SETH MEYERS LIKES NEO-NAZI TACTICS

Brooklyn has been hit with a wave of anti-Semitic attacks, and no one uses this as a pretext to make light of them. A Catholic church in Brooklyn was vandalized on January 12—a man interrupted Mass and desecrated the altar with red juice—and Seth Meyers took the occasion to make fun of it on his NBC show.

“A Brooklyn man was arrested at a Catholic church on Sunday for allegedly pouring juice on the altar and splashing it at the priest. Wow, that’s crazy, a crime in a Catholic church that led to an arrest. We will tolerate a lot of stuff here, but you can’t splash the juice. That’s where we draw the line.”

The Nazis used to bust into houses of worship in Germany, and now we have people like Seth Meyers thinking it is cute when neo-Nazis bust into Catholic churches in America. No, Catholics are not fearing pogroms, but it is alarming nonetheless to think that public personalities think it is cute to disrupt a religious service and vandalize a church. The man is sick.

Meyers crossed the line this time.

RADICAL MUSLIMS AND LEFTISTS

ARE A THREAT

Attacks on Christianity, throughout the world, emanate from two principal sources: radical Muslims and leftists. The role played by radical Muslims is detailed in the 2020 World Watch List published by Open Doors; the Gatestone Institute cites radical Muslims as well, but it also mentions the role played by radical left-wing groups.

By using the data provided by Open Doors, of the 50 most oppressive nations for Christians to live in, 38 are run by Muslims and 4 are Communist controlled; the other 8 are neither Muslim nor Communist states.

For all the talk about an Islamic Reformation, it appears that nothing has changed. The violence against Christians is epidemic, yet there is little in the way of Christian persecution of Muslims.

If Muslims run three out of four of the most violent places in the world for Christians to live, radical left-wing groups are responsible for the lion's share of anti-Christian attacks in the secular nations of Western Europe. The Gatestone Institute's research shows that approximately 3,000 Christian churches, schools, cemeteries and monuments were defaced or destroyed there in 2019.

France and Germany are the most anti-Christian nations in Europe; Spain is also notorious for its assaults on Christianity. That these nations are beacons of secularism cannot be denied. Theirs may be a softer persecution than is true in Islamic nations—the left-wing activists favor arson, defecation, looting, mockery, profanation, Satanism, theft, urination, and vandalism to armed attacks on individuals—but it is no less menacing.

Muslim nations that persecute Christians have their origins in the most extreme interpretations of Islam. But what accounts

for the anti-Christian assaults by radical secularists?

The Gatestone researchers sought to understand the motives of the anti-Christian acts in Western Europe. Vandalism and theft were two of the four listed in the report; there was nothing extraordinary about these findings. The other two motives were more revealing: they were grounded in politics and religion.

“Some attacks” they said, “especially those against Roman Catholicism, which some radical feminists and radical secularists perceive to be a symbol of patriarchal power and authority, are political in nature. Such attacks include defacing churches and religious symbols with political graffiti, much of it anarchist or feminist in nature.”

“Many attacks that appear to be religious or spiritual in nature reflect a deep-seated hostility toward Christianity. Such attacks include smearing feces on representations of Jesus Christ or statues of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Other attacks involve the defilement of or theft of Communion wafers…[which] may be the work of Satanists, who use the consecrated host in a ritual called the Black Mass.”

Radical feminists, radical secularists, anarchists, and Satanists. What do they have in common? They are all aligned with the politics of the left.

No one doubts that radical feminists and radical secularists are among the most influential left-wing activists in the western world. More contentious is the proposition that anarchists and Satanists are also associated with left-wing politics.

Historically, some extremists on the right have been anarchists, but today anarchists more typically resemble Antifa in the United States. “Anarchists and antifascists, often called the antifa, are factions of the far left who feel they are not represented by the mainstream Democratic Party.” That description, offered by a reporter for the *Washington*

Post, is accurate.

The Church of Satan says it has no "official" political position. Yet a look at the positions staked out by The Satanic Temple are squarely on the left: for instance, their support for abortion-on-demand is so extreme that it is impossible to go beyond it.

Many who have followed the litany of anti-Christian offenses in Western Europe have noted how left-wing the perpetrators are.

Ellen Fantini, director of The Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians in Europe, says her organization has documented that "churches and other symbols of Christianity in Europe are targets for many groups—from Islamists to radical feminists, LGBT activists to anarchists and self-proclaimed Satanists." Four of the five groups mentioned (the last four) are clearly in the camp of leftists.

