and perversions in this broken world was the pope referring to? The sickening, random attacks by murderous Islamic terrorists? Madmen acquiring destructive nuclear weapons? The living hell endured by millions of young girls around the world from prostitution, child marriage, weaponized gang rape, and female genital mutilation? Tyranny in North Korea, famine in the Sudan, oppression in Venezuela?

No, the leader of the world's Catholic flock was referring to *climate change*. His message was aimed at the 20,000 delegates attending the United Nations' 23rd annual climate change conference in Bonn: "I would like to reaffirm my urgent call to renew dialogue on how we are building the future of the planet. We need an exchange that unites us all, because the environmental challenge we are experiencing, and its human roots, affects us all." His holiness also cheered the 2015 Paris climate accord, which the Trump administration ditched last summer, and urged the group to move forward to achieve the pact's goals.

At a time of weak, feckless world leadership, it is sad, if not irresponsible, to have this powerful religious leader choose to push politically motivated climate orthodoxy rather than address legitimate problems in an unsafe world. Historically, the papacy has inspired non-Catholics and even non-Christians during perilous times. I cannot help but think of John O'Sullivan's brilliant and moving book, "The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister," which touted the success of Pope John Paul II, Ronald Reagan, and Margaret Thatcher in vanquishing the Soviet Union. The contrast makes Pope Francis's focus on human-caused climate change even more galling.

Climate Change Is a Mask for Economic Control

This week, Francis is in Myanmar and Bangladesh, two destitute nations reeling from a refugee crisis due to the religious persecution of minority Muslims, and where serious threats against the countries' small Catholic population are increasing. Despite the myriad woes afflicting his poor flock, the pope will still waste time talking about global warming: "This visit is for spiritual causes, for highlighting peace and harmony," the archbishop of Dhaka told the *Washington Post*. "But the Holy Father will also touch upon other very important issues that concern Bangladesh. The Rohingya crisis and climate change will come up prominently." Holy moly.

But it makes sense for a man who laments the evils of capitalism to advance the climate change agenda, which is rooted in Francis's preferred collectivist-based economic system. Francis blames terrorism on "a world economy has at its center the god of money and not the person." He rejects meritocracy and claims "the new capitalism gives a moral cloak to inequality."

In his view, the business man is evil, and the terrorist is a victim. That's why climate change is the ideal cause for Francis: climate policies punish private industry, redistribute wealth globally, enact punitive taxes and harsh regulations, and minimize the role of technology. It is not about the environment or science; it is the late-twentieth-century model of how to impose socialism while looking like you really care about polar bears and sea levels.

This Is an Unholy Obsession for Pope Francis

Over his nearly five-year reign, Pope Francis has devoted an extraordinary amount of time and focus on manmade climate change. In 2015, a few months before Paris climate conference, the Vatican published "Laudato Si," his encyclical about "care for our common home." The paper is a lengthy rant against greed, industry, technology, and consumption, declaring that "never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years."

Naomi Oreskes, a well-known environmental activist, wrote the report's introduction and the pope was subsequently criticized for aligning with other leftists who support abortion, population control, and contraception, policies inimical to Catholic tenets.

"Laudato Si" dismisses the reality that wealthy people in developed nations are typically far better stewards of nature than poor people in developing countries are: "A sober look at our world shows that the degree of human intervention, often in the service of business interests and consumerism, is actually making our earth less rich and beautiful."

The paper cautions against adopting beneficial technologies like genetically engineered crops and nuclear energy because it gives "those with the knowledge...an impressive dominance over the whole of humanity and the entire world." During their meeting at the Vatican last May, Francis gave President Trump a signed copy of his encyclical. A few weeks later, Trump announced the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.

So Is Inspecting Science a Moral, or Venial, Sin?

In a world full of villains, Francis saves some of his harshest invective for climate "deniers." Speaking to reporters last September from the papal plane—yes, an evil, fossil-fueled jumbo jet built and sold by greedy industrialists—Francis said climate deniers reminded him "of a phrase from the Old Testament, from the Psalm, 'Man is stupid.' When you don't want to see, you don't see." He claimed, "history would judge" anyone who denies climate change is happening.

