



Boston Catholic Journal



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Sign of the Times



THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE?

Surely you have heard the term, but *who and what* is the “Devil’s advocate”?

“The *Advocatus Diaboli* (Latin for Devil's Advocate) was formerly an official position within the Catholic Church: one who “argued against the canonization (sainthood) of a candidate in order to uncover any character flaws or misrepresentation of the evidence favoring canonization. In common parlance, the term devil's advocate describes someone who, given a certain point of view, takes a position he or she does not necessarily agree with (or simply an alternative position from the accepted norm), for the sake of debate or to explore the thought further. Despite being ancient, this idiomatic expression is one of the most popular present-day English idioms used to express the concept of arguing against something without actually being committed to the contrary view.” ([Wikipedia](#))

Does this describe Francis’s position in the *Synod on the Family* which resulted in the heretical “Apostolic Exhortation” *Amoris Laetitia* which audaciously presumed to legitimize what God Himself forbade — that is to say, **adultery** — reiterated in Christ’s *explicit* condemnation of it?

NO! But the Devil’s Advocate Literally!

Francis did not convoke the Synod as “*a Devil’s advocate*” in the way understood above — but as **The Devil’s advocate *indeed***: that is to say, as one who — advocating acceptance of “certain cases of adultery” — ***explicitly against*** Christ’s unequivocal teaching — **is condoning, and in condoning, advocating sin**. This ... *this* ... is the domain of darkness — and the provenance of the father of evil. To say that this is appalling is an understatement. We are speaking of the pope of the Roman Catholic Church — essentially advocating adultery!

Radix Malorum

But let us go to the root of this evil (literally the *radix malorum*) by adverting to things in the beginning — to the basics, if you will.

Among all that God has created **who** among them is quintessentially the “**advocate of sin**”?

satan. (we do not capitalize the name lest we dignify it) — he who is “**a liar and a murderer from the beginning**” — the serpent who whispered to Eve that **the injunction to obey one thing only in the Garden of Eden was *not fair*** and should be broken. Not only did Eve *break* the one Command that God had given, but she *propagated* it to Adam (Gen. 3 1-5) — and from Adam it was transmitted to the entire human race.

Sounds like a current state of affairs in the Church, yes?

A Pope Gone Rogue

Francis, we must sadly recognize, is not just a loose cannon. He is much more dangerous. He is a rogue pontiff far more radical — and despotic — than those who machinated his election could have possibly anticipated.

As we have argued elsewhere, he *may* be *non compos mentis* (not of a sound mind). Why would we suggest so extreme, and yet viable a possibility? Consider his *spontaneous* utterances — not those revised and made (with great effort and

imagination) to be textually and contextually comprehensible by the official organ of Vatican publications — but those which are rambling, disconnected, profoundly ambiguous, and often verge on being rhapsodic. Let us examine just a few:

- Francis, in an excess verging on the ecstatic, called Cardinal Walter Kasper’s approach **“profound theology,” “serene theology,”** saying **“it did me good”** and called it **“theology on one’s knees.”**

What, we ask, is **“serene theology”**? What is **“theology on ones knees”**? These are meaningless terms apart from the mind of the one who utters them. They possess a “pathos” of meaning: an emotional *sense of meaning to which nothing rational can be ascribed. They sound nice, but mean nothing. This is not an unkind assessment; only a logical one.*

Another disturbing — and more troubling — statement is the following:

- **“The Church will have to initiate everyone—priests, religious and laity—into this “art of accompaniment” which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other.” (cf. Ex 3:5).**

The “sacred ground” of the adulterer? *Really?* The bedroom of your neighbor’s wife as Mount Sinai?

And who, we must ask with an exacting determination, do we acquire this **“art”** from? Who are the **“Artists”** that will teach us? What is more, according to Francis, we will be have to be **“initiated”** into it, as into a Masonic Lodge or a pagan cult. Invoking the notion of **“initiation”** is particularly troubling. Catholics have religious **rites** (the Rite of Baptism, Confirmation, Last Rites, etc.). We are not **“initiated”** into the Church as into some occult organization; we undergo the **“Rite of Baptism”**. Still less are we initiated into a questionable **“Art”** of any kind. The connotation — apart from material, visual, or performing arts, of course — is historically antagonistic to Christianity, and is particularly associated with the **“Dark Arts”**. In a word, **Religion is not an “Art”** — but an expression and exercise of **Faith**.

Francis goes on further to say:

- **“The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the**

Christian life. (Evangelii Gaudium, 169).

What in the world is he saying? That we should “**compassionately gaze**” upon adulterers? Such a notion is surreal and behaviorally absurd.

How does one do that? Does one stare into their face with an excruciatingly painful expression of sympathy, a factitious and eerie sense of radiant warmth, unconditional love, and heart-wrenching compassion — without *frightening* the adulterer — or any sane person — in doing so — and that such an *affected* sympathy will do what?

Are we to imply that we understand and “*compassionately sympathize*” with what the adulterer did — is *still* doing — and which our odd behavior suggests is *really* not wrong at all?

Having developed that “**art of listening**” — without, of course, “**judgmentally**” *talking in the way of counseling him to refrain from his sin* — would you really “**accompany**” him to his neighbor’s wife to see that he arrives safely, and perhaps fend off her husband?

“**That is absurd!**” you say.

We agree!

But “**That is Francis**”.

You connect the dots and arrive at the conclusion.

Are You an “Artist” and a “Gazer” — a “Serene Theologian”?

Then please contact Francis with your portfolio of *human “artwork”* wrought through your grasp of “serene theology” and your sympathetic, penetrating , and “compassionate gaze” that led adulterers to continue sinning while esteeming their behavior as holy and pleasing to Almighty God.

Or ... you could contact your local office of the *American Psychiatric Association* (<https://www.psychiatry.org/>) and make an appointment.

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