Election 2016 Post-Mortem
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Last Update, March 17, 2017 (most recent entries found at the top in each category)
Online version at https://www2.bc.edu/james-bretzke/Election2016PostMortem.pdf

N.B. For a listing of representative articles BEFORE the Election see
https://www2.bc.edu/james-bretzke/ReligionIn2016ElectionArticles.pdf

I have organized the articles below in 4 categories: Buyer’s Remorse, Liberal, Conservative, and/or Middle of the Road OR Empirical Analysis

Buyer’s Remorse (including possible regret over “silence” in the campaign)

Kansas Bishops. “Joint Statement of the Kansas Bishops On Refugees and Immigration.”

“With regard to our immigration policies, there is broad consensus that undocumented immigrants who are members of gangs, involved with drug cartels and/or violent criminals should be deported. However, it is not true or just to characterize the majority of undocumented immigrants as violent criminals. The mass deportation of the vast majority of undocumented immigrants, who work hard and contribute positively to American society, will result in chaos and unrest in our communities as well as a human rights nightmare with families torn apart, children separated from parents and young people expelled from the only nation they have known.”

Compare this with the same Bishops’ pre-election lightly coded “Vote Trump” message:


“We have grave concerns about a proposed policy agenda that, if enacted, would put the most vulnerable among us in jeopardy. Throughout Christian scriptures, we are instructed to care for the poor and the most vulnerable. The Affordable Care Act, including Medicaid expansion, has given more than 30 million people access to affordable health coverage. While working to improve the ACA will benefit all Americans, repealing it
without simultaneously offering a replacement is reckless and unnecessarily endangers the health of millions of people. This is certainly no way to make America great.

Safety net programs, which lift more than 40 million people out of poverty each year, must also be preserved. These programs are proven to help reduce poverty and provide families in need, especially children, and seniors, with food and housing security as well as with access to health care. …

In addition, we are deeply troubled by choices President-Elect Trump has made for his Cabinet, particularly for Chief Strategist, Attorney General, and National Security Advisor. Stephen Bannon, Jefferson Beauregard Sessions and Michael Flynn epitomize extremist, racist and fringe world views that we believe are morally inconsistent with Christian principles of loving neighbor and antithetical to American values of “liberty and justice for all.”

These objectionable nominees represent a bygone era of hatred that we have denounced and worked tirelessly to eradicate. Their corrupted credentials, which include condoning and supporting racist, anti-Semitic, white supremacist, xenophobic, and anti-Muslim ideologies, are not only unacceptable but they should disqualify them for service as public officials. We urge the President-Elect to protect the integrity of our nation by replacing these nominees with candidates who represent shared American values for the common good.

Before he takes the oath of office, we call on President-Elect Trump to preserve, protect and defend our nation by enacting a policy agenda that will improve the lives of the most vulnerable, not put them at greater risk. We urge President-Elect Trump to preserve, protect and defend our nation against people who have a documented history of racial hatred, bigotry, and xenophobia. We encourage President-Elect Trump to preserve, protect and defend our nation by doing the hard work it will take to unify our country and move us toward a just, sustainable and equitable future that lives up to the ideals and promise of America.


“Ohreeone agrees that our immigration system is broken - and it has been for more than a decade. The blame cuts across party lines and we cannot find many examples of moral leadership or political courage to point to.
“We are deeply concerned about the president-elect because of his drastic campaign promises regarding deportations.

“But we also know that the outgoing administration has deported more than 2.5 million people in the past eight years - more than any other administration in history. And the vast majority of those deported are not violent criminals. In fact, up to one-quarter are mothers and fathers that our government is seizing from ordinary households.”


“Whenever one can play on the fears of some people and depend upon the ignorance of others, racism flourishes. As a political strategy, such taunting may win votes, but it destroys national unity and our future.

The attitudes emerge: “The immigrants are taking our jobs.” “Public aid only rewards laziness.” “Poor and struggling white people have been forgotten.” The conditions necessary for the transmission of racism were thoroughly mixed with such attitudes during the recent election process. Left untreated, the prognosis is bleak.

We have returned to a moment in our nation’s history when racist feelings and sentiments have been condoned as acceptable to express publicly and publish openly.


“While bishops at the national meeting were swift and clear to speak up for immigrants, I still don’t sense enough of them recognize or want to grapple with the fundamental threats a Trump administration poses to the country. There was little sense of urgency when Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, the newly elected president of the U.S. bishops’ conference, spoke to reporters at the meeting. Bishops, we were told, will work with the new administration on areas of agreement and navigate areas of disagreement. “Low-energy” is how Trump may have described his tepid response. On a certain level, this is an expected and reasonable answer for someone who will be sitting down with the president-elect and his team. Bishops are pastors but they are also CEOs who manage large, complex institutions. We should expect them to prudently maintain a network of relationships with political and civic leaders across the ideological spectrum. A certain realpolitik is inevitable.

But compare the lukewarm, scripted answers some bishops gave to reporters asking about Trump with how the bishops reacted to a just elected President Obama in the fall of 2008.
The contrast is stark. Eight years ago, bishops stepped up to the microphone during that year’s bishops’ conference public sessions with dire warnings. “This body is totally opposed to any compromise,” one bishop said. “We are dealing with an absolute,” said another, “there is no room for compromise.” Others called for a “war” against abortion, and urged the church to adopt a “prophetic” voice. (See Commonweal’s November 2008 editorial [3] in response to these outbursts, “The Bishops & Obama,” for more.)

