

Let's compel fatherhood

Here's an idea: The government should force men to be fathers to their children.

As we prepare to perhaps enter a post-Roe world where any woman who becomes pregnant is compelled to become a mother (or, at least so long until she gives her child up to someone else) and as we've recently heard following the mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas, that fatherlessness is apparently a root cause of mass shootings, this seems like the only sensible solution.

And I'm not talking child support and visits every other weekend. I'm talking full-time, 24/7 parenting. You know, like single mothers have to do when their baby's dad skips town and shirks his responsibilities.

We don't have to compel that people be married, but we do need to force Mom and Dad to live together, regardless of the circumstances or their relationship. For the good of the child and for the good of society so that kid won't grow up some day to shoot up a school.

Better clear off your calendar, Dad-to-be, because you now better be at every pre-natal doctor visit, as well as in the room when Mom is giving birth. And, be ready to fork over payment to cover that.

Got multiple children with different women? Better clear out the spare bedroom, bro, because they're all moving in with you now. Gotta be there for all your kids and their moms.

Now, there are a few slight issues with this plan.

Couples who don't have a good relationship, up to and including those who are abusive? Well, they'll just have to learn to get along. The power of a two-parent household is more powerful than the detriment of growing up in an abusive two-parent household.

What about rape and molest cases? Well, again, unfortunately, but if some predator impregnates a pre-teen girl, that child is still going to need a father.

But perhaps the biggest problem, what about fathers in prison? If there's one thing America is No. 1 for beside gun ownership per-capita and mass shootings, it's incarcerating our own citizens. We can't let criminals out to be parents, so the most reasonable solution is we're going to have to move Mom and baby into the prison with Dad, so that he can be there and makes sure junior gets a good upbringing.

If men find this forced parenthood unpleasant and try to shirk their duties, well, we already have two felony criminal charges — nonsupport of a dependent child or neglect of a dependent — both of which can be used to immediately punish any dude who isn't there for his kid. And if they get convicted and end up in jail or prison, as stated above, we can just move Mom and kid into the lockup with them.

All of this will ensure fairness in parenting, will ensure that babies are well supported and cared for after birth, and also ensure that no child ever grows up to become a mass shooter again.

We won't need to do anything to try to keep firearms out of the hands of teenagers, because no one who has ever had two parents growing up has ever used an assault rifle to shoot up a public place...

OK, I've had my fun. Now time for the serious part of the column.

Yes, stable two-parent relationships are shown to be the best conditions in which to raise a kid.

That being said, the recent new talking point that fatherless kids are somehow a root cause of mass shootings seems to be pretty imaginative, not to mention pretty insulting to the single mothers out there who take on the Herculean task of raising one (or many) kids on their own with little to no support from deadbeat fathers who often suffer little to no consequences if they aren't involved at all.

I've known single moms who have more headaches because their ex has to remain involved as a term of ongoing child support agreements, even when the scope of that involvement could be summed up as "barely there."

The sad truth is that some kids are probably better off *not* being involved with their biological father for a variety of reasons. Or, at least, better off not being stuck in a house with two people who are going to create a negative atmosphere for the backdrop of their development.

The notion that not only this is one of the leading factors in mass shootings or the notion that somehow we can fix that instead of fixing much other easier-to-fix issues like, say, don't let 18-year-olds buy and possess two assault rifles, is a smokescreen.