Fossil fuel corporations are also on the pope's naughty list. Citing "Laudato Si," 40 Catholic institutions announced last month they would divest from fossil fuel interests, and other groups are expected to follow. In July 2016, the same month Islamic terrorists killed 86 people in Nice, 29 people in a Bangladeshi bakery, and 323 people in Baghdad shopping district, the pope called for a World Day of Prayer...*for the planet*.

Most alarming about Francis's climate advocacy is how it harms the same vulnerable people he wants to protect. In his letter to the Bonn delegates, Francis condemns the "strong links between combating climate change and poverty," and cites that myth to promote a "low or zero-carbon model of economic development." But that approach is precisely why hundreds of millions of poor people continue to live in poverty.

It is not climate change that causes global poverty, but the absence of a reliable, affordable energy grid does. Bangladesh is one of the most energy-poor countries in the world; only 60 percent of Bangladeshis are connected to an electricity grid. Instead, Bangladeshis rely on "biofuels, such as wood, cow dung and agricultural residues [that] are collected mainly from the local environment and have become a traded commodity as cooking fuel as access to local biomass becomes ever more difficult. Inefficient, kerosene lamps are the most common sources of light."

Insisting that developing nations shun their troves of coal and natural gas resources to scale up wind, solar, and geothermal energy to avoid emitting carbon dioxide is literally keeping large swaths of the global South in the dark. People without electricity can't work, grow food, access clean water, go to school, or get basic health care efficiently. Many more women die in childbirth, and mothers watch their children suffer from hunger and disease.

The Vatican's unholy alliance with climate activists, many of whom hold views hostile to Catholic doctrine, is extending that misery. That, not climate denial or indifference, is a real perversion the pope should worry about.

Pajamas Media **[Is the Pope Catholic?](#)**

by Michael Walsh

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work to save what he hails as the "marvelous," God-given gift of the "great waters and all they contain." He said efforts to fight plastics litter must be waged "as if everything depended on us."

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Nice job of working "refugees" and "migrants" into the remarks as well. Seriously, given the enormous crisis of faith the Catholic laity is currently experiencing, is this really what's on the Pope's mind?

Come back, Benedict, your Church needs you. **(Maybe it doesn't)**

Powerline

THE SCANDAL OF LEFT-WING JOURNALISTS COVERING A LEFT-WING POPE

by John Hinderaker

Last year, my wife and I visited Italy for the first time. In Rome, we arranged for a guide to take us through the Vatican. I envisioned an elderly gentleman, but our guide turned out to be an attractive young woman who, I soon decided, was a practicing Catholic. At one point, she asked me guardedly what I thought of Pope Francis. I'm not a Catholic, I said, so it's probably none of my business. But I don't like him. He seems to care more about left-wing politics than about Christianity. When it comes to politics and economics, he is ignorant; he should stick to theology. She discreetly kept silent, but I was pretty sure she agreed.

I didn't know the half of it. Steve described the scandal that is now engulfing the papacy—or would be engulfing it, if reporters were not trying to protect their fellow left-winger—[here](#). The scandal begins with Pennsylvania's Cardinal McCarrick, whose career as a homosexual who corrupted priests and parishioners alike, apparently on an epic scale, has come to light. Pope Francis has protected McCarrick, apparently reversing sanctions that had been imposed on him by Pope Benedict, while transferring him to Washington, D.C.

Pope Francis's role was brought to light by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò of Ulpiana in the Balkans, who himself discussed McCarrick with Francis and who has alleged, based on his own experience, that Francis was personally involved in protecting McCarrick, who was an important booster of Francis in his bid for the papacy.

The broader context of the scandal is that the American Catholic church welcomed an influx of homosexuals into the priesthood several decades ago. These homosexual priests were the source of the scandals that have devastated the Catholic church in America. It appears that they remain a major power within the church hierarchy, that they supported Francis in his ascension to the papacy, and that he continues to ally himself with them.