It was hard to find this moral outrage and sense of determination last week. Church leaders need to wake up and recognize the need for a prophetic Christian witness. If not now, when? The “alt-right” leader Steve Bannon, alluded to previously, is now the president-elect’s chief adviser, thrilling white supremacists and neo-Nazis. Bannon was raised in an Irish Catholic family. He addressed a Vatican conference [4] in 2014. Earlier this year, he argued [5] the Catholic Church welcomes immigrants only to pad its numbers because “the church is dying in this country.” Bannon should be feeling pressure from Catholics leaders. If he doesn’t, the normalization of extremism that we saw in the presidential campaign will only continue in the White House. Let’s be clear: “alt-right” and even “white nationalism” are euphemistic ways of describing racist movements that must be stopped.”

Liberal Wing


Reflections on attending a well-heeled two-day, $1,250 a person symposium of conservative Catholics held at the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C. (including Archbishops Charles Chaput of Philadelphia and Jose Gomez of Los Angeles. Gehring’s own cautionary conclusion is that “Conservative Catholics who feel emboldened in the Trump era will continue to strategize and look for political openings. But along the way they risk being relegated to cheerleaders for the administration if they downplay or ignore how poverty, the environment and the command to welcome migrants are central to traditional church teachings. Perhaps looking to Pope Francis, rather than Donald Trump, would be a good place to start.”
Brian Roewe, In powerful speech, San Diego bishop [Robert McElroy] challenges organizers to disrupt, rebuild” National Catholic Reporter February 19, 2017

“We must disrupt those who would seek to send troops into our streets to deport the undocumented, to rip mothers and fathers from their families. We must disrupt those who portray refugees as enemies, rather than our brothers and sisters in terrible need. We must disrupt those who train us to see Muslim men and women and children as sources of fear rather than as children of God. We must disrupt those who seek to rob our medical care, especially from the poor. We must disrupt those who would take even food stamps and nutrition assistance from the mouths of children,” the bishop said.


“Now, after President-elect Donald J. Trump’s campaign vows to reinstate the sort of torture used in the Bush-era war on terrorism — and to fill the Guantánamo Bay prison with “some bad dudes” — human rights experts fear that authoritarian regimes around the world will see it as another green light to carry out their own abuses.

A return to such “enhanced interrogation” — and even to techniques that Mr. Trump has pledged will be “much worse” — would also send a powerful message just as nations around the world have begun to examine their own past abuses to ensure that they will not be repeated. …

A fragile consensus against torture, said José Miguel Vivanco, the regional director for the Americas for Human Rights Watch, could be shattered “when you have the White House openly advocating for torture.” …

“I am afraid that Trump’s government will question the basic values of the international order, and torturing people will be justified,” said Carlos Jibaja, a psychologist with CAPS, a group in Lima, Peru, that helps victims of torture.

At the same time, Mr. Trump’s advocacy of torture may encourage some major countries, like Russia and the Philippines, to be even more open and aggressive in their use of torture.”

Stephen Schneck “Where are our bishops? The racism of ‘alt-right’ nationalism. It is long past time for the USCCB to speak out against the evil of today’s racism.” US Catholic January 4,
“It is long past time for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to speak out against the evil of today’s racism. The “alt-right” white nationalist racism that surged alongside the political campaigns of 2016 is an evil that the church in America cannot ignore. …

And, while surely not even a majority of his Catholic supporters were enthusiastic about the confluence of Trump’s campaign with white nationalist racism, none can claim to be ignorant of that association. White nationalism, then, is not only a rising social evil in American society at large, it is also a serious moral danger within the church that must concern the community of the faithful.

Why then has the bishops’ conference remained almost entirely mum in the face of this election’s mounting racism when it has been so courageous in speaking moral truth to power in regard to other so-called intrinsic evils of contemporary public life? …

Moreover, it has become clear that the racist agenda at the heart of the “alt-right” white nationalist movement extends beyond discrimination against African Americans to target Jewish, Asian, Latino, and Muslim Americans. Archbishop Gregory is right: The nation needs the moral voice of its Catholic bishops to speak clearly and unambiguously in condemning the racism of “alt-right” white nationalism. …

Catholics in political life are morally obliged not only to reject racism personally, but also to prophetically oppose any advance of racism and racist policies by others and answer every instance of racism with the remedies of social justice. Catholics must oppose “alt-right” white nationalism.”


“During the campaign, Trump certainly behaved like a pragmatist, except that his pragmatism often lapsed into opportunism. …

Mr. Tillerson has a long career working for, and eventually leading, a large multinational corporation. Such leadership undoubtedly involves making many pragmatic choices. In the world of modern corporate leadership, aided by far too many economists, morality has been written out of the equations they confront. Efficiency and the bottom line are the
gods they worship, and they have created a closed system of analysis to insulate themselves from all but the narrowest moral concerns. …

Fascist or Randian or simply a protean, self-absorbed plutocrat, Roman Catholics can find nothing to like in this cast of mind which seems to dominate the emerging Trump administration. …

Pope Francis is not shy about his critique of market ideology and the idolatry of money. He has called for a social market that responds to needs current economic thinking pushes to the sidelines, needs such as inclusion of all, concern for the poor and care for Creation. Catholics should follow the Holy Father's lead and not be shy either in voicing our critiques and our concerns. I have said previously and will say many more times in the months ahead: There are several ways to frame the next four years, but one of them is Pope Francis versus Donald Trump. I know which side of that divide I will be on.”


