

POPE HOPE ?

You Be the Judge!

He tweets! He kisses the feet of prisoners! He rails against the evils of capitalism and inequality, and pleads on behalf of mother earth!

Liberals rejoice! He's been canonized on the cover of Rolling Stone. Bernie Sanders pens a letter to his followers singing the Pope's praises and urging them to "listen to the Pope". The UN raises the Vatican flag. Ecstatic throngs flock to greet him.

But is Pope Francis really the breath of moral fresh air so many believe him to be? Or more like Volkswagen's green PR, is Francis hitting all the high notes de jour and exploiting the blind spots in a haloed bait-and-switch expertly designed to woo back straying American flocks and recover their cash flow, all as the Catholic Church plunders on as before.

You be the judge! Because if it's the latter, singing the praises of this Pope only helps enable the continued oppressions and global devastations for which the Catholic Church is more a prime cause than a pious cure.

On Capitalism:

Pope Francis condemns the unbridled capitalism of wealthy nations, along with its profit mentalities and social exclusions.



This from the head of what is one of the wealthiest, if not the wealthiest institution on earth; a wealth the Catholic Church continues to amass through autocratic rule, behind layers of secrecy, outside any and all regulatory mechanisms, brokering its billions of stock shares in many of the biggest capitalist corporate producers of fossil fuels, weapons, and thieving mega-banks, with no ethics policy governing its investments and paying no taxes.

Add to this the thousands of Catholic Churches throughout the poorest countries, gilded from statues to steeples in gold, raking their riches from the backs and sweat of the poorest of the poor.

If Francis would announce that the Catholic Church is divesting from dirty capitalism and giving back the gold to the poor, perhaps then we could listen to the Pope's anti-capitalism rant. Until then his words on the subject are

certainly drowned out under his cynical tsunami of hypocrisy.



On Inequality and Discrimination:

Pope Francis speaks loudly and often against inequalities and discrimination. "Inequality," he tweets, "Is the root of social evil."

Imagine the nerve of this man when the Catholic Church outright bans half of all humans on the earth from its official positions, and uses its juggernaut Vatican lobby to pressure governments throughout the world to deny women their most fundamental human rights.

When asked about even the future possibility of women priests Pope Francis responds with a medieval clang, "That door is closed!" says Francis, the 'people's pope'.

Every serious modern analysis of the world's most urgent problems highlights the need to



prioritize the equality and empowerment of women as essential for any and all solutions.

But Pope Francis gingerly steps over the glaring contradiction of his church's sweeping oppression of women fully confident that liberals the likes of Bernie Sanders are willing to do the same. And indeed they are. They may even disagree with the Pope on this issue, as does Sanders. But, hey, ignoring that women have been thrown under the bus is no big deal given his holiness is so right on with the really important stuff.

Ending the oppression of women has always been an expendable fifth wheel on the liberal wagon train to progress.

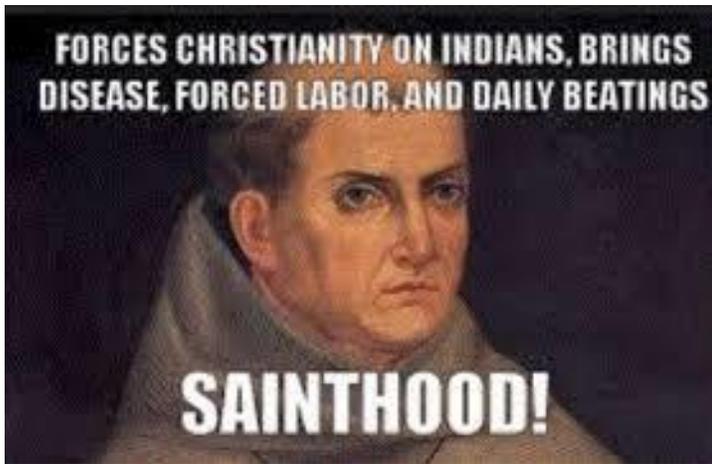
On Genocide and "The Grave Sins" of Colonialism:

In April of this year Pope Francis recognized the Armenian genocide, as much of the world had already done. And this July in Bolivia the Pope apologized to indigenous peoples for the "grave sins" of the church's colonialism.

This, as Pope Francis planned the canonization to sainthood of colonialist priest Junipero Serra as a signature act of his visit to America. Junipero Serra was the Jesuit colonialist official whose authority over the west coast missions oversaw the mass enslavement and genocide of California Indians.

For years Native Americans have organized, protested, and pleaded with Pope Francis to halt his drive to canonize Serra. They provided the pope with extensive historical documentation of the human devastation left in the wake of Serra's reign.

Pope Francis, however, has just powered on, probably in hopes the canonization will serve as good PR for luring back the Hispanics who have been leaving the Catholic faith in droves. Declaring sainthood has always made for good old self-serving PR and Francis has shown he knows the lesson well.



On Child Rapist Priests:

Pope Francis has apologized. He has created a commission for investigating sex abuse by church officials, and at long, long, long last he has met with victims. But to date Pope Francis has not fired one bishop for covering up for rapist priests. He continues to bankroll the heavy handed legal tactics with the singular goal of denying victims justice in courtrooms around the world. He refuses to turn abusers' records over to civil authorities, and he notoriously obstructed the UN investigation into the church's child abuse scourge.

