

April 24, 2016

Zoinks!

Several months ago, Bishop Brungardt impressed upon me that it would be wise to avoid mentioning political parties or the names of candidates in my column during this election season.

I explained to the bishop that just as in the days of old, when, in times of strife, Catholic peasants turned to their diocese's newspaper for wisdom and knowledge from Church elders (and even a few Church youngsters), so too do the readers of today look upon their Catholic newspaper for those things.

As a Christian humble of birth and nice of hair, can I disallow them the gift of my wisdom--wisdom that may mean the difference between a world of peace and love, and one in which apes (or people of like-mind) eventually take over the world?

But I acquiesced ("acquiesced" means to trip while going down the stairs). I got up, brushed myself off, and realized that as tempting as it is to throw in my two cents, good people – good Catholics – can believe vastly different things when it comes to electing a means to an end. I may wonder if one of the candidates is under the delusion that she/he is a guest star on "Fantasy Island." Yet, many other good people may believe that just because this candidate has ideals that would ultimately result in the earth blowing up like the Death Star, doesn't mean that he/she wouldn't make the finest darned president we've ever seen since, well, ever.

The bishop's guidance was further vindicated when I read (this is sadly true) an article in a religious newspaper that strongly advocated for a candidate who some people like, but I find as appealing as stomach flu. ("Advocate" is to rub a cat's belly until the cat suddenly and without warning *screeeeeches* and uses you for a scratching post.)

I realized then that up until that very moment, I had still been at odds over the bishop's request. But when I read the article in this other paper, the bishop and the guidance was made true in crystal clarity.

What I ask is that you allow me to offer my stances on the issues, knowing that my stances may not be your stances. It depends on your circumstances, hence the term "stances." And "hence."

IMMIGRATION

I'm a strong proponent of immigration reform, whether it be for immigrants who are black, brown, yellow or even the rare orange immigrant. I have great affinity ("affinity" meaning a trowel of spongecake) for immigrants. If I could, I would give them all some affinity upon their arrival, even the "orange" people, who are known for having little white circles around their eyes which they achieve via their national pastime, sitting under a sunlamp until their faces smell like bacon.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

I want to make it very clear that I am absolutely, positively AGAINST equal pay for women! Women getting paid the same as men is absurd. Ridiculous. The thought of it is ... is ... *insane*. Judging by the job that *so many men* in high places have done in recent years, I think it's truly outlandish that women would expect to earn the same wage as a man. Women should get paid MORE!!! Much, much more.

SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS

When we decided we'd rather watch the news than Scooby and the gang, the fall of civilization officially began.

RIGHT TO LIFE

Here we find no winner in any of the candidates. Not one true pro-life candidate among them. They either are pro pre-born life but hardly give a hoey about post-born life, or they don't give a darn about preborn-life but are pro-life for the post-born ilk.

In my modest and humble but entirely correct opinion, you're either pro-life or you're not. You either strive to respect and support ALL life—regardless of race, religion or country of origin—from conception to natural death, or you don't dare to call yourself pro-life.

GUNS

Guns of all sorts--handguns, assault rifles, machine guns, sub-machine guns, sub-machine-assault rifles, semi-automatic guns, muskets, semi-automatic-muskets, elephant guns, service revolvers, howitzers, rubber-band guns—you name it—should be made available to everyone, all ages, without all that silly stuff about background checks.

AMMUNITION

The creation and/or possession of ammunition should be strictly prohibited.

FREEDOM of RELIGION

The good ol' U.S. of A. is all about freedom—people being able to worship as they wish. That doesn't mean we can't extort strong Christian values. Which means *welcoming the stranger* ("For I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Mt 25:35), and

being *more* welcoming of people we may consider different from ourselves (see "*Amoris Laetitia*" by Pope Francis)--of the divorced, of people of other faiths.

If we were to reach the point where we show selective and self-righteous bigotry against one group, such as Muslims, the terrorists win. They will have imprisoned us within our own fears and prejudices. In doing so, we risk diluting the love of Christ born within us at Baptism that was designed to be shared with *everyone*, not just those like you or me.

Ours is an awesome country! Ours is an awesome faith! And *ours is an awesome God!* Regardless of who gets in office, it's important to remember that Jesus Christ died for *all* of us. Remembering this--*knowing* this--is how we will keep this country great.