At First Things, John Waters has an article titled "Francis and the Journalists." He observes that what has bedeviled the American church is not pedophilia, a rare and plainly aberrant condition, but rather homosexuality:

We have known since the John Jay Report published by the US bishops in 2004 that the overwhelming majority of abuse in the Church was carried out against teenage boys. The levels of pedophilia in the Church are shown by this report to be below those of the general population—whereas the levels of homosexual abuse were many multiples of the general situation.

[T]he problem arises in large part from the invasion of the priesthood in the 1970s and 1980s by unprecedented numbers of gay men, devoid of vocations, who now seek to undermine Church teaching on all sexual questions and who—rightly or wrongly—have come to see Pope Francis as an ally. This fifth column, the peel masquerading as the fruit, is the chief agent of the coverups of the abuses its own members have perpetrated.

For several decades, international news media have enthusiastically promoted (while usually misrepresenting) the story of homosexual abuse among the Catholic priesthood. And yet, now that the scandal has been dropped at the door of the Pope (!) by an archbishop speaking of his own experience, the press has fallen silent. Why?

Almost from the beginning, the media—who have otherwise sought at every turn to bury the Church—have adopted Pope Francis as their champion, creating an entirely bogus, indeed asinine, good pope—bad pope dichotomy between Francis and his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI. This is why Archbishop Viganò's statement was not widely reported in the Irish media (or indeed elsewhere) until late in the day last Sunday, and then only grudgingly, with the reports laced with innuendo about Viganò's motivation and timing.

Why was Viganò not portrayed as a heroic whistleblower? Because he blew the whistle on a leftist pope, whose views on homosexuality, and many other issues, are shared by pretty much all reporters.

The pope's exchange with journalists on the plane back to Italy must rank as one of the strangest episodes of mutual avoidance in the history of journalism. An issue that journalists have prosecuted with extreme vigor for a quarter-century had finally arrived at the door of a pope: a direct and concrete accusation that, in a specific instance, he had protected a serial sexual abuser.

Yet the omertà of the day continued into the early exchanges of the press conference, with several questions from Irish journalists making no reference to the matter. Then Anna Matanga of CBS—the first mainstream platform to cover the Viganò story on Sunday—asked: "This morning, very early, a document by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò came out. In it, he says that in 2013 he had a personal talk with you at the Vatican, and that in that talk, he spoke to you explicitly of the behavior of and the sexual abuse by former—Cardinal McCarrick. I wanted to ask you if this was true. I also wanted to ask something else: The archbishop also said that Pope Benedict sanctioned McCarrick, that he had forbidden him to live in a seminary, to celebrate Mass in public, he couldn't travel, he was sanctioned by the Church. May I ask you whether these two things are true?"

The pope replied: "I will respond to your question, but I would prefer last—first we speak about the trip, and then other topics. ... I read the statement this morning, and I must tell you sincerely that, I must say this, to you and all those who are interested. Read the statement carefully and make your own judgment. I will not say a single word about this. I believe the statement speaks for itself. And you have the journalistic capacity to draw your own conclusions. It's an act of faith. When some time passes and you have drawn your conclusions, I may speak. But, I would like your professional maturity to do the work for you. It will be good for you. That's good."

Huh?

To the uninitiated, this seems like a desperate prevarication mixed with feeble flattery, a playing for time. But if it was a prevarication, it turned out to be an effective one: The pope's refusal to answer the question was meekly accepted by the journalists present, who would surely have brought the plane down had the pontiff's name been Benedict or John Paul. The Viganò story has since gained little traction in the mainstream, except for the purpose of discrediting the archbishop.

It seems pretty clear that liberal reporters and editors view Pope Francis as an ally, maybe one who could decisively neutralize their long-time adversary, the Catholic church. Hence they are protecting him against what would, with a conservative pope, be a scandal of historic proportions.