The bishop of Fréjus-Toulon, Dominique Rey, agrees, but goes one step further. "We are witnessing the convergence of laicism—conceived as secularism, which relegates the faithful only to the private sphere and where every religious denomination is banal or stigmatized—with the overwhelming emergence of Islam, which attacks the infidels and those who reject the Koran."

It is striking to note that radical Muslims and radical left-wing activists prefer to attack Christianity, but not each other. Yet in terms of their respective worldviews, they could not be more different, particularly on matters governing marriage, the family, and sexuality. Moreover, as Bishop Rey observes, Christianity is being privatized while Islam is expanding in Western Europe. How can this be?

There is no cabal at work. What conjoins the two radical wings, one religious and the other secular, is hatred of Christianity. But the source of their animosity is not the

same. Radical Muslims want to conquer the West but cannot do so without attacking the Christian roots of Western civilization. Radical secularists want a full-blown libertine society—a sexual Shangri-La—but cannot do so without also attacking the Christian roots of Western civilization.

Christians are fighting for their lives against radical Muslims, and are fighting for their heritage against radical left-wing activists. They are the only sane players in this very sick development. More important, Christianity is the only tonic that can save us from their ravages.

WHY ARE DEMOCRATS SO UNHAPPY?

The Democrats are an unhappy people. This has nothing to do with their hatred of President Trump: it's who they are.

Gallup released a poll on February 6 measuring personal life satisfaction. The survey was broken down on the basis of age, sex, income, marital status, family status (e.g. those who have young children), education, race, and political preference.

It was found that those who make over $100,000 a year are the most likely segment of the population to say they are satisfied with their personal life. In second place are Republicans. In last place are those who make less than $40,000. Democrats are second to last.

Similarly, a Gallup poll released in January on happiness found that Republicans are happier than Democrats. Moreover, the gap is widening between Republicans and Democrats on the scale of being "very happy." No data were collected based on income.

Money may not buy happiness but it clearly has an impact on personal life satisfaction. That is easy to understand. But why are Democrats so unsatisfied and so relatively unhappy?

Some might say that because African Americans are more likely to be Democrats and are more likely to be at the low end of the income scale, that racial discrimination is indirectly causing the outcome. That assumption is wrong. The real reason for this divide is religion, not race.

Surveys done on wellbeing have consistently found that there is a positive correlation between religiosity (religious beliefs and practices) and happiness; the more religious a person is the happier he is likely to be.

This is true worldwide. A survey by the Pew Research Center released last year that measured religion and happiness on a global scale found that "actively religious people are more likely than their less-religious peers to describe themselves as 'very happy.'"

We know from many surveys that blacks are much more religious than whites. Indeed, they have more in common with Republicans when it comes to religiosity than they do with white Democrats. The latter are the most secular segment of the population.

So when religion is factored in, we are left with the conclusion that it is white secular Democrats who are the most dissatisfied and the least happy. It is not race and party preference that makes one happy or unhappy. What matters is religiosity.

"Why Are Democrats So Unhappy?" The answer lies more with their lack of religious beliefs and practices—driven by white Democrats—than any other factor.

PLAYING FAVORITES WITH TWO POPES

On New Year's Eve Pope Francis had an altercation with a woman as he walked a line of greeters.

The pope slapped an Asian woman twice on the hand and walked away in a fit of anger. That much is indisputable. Why he did it and what it means is a matter of debate. The Vatican attributed his reaction to being grabbed by the woman as she sought to shake his hand, causing "a shooting pain."

The larger issue here is the way many in the media treated the pope's reaction, and how they typically respond when the source of controversy is Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. Benedict is rarely given the benefit of doubt when a controversy arises.

Claire Giangravé wrote a piece for Religion News Service noting the Holy Father apologized for "being grumpy." The Vatican never indicated that he was grumpy on New Year's Eve, or that he reacts intemperately when he is.

AFP, the French news agency, blamed the pope's bodyguards—they should have been more vigilant.

Several commentators blamed the woman.

Dave Armstrong at Patheos said her reaching out to him with both arms was "shocking and staggering."

International Business Times said the pope's violent reaction was very "human."

John Allen at Crux blamed the Asian woman as well. He said "it

was the grasping woman rather than the pope" who was guilty. He also blamed the pope's ethnicity, saying "the revelation that an 83-year-old Argentinean male has a temper wasn't exactly a thunderclap."

Why is it okay for those on the Left, who are the masters of identity politics, to blame a woman of color while using as exculpatory the pope's alleged machismo upbringing?

There is a game going on here. We have the good pope, Francis, and the bad pope, Benedict. This is currently being played out on the big screen. Those who have reviewed "The Two Popes" have noted the unfair nature of the contrasting portrayals. This includes *Commonweal*, Bishop Robert Barron, *First Things*, the *Washington Post*, and *Vanity Fair*.