Many liberals have publicly lamented the lack of robust faith outreach during Hillary Clinton’s campaign, arguing that the need for emissaries fluent in the “God talk” of so-called values voters has never been clearer. Yet after years of dominance by the religious right, Trump’s victory may inadvertently trigger the ascendancy of a group sometimes called the “moral minority”: the religious left.


I would have thought that religion might provide that kind of identity, until I looked at the 81 percent white evangelical vote for Trump and the 60 percent white Catholic vote. My guess is that these churches and, by association, religion generally, will find themselves badly discredited by a Trump administration bearing gifts. The prolife and religious freedom movements, which I consider of major importance, may win a round or two in the Supreme Court. Unfortunately, with the mark of Trump stamped on their foreheads, they have virtually doomed themselves in the cultural contests essential to their goals.

“I don't personally blame you for these assaults on human dignity, but as Christians who supported Trump you have a particular obligation to see with clear eyes the toxic venom his election has unleashed. As history teaches us, if you don't speak out, you're complicit in the horrors that inevitably follow silence. Many of you are good people. You love your kids, work hard, serve your country. This isn't about politics as usual. I don't question your vote for a Republican. My question is about Jesus. If we're reading the same book, I see a brown-skinned man, born under the yoke of empire, scandalizing the elite of his time by eating with foreigners, sitting down with prostitutes, reminding the wealthy and the powerful that the poor have a better shot at reaching paradise. The migrants are welcomed. The mocked are given the best seat at the party. The mighty are made low. Is this the kind of world our president-elect envisions?”


“Catholics cannot dismiss Trump’s words and actions in the past toward various communities as simply the kind of “locker-room” talk and action that some men have been socialized to practice. There is simply no justification for his inappropriate, unjust, and at times illegal conduct toward women, Latinos/as, the undocumented, Muslims, African-Americans, and the physically disabled. Catholics must continue to raise questions with respect to the nature of political life and the kind of leaders that best align with our faith values. In his address to Congress last year, Pope Francis invited us to think about our American political life and the kind of leaders we should support. …During my tenure as Ambassador, I remember a conversation I had with the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi, in which he reminded me that Catholics must always be pro-life. But he quickly added, “Mr. Ambassador, being pro-life means so much more than being pro-life in the womb!”

In our conversation on various life issues, Sambi was already anticipating Pope Francis’s integral ecology of life.

At its core, Pope Francis’s teaching has been about promoting this “integral ecology of life.” As his encyclical Laudato si’ made crystal clear, to affirm this ecology means to embrace the interdependence of all forms of life, and in a special and preferential way, to opt for the life of our impoverished earth and those lives who suffer most as a result of this impoverishment.

According to Pope Francis, if we wish to advance this integral ecology, we must be willing to practice the following things: 1) a culture of encounter, 2) the rejection of human indifference, 3) the option for the poor and marginalized, 4) care of our environment, and 5) an ethos that values persons over capital and rejects economies that
kill human lives. As I have suggested, the questions that I raised with respect to pending policies under the Trump administration are all questions related to defending and sustaining life. They are questions that have been raised within the context of Pope Francis’s ecology of life.”


“But compare the lukewarm, scripted answers some bishops gave to reporters asking about Trump with how the bishops reacted to a just elected President Obama in the fall of 2008. The contrast is stark. Eight years ago, bishops stepped up to the microphone during that year’s bishops’ conference public sessions with dire warnings. “This body is totally opposed to any compromise,” one bishop said. “We are dealing with an absolute,” said another, “there is no room for compromise.” Others called for a “war” against abortion, and urged the church to adopt a “prophetic” voice.”


“For THEIR PART, American bishops showed a stunning lack of leadership at a time when it was needed most. … But they did not offer a direct and sustained criticism of the substance and tone of his campaign as a whole. … Yet no bishop had the courage of Southern Baptist leader Russell Moore to denounce Trump in no uncertain terms as a “walking affront to the Gospels.” Most obtuse was Archbishop Charles Chaput’s assessment of both major-party candidates as “equally problematic.” Truly problematic are prelates who raise their voices against same-sex marriage, but not against overt racism and misogyny. Or bishops who defend the religious liberty of Catholic institutions regarding contraception, but not the freedom of persecuted Muslim refugees who wish to immigrate to our shores. … Reconciliation is the end—not the beginning—of a process that leads all parties into greater truth, justice, and solidarity. Karol Wojtyla did not reconcile with the Communists, Bonhoeffer did not reconcile with the Nazis, Romero did not reconcile with the Salvadoran oligarchy, and King did not reconcile with the KKK. Neither did they enter into dialogue with those who were brutalizing the marginalized. They spoke the truth to power, witnessed to God’s solidarity with the poor, defended human rights, insisted on justice, and called their opponents to conversion. We should expect to be called to do so if the incoming administration attempts to realize Trump’s worst instincts.”