On Immigration:

Pope Francis exhorts nations to open their arms to immigrants and protect their human rights. He's done so most vehemently during the unprecedented flow of unaccompanied children fleeing the countries of Central America.

But not once does Francis call on his church to stop bullying poor nations into blocking women's rights to use birth control, nor does he hold his church nor himself to account for the church's leading role in generating these desperate migrations of humanity, along with the untold horrific suffering caused by the church's forcing women to bear unwanted children. So much of the starvation, violence, despair, and abandonment of children in Central America, Africa, and Southeast Asia can be traced directly to the Catholic Church's unyielding denial of women's sexual and reproductive rights.

In June of this year, Francis himself traveled to Chile to assure his promotion of Bishop Juan Barros Madrid, despite pleas of Chilean leaders who have long known Bishop Barros to be a protector of pedophile priests. And in September, on his visit to the U.S., Francis praised American bishops for their "generosity" and "courage" in handling the priest sex abuse "scandals" here.

It's worth asking, if any other world leader or candidate for office were head of an organization whose employees were found to have carried out and covered up the rapes of over 100,000 children in the U.S. alone, would you be swooning over the fact this person apologized and met with the victims?



On Climate Change:

Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change has been his bell ringer, and likely his most crafted bait and switch. Part A of the encyclical states clearly that climate change is being caused by human activities. Dig down, and part B is equally as adamant that human population growth is not the cause, hence birth control, women's rights, and sexual violence conveniently have no bearing on the subject.

Climate change deniers come in all flavors. The Pope's brand comes right out of the darkest ages. It's especially pernicious for its pretense of caring and being on the cutting edge. Like all other deniers, Francis has fabricated what's best for the church's interests, not what's best or accurate for the environment, and certainly not for the women and children of the world.

Meanwhile, behind the blinding light of liberal ecstasy that Francis believes in climate change, the Vatican lobbyists have been busy pressuring the U.N. to strike 'gender' as a benchmark of sustainability.



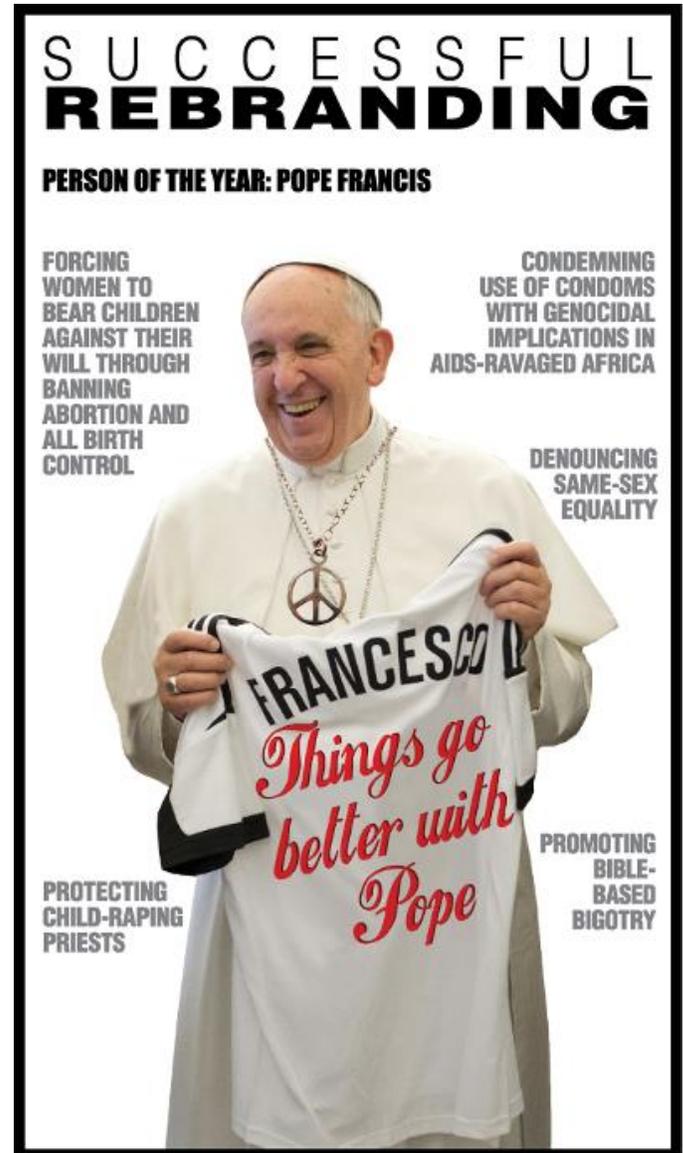
Consider:

Did you know that from the beginning of his papacy Pope Francis has employed ex FOX news veteran Greg Burke as his chief PR man?

If you're outraged over being duped by a VW car manufacturer for gross polluting while waving the flag of green, why ever would you sing the

praises of this pope? During his papacy not one iota of church doctrine has changed at all.

Greg Burke, his ex-FOX news guy, for one, is pleased as punch. "The Pope scores goals for us," he says of his tenure with the pope, "The people are just eating this stuff up."



Feel free to photocopy and distribute this information as long as you keep the credit and text intact.

Copyright © Marie De Santis,
Women's Justice Center,
www.justicewomen.com
rdjustice@monitor.net