This is nothing new. On March 3, 2014, we published an op-ed ad in the *New York Times* titled, "Happy Anniversary Holy Father." On the day of Pope Francis' first year anniversary, March 13, we mentioned the Catholic League's tribute to him in a news release. But we also took the opportunity to comment on the way the media were treating Francis and his predecessor.

"What is particularly odious is the increasing tendency of agenda-ridden Catholics to trash Pope Benedict XVI, as well as Blessed Pope John Paul II: this is done so that their inflated image of Pope Francis stands in sharp contrast to Benedict and John Paul II.

"To those who constantly look at the world through a political lens, there are good popes (Francis) and bad ones (his predecessors). This is a jaundiced view of reality, and it is unfair to all of them."

LOOKS LIKE VICTORY IN NEW YORK STATE

New York State Department of Education has put on ice its proposal to allow public schools to exercise control over private schools. We fought this power grab on two occasions in the past two years and will continue to do so again if it is resurrected. We are delighted to learn that the vast majority of those who responded to the invitation to make a public response to this initiative were opposed to the plan.

On April 5, 2018, we wrote a letter to the Commissioner of Education at the New York State Education Department, Mary Elia, expressing the concerns of the Catholic League. Though the proximate cause for allowing a partial takeover of private schools was alleged curriculum deficiencies in some yeshivas operated by Orthodox Jews, there were passages in the guidelines that actually allowed the state to exercise more control of parochial schools than yeshivas.

We not only protested this idea, we rejected the entire scheme. At stake is the religious autonomy of Catholic and Jewish schools. “To be sure, there are legitimate educational matters that should concern the state,” we said, “regardless of whether a school is private non-sectarian, religious, or public. There are also legitimate church and state issues involved when it comes to the public policing of religious education.”

On August 28, 2019, we issued another statement, this time encouraging our allies to contact the New York State Education Department; we provided the email contact information. The notion that a local public school, which may be a failed institution, would be given oversight over an academically excellent Catholic school is something right out of the Twilight Zone.

Albany education officials should have hit the “stop button,” not the “pause button.” This proposal was killed in the court of public opinion and was certain to be killed in the courts as well. It should be withdrawn and buried.

POPE BRANDS TRANSGENDER THEORY AS EVIL

Pope Francis is on the left of the political spectrum on economic and environmental issues, but he remains a conservative on moral issues. His defense of the rights of the unborn is as strong as his two predecessors, and there is nothing heterodox about his comments on marriage, the family, and sexuality: he is a defender of traditional moral values.

In his apostolic exhortation responding to the Amazon synod’s call for the ordination of married men and a reconsideration of the Church’s position on women deacons, he gave the so-called progressives nothing. In fact, he didn’t even answer their plea—they were summarily dismissed. Worse, as far as the dissidents are concerned, was his embrace of complementarity, that is, the commonsensical observation that men and women are not identical but are indeed complementary.

The Holy Father goes beyond his two predecessors by strongly condemning gender theory. He was recently asked where he sees evil at work today. “One place is ‘gender theory.'” He went on to say that gender theory is “dangerous” because it seeks to destroy basic differences between the sexes. “It would make everything homogenous, neutral. It is an attack on difference, on the creativity of God and on men and women.” These remarks are nothing new for the pope. In 2014, he said, “Gender

ideology is demonic."

Such comments would be enough to get Pope Francis banned from speaking in England—Franklin Graham was just banned for voicing similar comments—and from most colleges and universities in the United States. Many Catholic ones would like to deny him the right to speak the truth about this subject as well, though they wouldn't have the nerve to do so.

If this madness about men and women being interchangeable were just a theory confined to the asylum and the academy (increasingly indistinguishable), no one would care. But unfortunately, it has been operationalized.

Connecticut allows men to compete in women's sports providing the guys consider themselves to be girls. They call such people transgender athletes. But real girls keep losing to these guys in girls' sports and so three real girls have sued claiming that they are being discriminated against under Title IX: it is a federal law that bars discrimination on the basis of sex.

The ACLU, which worked hard to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment for women for 50 years, is defending the discrimination against the girls. "The truth is," it says, "transgender women and girls [meaning men and boys who think they are not men and boys] have been competing in sports at all levels for years, and there is no research supporting the claim that they maintain a competitive advantage."

That's right, the lawyers at the ACLU need to see the research. We don't. That argument implodes by considering the Olympics. The reason why the Olympics is a showcase of sex segregation is precisely because men are stronger and faster than women. If there were not a competitive advantage enjoyed by men, the Olympics would be unisex. It never will be. That is because men have more testosterone than women, and even the ACLU can't do anything about that.