O’Loughlin, Michael. “Some Catholics Say Politics Prevalent in Parishes Ahead of Election.” America http://www.americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/some-catholics-say-politics-
Catholic Scholars React to Trump Victory *National Catholic Reporter*
https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/catholic-scholars-react-trumps-election
(accessed November 10, 2016)

**Conservative Wing**


Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia accused the press of being too hostile to President Donald J. Trump and of “very deliberately” maligning religious faith during a radio interview on Monday. Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia accused the press of being too hostile to President Donald J. Trump and of “very deliberately” maligning religious faith during a radio interview on Monday.

“It’s just amazing to me how hostile the press is to everything that the president does,” the archbishop said. “I don’t want to be partisan in my comments here, but it seems to me if we really are serious about our common responsibilities as citizens, we support the president whether we accept everything he stands for or not and wish him success rather than trying to undermine him.”


[Emma Green] “Reno does not believe Trump will fix what he sees as America’s frayed social contract. But he does think the incoming president will disrupt the current political system, which he considers deeply flawed.”

On justification of limiting Muslim immigration: “Reno: I can never get my hands around what the concrete worry is. Mass deportations? That seems so far from anything that’s possible; it strikes me as an irrational worry. But special screenings of refugees from Middle Eastern countries? That’s quite realistic. We don’t know how severe terrorism
will become. Maybe it’s already crested, in which case, these are pointless worries. But
maybe it will get worse.

I have talked to friends—moderate friends—who basically can’t defend any limitations
on immigration. Limiting Muslim immigration may seem unnecessary now, but what
about a terrorist incident where 1,000 people died—would that justify it? My friends
would say, “No.” What about 10,000 people? They’d say, “No, it’s never justified.” Well,
what about if 100,000 people get killed with a dirty bomb?

At some point, the person is not a serious person if they don’t allow that there are
situations where you would have to use dire measures to protect the citizens of our
country. That’s why some voters voted for Trump. They were beginning to suspect that
the people who run the country are not, ultimately, serious.”

On multiculturalism in the USA:

Green: Well, but the United States is a multi-cultural democracy.

Reno: No, it’s not. It’s very homogeneous. When foreigners come to the United States,
you’re always shocked by how homogeneous we are. We just do a very good job of
assimilating people and making them into Americans.

Green: So if by “multi-cultural” you don’t mean a diversity of religions, a diversity of
ethnic backgrounds, a diversity of national origins, and a diversity of individual political
ideologies—all of which the U.S. has—what do you mean?

Reno: Shared heritage, common identity. When you’re traveling abroad and you meet
another American, it doesn’t matter if they’re Asian, African American, or whatever—
you hang out with them, because you have shared habits of mind and sensibilities.

Green: So you’re pointing to a cohesive sense of national identity.

Reno: I think that’s pretty strong in the United States.”

Samuel Freedman, “‘Church Militant’ Theology Is Put to New, and Politicized, Use” New York
Times December 30, 2016 http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/30/us/church-militant-theology-is-

The [ChurchMilitant.com] site’s right-wing stances against globalism, immigration,
social-welfare programs and abortion, as well as its depiction of an existential war against
radical Islam, mesh with many of the positions espoused by Mr. Trump and his inner
circle. (Mr. Bannon did not respond to questions submitted to the Trump transition
office.)
Michael Voris, the senior executive producer of ChurchMilitant.com, said the website’s positions were a righteous defense of patriotism and morality on behalf of people who believe those virtues have been attacked by liberals, secularists and global elites.

“This is breaking down into forces that believe in God and those that don’t,” he said, adding, “Largely, I would say this is a war of religion versus nonreligion.”

ChurchMilitant.com, for example, has dismissed climate change as a hoax. It likened the Black Lives Matter movement to “the new fascism.” Hillary Clinton, whom it routinely calls “Killary,” was “Satan’s mop for wiping up the last remaining resistance to him in America.” Mr. Voris has described social-welfare programs as a system in which “half the people of America” pay no taxes and “get things handed to them.”

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan accepts offer to give the Invocation at Trump’s Inauguration 28 December 2016 http://www.americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/new-yorks-cardinal-dolan-pray-trump-inauguration (accessed December 30, 2016)


“Maybe in this newly unpredictable world, next time all Catholics can search together for a candidate without a trace of intolerance, racism, or misogyny, but also a candidate respectful of freedom of religion and who is not seeking to expand access to abortion. If not, I will stand with you when I can to protect the environment, to fight intolerance, to prevent racism, and to treat the poor and the immigrant community with kindness. But I still won’t vote for candidates who threaten our freedom of religion and seek to expand federal support for abortion abroad and at home.” Daniel R. Kempton is a professor of political science at the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio.


President-elect Donald Trump can alleviate the current financial and regulatory burden that weighs heavily on people of faith.

First, the president-elect can - and should - rescind executive orders that effectively exclude faith-based organizations from partnering with the federal government, such as Executive Order 13672.

Second, the president-elect should direct the head of HHS to place an immediate moratorium on the HHS mandate. Then the next administration should rescind the HHS
mandate. Contraceptives are not preventive “health care,” and indeed are associated with adverse health outcomes.

Rescinding the HHS mandate would ensure that people of faith like the Little Sisters can, without threat of massive fines, offer health insurance that comports with their religious values.