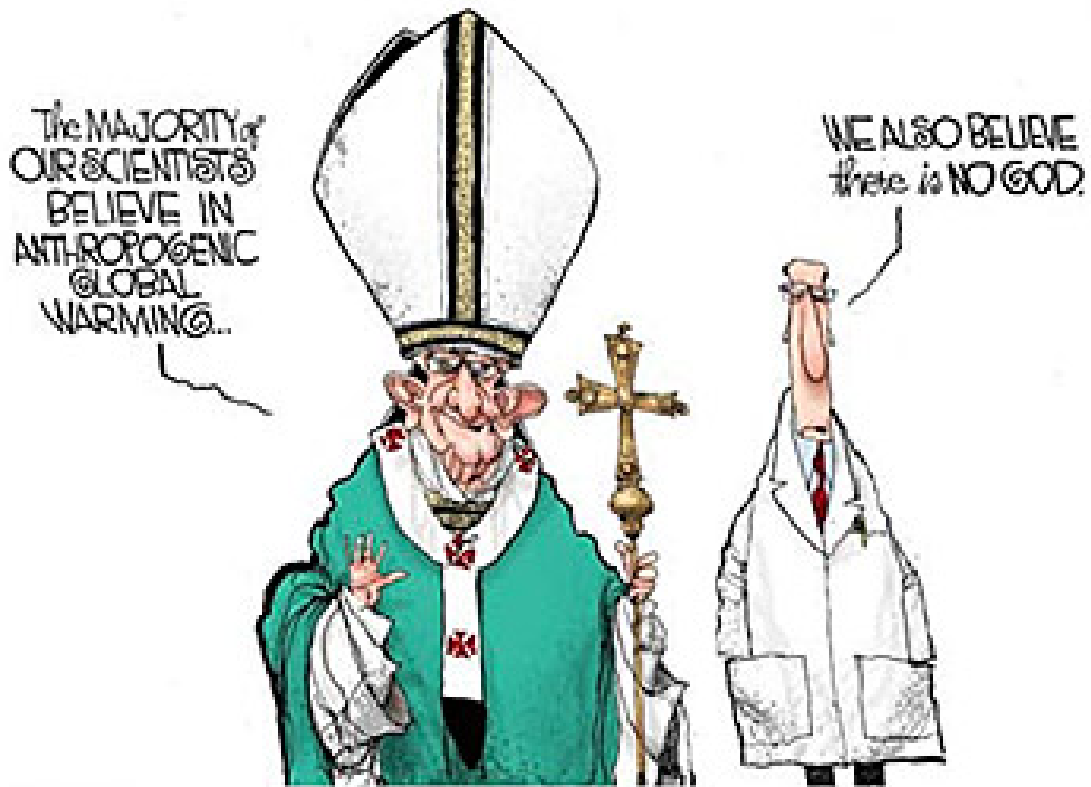
Waters concludes this piece by offering a translation of what Francis said to the journalists on the airplane. I think his interpretation is fair:

Read the statement in the knowledge of the relationship you and I share: We are men and women of the world and like-minded on what is important. We know where we stand on matters like homosexuality and homosexual priests. But be careful how you handle this Viganò business—a wrong word could undo all we have achieved. I have faith in you to figure out who this man is. Do your work well and there will be no need for me to risk my position. Once you have defused the situation, I will deal with Viganò for the record. We are all adults here. I know I can count on you. I need your help on this, but we have an understanding that has worked well so far. Trust me.

Liberal journalists cover a liberal pope. We live in an era that is corrupt in many ways, but I think the corruption of the press is the worst corruption of all.



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Cartoon by Michael Ramirez of *Investor's Business Daily*.