Why is this subject even a matter of debate? Because of the geniuses who populate the academy. It all comes down to the postmodern assault on truth, nature, and nature's God.
Once that is done, a man can consider himself to be a dog and compete in a dog show. He can even be walked by a professor of sociology and access a hydrant. Wonders never cease.

TERRENCE McNALLY DIES AT 81

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the passing of Terrence McNally:

Playwright Terrence McNally has died as a result of complications from coronavirus; he was 81. The four-time Tony award winner came to the attention of the Catholic League when his play, "Corpus Christi," was performed at the Manhattan Theatre Club. The play featured Christ having sex with the twelve apostles and was the source of a demonstration I led when it opened in October 1998.

The *New York Times* got a copy of the script during the summer, before the play debuted. It said that "from the beginning to the end [the script] retells the Biblical story of a Jesus-like figure—from his birth in a Texas flea-bag hotel with people having profane, violent sex in the room next door to his crucifixion as 'king of the queers.'" It added, for good measure, that the Christ-like character, Joshua, "has a long-running affair with Judas and sexual relations with the other apostles." The script ended with a statement to Christians. "If we have offended you, so be it."

The play, interestingly, was replete with gay stereotypes, ranging from the sexual to the scatological. There was crotch grabbing and a clear obsession with the male sex organ. The

Christ-like figure pretended to urinate in front of the audience, and he was joined by three of the apostles, complete with sounds of urination piped into the theater. No doubt this was considered creative.

Joshua had sex with Judas at a high school prom and then another romp with Philip. At one point, Philip said to Joshua, "I hope you have rubbers." He then asked the Jesus-figure to perform oral sex on him.

According to the *New York Times*, the demonstration I led drew 2,000 on a rainy night; only 300 joined a counterdemonstration. "The protest began with a fiery speech by William A. Donohue, the president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights," the newspaper said. "Mr. Donohue shouted criticisms at the opposition. 'You are the real authoritarians at heart. We're the ones that believe in tolerance, not you phonies.'"

The counterdemonstration was organized to protest the free-speech rights of the Catholic League. I never called for censorship. Our critics were led by People for the American Way. They were joined by the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression, the National Coalition Against Censorship, and the PEN American Center. All of these organizations were founded to defend freedom of expression, and all were there to condemn my free-speech rights.

The play turned out to be a bomb. Fintan O'Toole of the New York *Daily News* called it "utterly devoid of moral seriousness or artistic integrity." Clive Barnes of the *New York Post* said it was "dull," and David Lyons of the *Wall Street Journal* rebuked it for its "fatheadedness." The *Washington Post* said "the play plummets to a whole new level of grandiosity," and the *New York Times* pronounced the writing "lazy" as well as "flat and simpleminded." None were critical of the play's Christian bashing, or the fact that McNally singled out Catholics for special treatment.

McNally is gone. Let him rest in peace.

ATHEISTS RIP PENCE FOR CHURCH DONATION APPEAL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on atheist critics of Vice President Mike Pence:

Organized atheists, unlike most Americans who are non-believers, are more often than not driven by hatred of religion and the faithful. Their impulses are totalitarian: they would ban all religious expression if they could. A classic case is Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF).

FFRF has gone ballistic because Vice President Mike Pence recently implored Americans to make donations to their church, even if they cannot attend during the coronavirus crisis.

The atheists said that no American public official "should lend the power and prestige of their office to a particular church or to religion in general." They even accused Pence of being un-American. "Leveraging a global pandemic to drum up church donations is an egregious betrayal of the country's founding principles in order to benefit religion." The atheists added that Pence "should not further encourage Americans to give their money to those who least deserve it."

Their reasoning is bankrupt. Here are four reasons why.

First, Pence was exercising two of his First Amendment rights: freedom of speech and freedom of religion (religious expression is a core constitutional right). Even vice presidents maintain those rights.

Second, Pence did not order anyone to give to their church or offer new tax incentives if they did. His terms were purely volitional.

Third, what Pence said not only did not betray America's founding principles, it affirmed them. Every president in American history has made public appeals expressing the critical role that religion plays in society, especially during times of adversity.

During the Civil War, Lincoln once told his secretary, "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go." Similarly, William McKinley, struggling with his decision to seize the Philippines, said to a group of ministers, "I am not ashamed to tell you, gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night."

Atheists like those at FFRF like to cite Jefferson as an example of a non-believing president who wanted an impregnable wall between church and state. They are badly educated.