The president-elect should also direct HHS to stop enforcing its “transgender mandate” issued under the purported authority of Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act.

Catholic hospitals are currently being sued by those seeking coverage of “gender reassignment” surgeries. The federal government has issued regulations stating that such surgeries cannot be denied, or it is “discrimination.”

Doctors and hospitals should be free to use their best medical judgment to treat patients who experience gender dysphoria. Health care providers should not be told by the federal government that they must participate in procedures that have the effect of mutilating a patient’s otherwise healthy reproductive organs. Hospitals should not lose Medicare or Medicaid funding over this issue.

Third, the president-elect should rescind the Obama administration’s “guidance” and related memos on Title IX that force schools - including at the K-12 level - to treat students according to their “internal sense of gender.”

Teachers and school administrators at the local level should be free to use their best judgment - working with parents and counselors - of how to deal with extremely sensitive issues involving young children.

Further, schools with religious exemptions to Title IX should not be placed on a “shame list” run by the U.S. Department of Education simply for claiming an exemption - a right that stems from the Constitution.

Fourth, the president-elect should direct the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to stop enforcing its “gender identity” mandate on homeless shelters, such as many operated by faith-based providers like Catholic Charities.”


“Sadly, the Obama administration has been an ally to abortion advocates in advancing such oppressive policies. It imposed the so-called HHS mandate forcing even religious organizations to cover contraceptives, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs in their health insurance plans. …
“The president-elect said he would make the Hyde Amendment permanent law, would sign a ban on late-term abortions, would defund Planned Parenthood and would nominate pro-life justices to the Supreme Court.

“On his transition page he promises to ‘protect individual conscience in health care’ and ‘protect innocent human life from conception to natural death, including the most defenseless and those Americans with disabilities.’

We certainly hope that the policies pursued by the president-elect and his administration will match these promises. In particular, we are eager to see immediate enforcement of federal conscience protections on abortion and elimination of the contraceptive mandate.

We also hope to see progress toward a majority of Supreme Court justices who will reform the injustice and travesty of Roe v. Wade.

Pro-life Americans cannot be complacent in the months and years to come. It will be essential that we hold our new president and his administration accountable to the pro-life promises they’ve made.”


“Eric Scheidler is the executive director of the Pro-Life Action League and the son of the famous pro-life activist Joe Scheidler. This column originally appeared at *Daily Caller.*”

“First, I was extremely encouraged by Trump’s 60 Minutes interview. Though he moderated his position on some issues—like whether he would seek to prosecute Hillary Clinton—he stayed firm on his intention to appoint pro-life justices to the Supreme Court. In fact, Trump went farther than any previous Republican candidate or President-elect, stating outright that he wanted to appoint justices who would overturn Roe v. Wade.

“Next is Trump’s appointment of Rep. Jeff Sessions to head the Department of Justice—an agency that is especially critical for pro-life activists like me. Under President Obama, the DOJ put scores of peaceful pro-life groups, including the one I lead, on an FBI watch-list. Obama’s attorneys general intervened in pro-life cases before the Supreme Court, and refused to thoroughly investigate wrongdoing by the abortion giant Planned Parenthood.
“With Jeff Sessions at Justice, pro-life activists like me can breathe a sigh of relief. Our right to speak out publicly against abortion, especially outside abortion facilities, will not be stamped out by a militantly pro-abortion attorney general.

“Finally, there’s Trump’s appointment of Rep. Tom Price as Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Few issues in recent years have mobilized the pro-life movement as much at the notorious Obamacare “HHS Mandate” imposed by former HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, which requires employers to provide free contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs through their health plans, regardless of their religious or moral objections.”


“Catholics should be really thankful that Donald Trump was elected, instead of Hillary Clinton, to be our next president of the United States. We faced a binary choice and the people of America showed once again that they are smarter than the pundits, beltway bandits and establishment insiders.”

Msgr. Charles Pope, “The Election is Over, But There is Much Work to be Done: This election was but a small part of a vast battle, so don’t give up the fight to bring the light of the gospel to a darkened age.” National Catholic Register 14 November 2016 http://www.ncregister.com/blog/msgr-pope/the-election-is-over-but-there-is-much-work-to-be-done (accessed November 15, 2016)

“The most immediate benefit, if Mr. Trump is true to his word, is that the Supreme Court will not be utterly lost. Had Mrs. Clinton won, it seems quite certain that the court would have shifted sharply to the left and there would have vanished what little remains of the last legal speedbump slowing the steady onslaught of the agenda of the left. … In every critical and nonnegotiable moral issue of our time, Mrs. Clinton stood foursquare against our Church’s teaching. She declared that “religion must change,” and, according to emails of John Podesta, she headed a party that infiltrated the Church in order to sow seeds of dissention and division. … Our opponents will continue to decry our religious objections as mere and thinly veiled bigotry and hate, intolerance and all manner of phobias. As such they will try and apply existing hate-crime and civil rights legislation against us. Many federal judges will be happy to oblige their demands for fines, more expansive laws to seek to compel us to violate our conscience. Attempts at further restrictions on religious liberty will surely continue in the local, state and federal courts.”