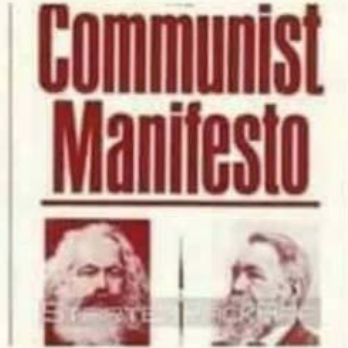
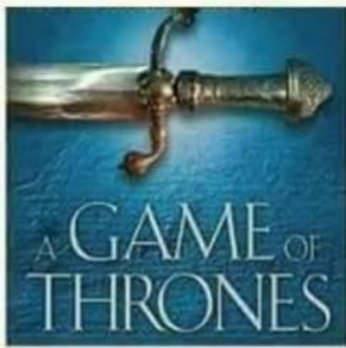
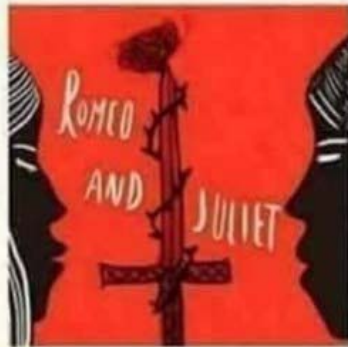
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Individuals whose
ideas fail every time



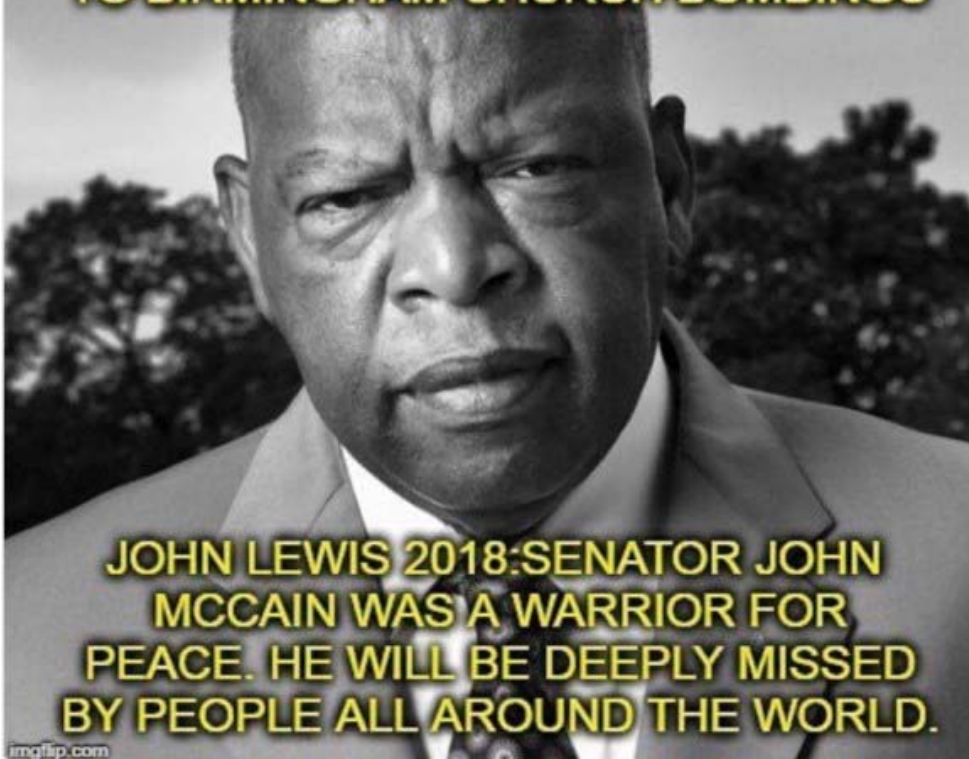
Books where everybody dies at the end:



The combination of the colors red and yellow makes people hungry



**JOHN LEWIS 2008: JOHN MCCAIN
IS SOWING THE SEEDS OF RACE
& DIVISION & LIKENING HIS CAMPAIGN
TO BIRMINGHAM CHURCH BOMBINGS**



**JOHN LEWIS 2018: SENATOR JOHN
MCCAIN WAS A WARRIOR FOR
PEACE. HE WILL BE DEEPLY MISSED
BY PEOPLE ALL AROUND THE WORLD.**

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**HUFFPO 2008: MCCAIN MENTALLY
UNFIT TO BE PRESIDENT**



**HUFFPO 2012: MCCAIN
A RACIST AND A WOMAN HATER**

**HUFFPO 2018: MCCAIN A
BIPARTISAN AMERICAN HERO.**

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"We don't chew on Nikes anymore in this house"