When Jefferson was seen carrying a red prayer book, a skeptical citizen asked where he was going. "To church," he replied. "Why, Mr. President, you don't believe a word of it," the citizen said. Jefferson replied, "I, as the chief magistrate of this nation, am bound to give it the sanction of my example." Jefferson also awarded the Kaskaskias Indians $300 so they could build a Catholic church. And all Pence was doing was asking Americans to give to their church!

Fourth, it is risible to read atheists tell the faithful not to give to their church because it will go to "those who least deserve it." Every study on charitable giving shows that atheists are the *least generous and religious Americans are the most generous*. From giving blood to providing food, clothing, and shelter to those in need, the churches,

synagogues, mosques, and other houses of worship lead the way in donating goods and services to those in need.

God bless Vice President Pence for encouraging Americans to support their local religious institutions during this crisis.

Contact FFRF's communications director, Amitabh Pal: apal@ffrf.org

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CELEBRITIES LEARN TO COPE WITH CORONAVIRUS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how celebrities are coping with the coronavirus:

In times of adversity, most Americans turn to God for relief, but there are segments of society that are so thoroughly enmeshed in a culture of secularism that even something as horrific as the coronavirus pandemic is not enough to change them. Hollywood is a case in point. The advice that celebrities are being given is only complicating their condition.

The *Hollywood Reporter* recently interviewed three therapists about the advice they are giving celebrities.

Dennis Palumbo is a former screenwriter-turned-psychotherapist who works almost exclusively with those in the entertainment industry. He tells his patients that they need to adjust to their new environment by letting themselves "process what a change this is" and learn to deal with it. "I think rather than try to get right back on the horse," he advises, "I would suggest walking alongside the horse for a week." Besides being

hopelessly vague, and therefore almost useless, this is classic self-help advice. Self-help aficionados, of course, have no need for God.

Dr. Jenn Mann is a psychotherapist and host of VH1's "Couple's Therapy" and "Family Therapy." She can't bring herself to advise her Hollywood patients to pray—that would be too extreme—but she does come close: meditation is okay. But meditation must have an object. Meditation about what? Given her patients' subculture of self-absorption, we have a good idea it won't be about anyone save themselves.

Philip Pierce is a producer and Beverly Hills psychologist and he recommends that his patients "reflect on one's values, and what is truly meaningful." Those values, however, are hopelessly secular to begin with, thus doing nothing to alter their condition.

Even those celebrities who have been moved to rethink their relationship with God have a hard time breaking away from their narcissistic condition. For example, Miley Cyrus says the coronavirus pandemic has inspired her to reconsider her rejection of religion.

In a conversation with Hailey Bieber (Justin Bieber's wife), the "Wrecking Ball" star said, "So I think now you are telling me that I'm allowed to redesign my relationship with God as an adult and make it how it feels most accepting to me would make me feel so less turned off by spirituality." While it is commendable for Cyrus to have some second thoughts, her statement smacks of self-centeredness.

Hollywood is not wholly unique. We know from many studies that a self-absorbed milieu is characteristic of the media, the arts community, and academia. That is what secularism spawns, and that is not the kind of environment that is particularly helpful at any time, never mind times of adversity. To give those who are already basking in themselves self-centered

advice is worse than folly—it is regressive.

BUFFALO NEWS NEEDS TO BE CONSISTENT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an editorial in the *Buffalo News*:

In a March 18 editorial, the *Buffalo News* called for Buffalo Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger to open the personnel files on priests accused of sexual abuse. The newspaper speaks of a "cult of secrecy" and a "cover-up culture" in the Catholic Church.

We would love to know if the *Buffalo News* can name one—just one—institution in the United States, religious or secular, that *has not handled cases of alleged sexual misconduct in secret*. From Hollywood to the media, and from the public schools to the corporations, virtually every organization has handled cases of alleged wrongdoing behind closed doors.

In other words, the Catholic Church does not have a monopoly on refusing to turn over its personnel files on alleged victims (though some dioceses have). If this is such a big deal for the *Buffalo News*, why doesn't it ask all organizations in Buffalo (we suggest they begin where the action is—in the public schools) to open their personnel files on accused sexual offenders. Let's see how the unions react to that one.

Better still, why doesn't the *Buffalo News* demand that Buffalo organizations do away with non-disclosure agreements? The Catholic Church has (but no institution has followed).

It is not just the *Buffalo News* (which in fairness did not write an insulting editorial the way other papers have on this issue) that needs to be consistent in making these statements, it's every media outlet. We need to stop the cherry picking: religious profiling is no less invidious than racial profiling.

Contact: Kwalter@buffnews.com