Cardinal Raymond Burke Tablet Interview with Christopher Lamb. “CARDINAL BURKE 'VERY HAPPY' WITH ELECTION OF TRUMP SAYING PRESIDENT-ELECT 'UNDoubtedly' PREFERABLE TO CLINTON.” Tablet November 12, 2016.
Burke: “I am very happy that my fellow Americans have chosen a new president, and
given him a strong mandate to address resolutely the corruption that has beset the federal
government in recent years. … I do not see any moral equivalence between abortion, and
the welfare of migrants. I hope it is obvious that I think migrants, made in the image and
likeness of God like you and me, should be treated with every care and respect. But to put
the two issues on the same plane is simply wrong (as the Church clearly teaches).”

Bishop Anthony Taylor, Little Rock AK, http://www.dolr.org/article/bishop-addresses-
presidential-election-results (accessed November 11, 2016)

“Many of us have experienced the recent presidential election as a mixed blessing. We
are relieved that President-elect Trump opposes abortion and plans to nominate anti-
abortion justices to the Supreme Court. Indeed, many people voted for him for that very
reason. But we are also dismayed by his divisive rhetoric. The purpose of this letter is to
remind all of us that this election has not changed the mission of the Church in Arkansas.
We believe in the right to life and the dignity of the human person from conception to
natural death and at every stage in between. … I am grateful that we will soon have a
president who has promised to name Supreme Court justices who are opposed to
abortion. Let us support President-elect Trump in this matter and other areas where his
efforts promise to benefit the common good.”

Osborne, Simon. “Church backs Trump: New president will ‘defend Christian values’ says
Vatican cleric [Cardinal Burke].” Express
http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/731057/Donald-Trump-US-election-2016-President-elect-
Roman-Catholic-Cardinal-Raymond-Leo-Burke (accessed November 11, 2016)

Pope Francis was highly critical of Mr. Trump during the election campaign, particularly
over his plans to build a wall along the Mexican border, saying: "We must build bridges
of peace and not walls of hate.” But Cardinal Burke said: “I do not think that the new
President will be inspired by hate when dealing with the migration issue: a matter of
prudence, which requires knowledge of who immigrants are, of the reasons that lead
them to migrate and the ability of local communities to welcome them. “Charity must
always be intelligent and, therefore, informed by a deep understanding of the situation of
people who want to immigrate and the ones that receive these people.”

“Cardinal Burke: Trump’s Victory a Wake-Up Call to US Political Leaders.” National Catholic
Register http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/cardinal-burke-trumps-victory-a-wake-up-call-
to-us-political-leaders (accessed November 10, 2016)

“I’m delighted with the Trump victory because it’s a victory for working class people, for underemployed people and unemployed people — people for whom the Pope has great concern. So they have a great amount in common in their priorities.

[Pentin] The Pope has often spoken of his concerns about capitalism. Could this be a problem going forward in relations with a Trump administration?

“They have differences in views but a great deal in common. They have a mutual concern for poor, a mutual concern for the foundation of the Catholic Church which is life. Trump is adamantly pro-life, as is the Pope. I think on matters like their view of capitalism and the free market and of course immigration, we should acknowledge differences. …

[On the Pope’s remarks about building bridges rather than walls]: What I think the Holy Father should have said, more appropriately, was that’s not a Christian way to act, but instead he branded Trump as not being a Christian. Trump retorted pretty robustly to that. It’s a two way street.

Middle of the Road OR Strictly Empirical Analysis


“The U.S. Catholic hierarchy was one of the staunchest foes of President Obama’s signature health care law, nearly derailing its passage in 2010 over concerns about abortion funding and exacting a political toll that helped doom abortion-opposing Democrats who backed Obamacare while boosting Republican efforts to take control of Congress.

But faced with the prospect of the GOP following through on pledges to repeal health care reform, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops seems to be changing its tune.

On Wednesday (Jan. 18), the USCCB released a letter warning Congress not to overturn the law without providing an immediate replacement to provide continuing coverage for the millions who have been insured under the Affordable Care Act.”

On whether God intervenes directly in human events, such as the 2016 election of Donald Trump, whether God intervened and whether He had anything to do with Donald Trump going to the White House. Also about God’s plans for people and what it means with their political and environmental actions. Many theologians across the spectrum interviewed, including James Bretzke, SJ. Story posted on January 17, 2017 at


“They are conservative, believe in hard work, family, the military and cops, and they know that abortion and socialism are evil, that Jesus Christ is our savior, and that Donald J. Trump will be good for America.

They are part of a growing movement in rural America that immerses many young people in a culture — not just conservative news outlets but also home and church environments — that emphasizes contemporary conservative values. It views liberals as loathsome, misinformed and weak, even dangerous. …

Political analysts have talked about how ignorance, racism, sexism, nationalism, Islamophobia, economic disenfranchisement and the decline of the middle class contributed to the popularity of Mr. Trump in rural America. But this misses the deeper cultural factors that shape the thinking of the conservatives who live here. …

Many moderate rural Republicans became supporters of Mr. Trump when he released his list of potential Supreme Court nominees who would allow the possibility of overturning Roe v. Wade. They also think the liberal worldview creates unnecessary rules and regulations that cripple the economy and take away good jobs that may belong to them or their neighbor. Public school systems and colleges are liberal tools of indoctrination that go after what we love and value most — our children.

