

Trump, Gingrich and other "blankedy-blanks" need our prayers

Pope Francis reminds Christians of their duty to pray for government leaders, even "those who did not think as we do" or "slam the door in our face"

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"It is pointless, even tedious, for Christians to waste their time complaining about the world, about society, about everything that is not right. Complaints change nothing."

That was just one of the choice lines in an [extraordinary homily](#) Pope Francis delivered on June 29 for the liturgical feast of Saints Peter and Paul, the "founders" of the Church in Rome.

"Let us remember that complaining is the second door that closes us off from the Holy Spirit, as I said on Pentecost Sunday. The first is narcissism, the second discouragement, the third pessimism," the pope continued.

"Narcissism makes you look at yourself constantly in a mirror; discouragement leads to complaining and pessimism to thinking everything is dark and bleak. These three attitudes close the door to the Holy Spirit," he explained.

Francis then went on to address matters concerning division within the Church. And it would not be a waste of time for all of us to read what he said and meditate more carefully on his words.

Praying for those who govern

But he also had something to say, at least briefly, that's pertinent to the current socio-political mess many countries around the world are currently experiencing.

"Saint Paul urged Christians to pray for everyone, especially those who govern," the 83-year-old Jesuit pope said.

"'But this governor is...'," and there are many adjectives. I will not mention them, because this is neither the time nor the place to mention adjectives that we hear directed against those who govern," he said.

"Let God judge them; let us pray for those who govern! Let us pray: for they need prayer," the pope repeated.

"God expects that when we pray we will also be mindful of those who do not think as we do, those who have slammed the door in our face, those whom we find it hard to forgive," he insisted.

When it comes to those who govern, we can all think of presidents and prime ministers – and those who represent them, do their bidding and give them backing – who have done far worse than merely slam the door in our face; those who have done (or said) things that are seemingly unforgiveable.

On this 244th anniversary of the independence of the United States of America, many of us – and not just US citizens – may find it difficult to pray for a president who has turned a nation that was once a beacon of hope and freedom into a more narcissistic, discouraging and pessimistic place.

Vatican summons US and Israeli ambassadors over West Bank expansion plans

Certainly, we must pray for all leaders and even Donald Trump. But we must also act concretely and do whatever we can to stop them from doing things we believe are unjust, unlawful and potential catalysts for more social unrest and conflict.

And that's why not even 24 hours after Francis preached that remarkable homily, his Secretary of State – Cardinal Pietro Parolin – summoned the ambassadors of the United States and Israel to the Vatican to protest US-sponsored plans to extend Israeli sovereignty over the Palestine territory in the West Bank that is being occupied by Jewish settlers.

The Italian cardinal could have merely prayed for Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu. And he surely does. But he also has a job to do.

So he called Callista Gingrich and Oren David, the two presidents' respective envoys, to the Vatican for separate meetings.

One could feel pity for these two ambassadors for having to represent such divisive world leaders and publicly support their racist, nationalist policies. But pity would be misplaced, especially for Mrs. Gingrich.

While Ambassador David is a career civil servant and diplomat, she is not. She is merely the wife of Newt Gingrich, the man who paved the way for the divisive and ugly political landscape that is now run erratically and brutally by Donald Trump.

Of course, the platinum blond ambassador is only an impeccably coiffed fig leaf that Trump is using to try make his grotesque administration somewhat respectable before the Vatican.

Newt Gingrich: Trump's real ambassador to the Holy See

But with zero political or diplomatic qualifications, she is ambassador in name and ceremonial function only. Donald Trump's real, *de facto* eyes and ears at the Vatican is her husband Newt, the former speaker of the US House of Representatives.

This was all laid out in [this column](#) nearly three years ago.

And [Mr. Gingrich](#) relishes being the power behind the throne. In fact, he is not only the power behind Callista, but he is also the architect of the divisive, denigrating and scorch-and-burn politics that Trump used to win the White House.

Trump sent the Gingriches to Rome and the former House Speaker is using this perch – on American taxpayers' money – to further the division. He does so on regularly scheduled podcasts and interviews on Fox News, staged from the ambassador's residence.

He spews his conspiracy theories and continues to tear down Trump's political rivals with words that are just as insulting or even worse than the president's.

Newt promoting his wacko worldview on the US taxpayer's dime

Recently, Newt [presented](#) a cockamamie theory on how democrats were scheming to steal the 2020 presidential election, throwing out "facts" so dubious they made Trump's most outrageous whoppers seem like little white lies.

And he did all he could to outdo the president in coming up with pejorative adjectives for Nancy Pelosi and Senator Chuck Schumer, the Democratic leaders in the US congress.

That was in an [interview](#) with Sebastian Gorka, a British-born Hungarian alt-right nationalist with dubious academic credentials, who served briefly as a military and intelligence advisor to Trump.

In the world of Newt Gingrich and Donald Trump it's never not the time nor place for this kind of nastiness.

After all, Newt introduced this strategy into contemporary US politics almost 40 years ago and The Donald has been implementing it with a tenacity and bloodlust never before seen in a US president.

So we will pray. But Lady Liberty weeps.

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