Some of what liberals worry about they see as pure nonsense. When you are the son or daughter of a carpenter or mechanic and a housewife or secretary who lives paycheck to paycheck, who can’t afford to send kids to college, as many rural residents are, white privilege is meaningless and abstract. …

The Republican brand is strong in rural America — perhaps even strong enough to withstand a disastrous Trump presidency.
Rural conservatives feel that their world is under siege, and that Democrats are an enemy to be feared and loathed. Given the philosophical premises Mr. Watts presented as the difference between Democrats and Republicans, reconciliation seems a long way off.”


“The 2016 election was already close. In the popular vote, Hillary Clinton had almost 2 million more votes than Trump, and if only two states had gone her way she would be the next president. And she was an unpopular candidate to begin with. Republicans are unlikely to win again with the same strategy they used in 2016.

What happens next will depend on the choices of party leaders. In their rhetoric and their policies, Democrats can choose to stop offending people of faith and Republicans can choose to stop offending people of color.

With the country becoming both more non-white and more religious, one or both of those are likely in the long term because political parties are pragmatic, designed to win elections.

Which party will learn first?”


“Bishops across the country are encouraging parishioners to put aside their differences and work for the common good as President-elect Donald J. Trump prepared for his Jan. 20 inauguration.

The postelection messages that have emerged serve as both spiritual guide and practical response in an effort to overcome polarization and divisiveness that prevents the country from unifying. …

The core message of individual bishops addressing election results was to urge the incoming administration and Congress to work for the common good. Their statements included the importance of the country not abandoning the needs of poor, vulnerable and marginalized people and to fight racism in all its forms.
The conference as a whole and several individual bishops said they were especially prepared to defend immigrants in the country without documentation should Trump's announced intention to deport "millions" of people be carried out.”


“I was out of the country for 20 years, and I came back and found a much greater degree of polarisation within American society, and a polarisation that always risks seeping into the Church as well. And I found that shocking and distressing. I think one of the principal missions of the Church in the United States is to be an agent of healing that promotes the common good, and unity in diversity. That’s always been a hallmark of the American Church, because American Catholics all came from some place else. If we forgot that as American Catholics, on the day of judgment it will not be Jesus who condemns us, it will be our grandparents, because we forgot. This election enhanced the sense of polarisation - pitting groups against each other. In the wake of that election I feel the mission of the Church is even more crucial, not simply to be faithful to the Gospel but to help our nation preserve the best of its traditions.”


San Bernardino bishop asks parishes to participate in a one-day fast in response to 'divisions that emerged from the presidential campaign'Fast before Inauguration. “It is meant as a show of support for our country,” Bishop Barnes said. “It’s a prayer that the United States succeeds in its principles, for the benefit of all.”

Groups of parishes will be encouraged to observe one day of fasting between January 3 and January 19. The fast would follow the directive for days of fasting during Lent, in which one full meal is permitted with two smaller meals as needed to maintain strength.

As they fast, parishioners are encouraged to pray for the country and that the presidency of Donald Trump will promote human life and dignity, and the common good

Clinton’s stance on abortion was even more off-putting to many evangelicals. In 2007, Clinton was still echoing her husband’s mantra that abortion should be “safe, legal, and rare—and by rare, I mean rare,” as she told a pro-life pastor at a faith forum on CNN. This was the conciliatory language adopted by Democrats during the ’90s culture wars. But by this year, Clinton had dropped the “rare” and was accentuating her support for overturning the Hyde Amendment, which prevents federal funds from being used to pay for most abortions. The shift played well with Clinton’s base, but it did nothing for the many moderates and even conservatives looking for an excuse to vote for her this year.

But when it comes to the evangelical vote, it’s hard not to daydream about what would have happened if Democrats had just shown up. In 2008, the candidate knew that half the job of running for office was simply asking people for their votes. “Evangelicals have come to believe often times that Democrats are anti-faith,” Obama told Christianity Today then. “Part of my job in this campaign, something that I started doing well before this campaign, was to make sure I was showing up and reaching out and sharing my faith experience with people who share that faith.”


_We saw a divide, too, in the U.S. church during this election, with some bishops considering a single issue—abortion—as the decisive factor for Catholic voters. With such a division among the bishops, how can the church in the United States help to heal the wounds of this polarized society?_

“Well, I think we have always had that kind of division in the episcopal conference when it comes to how some take up the various issues and give single focus to some over others. We see that every four years when we debate Faithful Citizenship. There are always some who would like us to make one issue, or a set of issues, the non-negotiables. The bishops have rejected that approach in each reframing of the Faithful Citizenship document. So that’s nothing new. But I think what is new, what I have seen develop in a disturbing way, is that we have never before criticized or spoken about candidates individually, where we would criticize them by name or speak about them.

We always spoke about principles and the issues, but we never used the opportunity of addressing issues related to the campaign by actually naming and criticizing individual politicians by name. Unfortunately, that is a new development which we have seen happen in the last couple of years, and I think that’s a very disturbing departure from the way we have done things in the past. I am convinced that in the long run this tactic does
not suit us well, and it really is not what we should be doing as bishops. I hope we have a chance to talk about this when we meet in November; otherwise our voice will be even further marginalized in the public square.”

_That’s in fact what the pope is reported to have said in an interview published this morning in La Repubblica when asked before the elections what he thought about Donald Trump. “I do not pass judgement on persons or politicians, I just want to understand what are the sufferings that their way of proceeding causes to the poor and the excluded,” the pope is quoted as saying._

“That’s right, and I think before an election it is important that we do not single people out and speak about them in a personal way. That has never been our way of acting, and it is disturbing that some have deviated from that tradition and practice. We need to return to speaking about these issues without speaking directly about individuals and criticizing them personally.”


A close analysis at a variety of aspects in which Clinton and the Democrats failed. His conclusion:

“This is a fateful moment for the U.S. Catholic Church. We will need to see what happens next. Let’s not forget the ruinous choices made eight years ago. After barely uttering a word about Bush’s catastrophic war and legitimization of torture, the U.S. bishops immediately declared war on Obama. In doing so, they allied themselves, however unwittingly, with the unsavory financial interests seeking to undermine his presidency for their personal financial gain.

Will they make the same mistake this time? There are some encouraging signs, at least around the protection of immigrants. But there is still no real appreciation among the bishops for the importance of climate change, or for the damage done to social cohesion from inequality and libertarian ideology. My hope is that a Trump presidency will act as a wake-up call. But I’m not optimistic. We have a long and hard road ahead.”

“Americans are nearly evenly divided on whether American culture and way of life have changed for worse (51 percent) or better (48 percent) since the 1950s. Roughly two-thirds (66 percent) of Democrats say American culture has generally changed for the better since the 1950s, while roughly two-thirds (68 percent) of Republicans say American society and way of life have changed for the worse. No other group believes things have changed for the worse since the 1950s more than white evangelical Protestants (74 percent), who turned out strongly and gave Mr. Trump 81 percent of their votes, according to the early exit polls. And here’s a finding that signals why Mrs. Clinton came up short: a majority (55 percent) of independents also agreed that American culture and way of life have changed for the worse since the 1950s.”

Trump wins Catholic vote in election that awoke religious feeling Crux November 9, 2016

“Now that the voting is over, however, preliminary results indicate Trump decisively won a majority of those self-identifying as Catholics, by 52 to 45 percent. By contrast, President Barack Obama won Catholics narrowly, by a margin of 50 to 48 percent, in 2012. Evangelicals flocked to Trump in far more overwhelming numbers, by a massive 81 to 16 percent. … But out of sight of most media reports, religious concerns also seem to have played an important role in Trump’s win. Whether religious voters were embracing Trump or blocking Clinton, there seems to be a clear political message in the result, which is that people of faith cannot be ignored, disparaged or taken for granted.

Coming on the heels of an administration known for court battles with faith-based businesses, the U.S. bishops and other religious leaders over policies such as the HHS contraception mandate, which includes sterilization procedures and drugs critics regard as abortion-inducing, revelations seen as indicative of team Clinton’s hostility to aspects of evangelical Protestantism and the Catholic faith certainly didn’t help.

Nor did a Catholic on the bottom half of her ticket who took public policy positions at odds with the teaching of his Church on issues including abortion, the death penalty and marriage.

Yet the Clinton campaign’s perceived hostility to religious belief, and what many Americans saw as its increasingly extreme stands on issues such as abortion, certainly didn’t help. With the makeup of the Supreme Court on the line, believers felt they had much to fear from Clinton appointments.”

“Election 2016: Breakdown of the Catholic Vote” National Catholic Register
“Trump’s margin of victory among white Catholics on Tuesday was striking. While that bloc normally votes Republican — Mitt Romney won it by 19 points in 2012 — Trump went even further and won it by 23 points, according to exit polls, the highest margin of victory in that bloc since before the 2000 election.”

“Advocates on both sides strive to make sense of Trump victory.” National Catholic Reporter


El Paso TX Bishop Seitz. Statement of Bp. Mark J. Seitz on Outcome of Presidential Race


“As Catholics we hold to a Consistent Ethic of Life. We believe that every human person, no matter their stage in life, their sex, their national origin, their economic status, or their disabilities deserves love, respect and care. For this reason based upon the positions frequently stated by our President-elect we can find reasons for hope and for serious concern.

“Today many immigrants are understandably fearful. Children and young people who know nothing but life in this country as the sons and daughters of immigrants wonder if their parents will be present when they return from school. Those fleeing direct death threats in their home countries or the murder of their family members have heard of the fate of hundreds who were forced back to their places of origin after running from murderous gangs and narco-traffickers.

“To you I would like to offer some assurances. This country has elected a President, not a dictator. We, in this democratic republic have a system of checks and balances so that the rights of individuals are safeguarded. Campaign rhetoric is just that. Now comes the challenge of governing. For that, a leader must work with others and seek places of compromise.

“U.S. bishops disagree over Trump immigration pledges” Crux November 11, 2016


Contrasts the statements of Bishop Seitz of El Paso with Cardinal Burke, who “believed the new president ‘understands what are the fundamental goods important for us [Catholics],’ especially over life issues and religious freedom. … Cardinal Burke told the Italian daily Il Giornale that he did not believe Trump was ‘inspired by hatred’ on the immigration question, which he said ‘requires awareness of who the immigrants are, the reasons that led them to emigrate and the capacity of the local community to welcome them.”