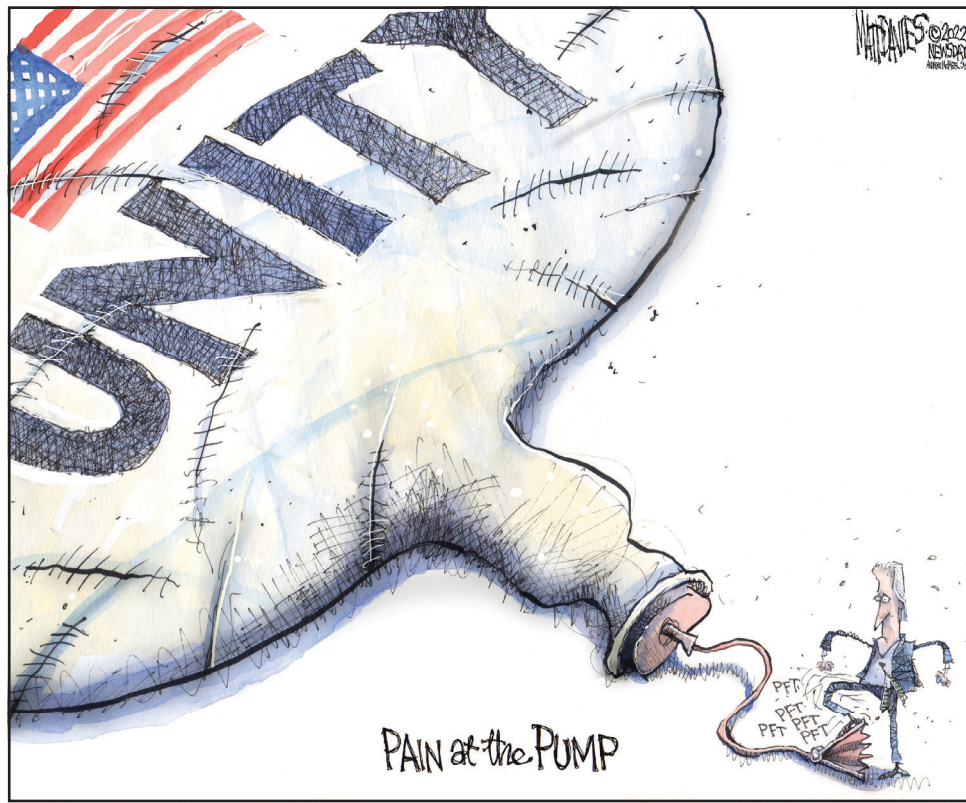
The 1950s-era nostalgia for rows of two-parent households isn't even genuine, as it covers up the very real situation that the dynamic between Mom, Dad and the kids were, in probably more cases than we'd care to admit, less "Leave It to Beaver" and more "Mad Men" or worse.

Stable, loving parentage is a solid goal and one society should encourage, as often as it is reasonable and positive. But how are you actually going to move the needle on that?

And how are you supposed to do that in a manner timely enough for it to be a workable solution to gun violence?

Feels like a cop out to me.

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Letter to the Editor

Biblical believers urged to vote in light of their faith profession

To the editor:
Have you ever wondered how Hitler's government was able to conduct a massive holocaust murdering 10 million people?

Many Germans claimed they knew nothing about the extermination program.

I suspect their "blindness" was related to their pocketbook. Economic prosperity has a way of averting eyes from inconvenient truths.

I believe many Americans are similar in regards to abortion.

When our generation faces God in the judgment, will we be asked, why did you turn blind eyes toward the murder of 63-plus million unborn children?

We know it is happening, but some of us won't stand against it. Are we similar to Germans who saw nothing?

Maybe abortion is overlooked because many Americans are godless materialists. Materialists largely deny the personhood of the unborn prior to a certain point of development.

Maybe abortion is overlooked because some fear militant Democrats, like the woke mob.

It is true they exercise demonic wrath upon their opponents.

Antifa and woke members are well-represented amongst deathscorts ushering women into abortion clinics. They are not shy about employing threats and violence against opponents, including protesters, judges and politicians.

Maybe abortion is overlooked

because some Americans hold unmerited historical loyalties toward the Democrat party.

I am very disappointed with professing Christians from my own Appalachian background. Older Appalachians sometimes turn blind eyes to the Democrat party promotion of abortion, unbiblical sexual practices and indoctrination of schoolchildren into the woke worldview, including gender ideology.

Democrat politicians position themselves as defenders of the poor. Maybe that is why some Appalachians are loyal to them. Are they willing to support a party approving of these abominable practices, in hope that a bone will be tossed to the poor?

Shouldn't faith be reflected in voting practices?

Are they aware the ordinary taxpayer funds these social programs, either directly or indirectly, through increased taxation, inflation and accumulation of national debt?

Proposed programs include funding and promoting abortion, both nationally and internationally.

The national debt is already \$30.5 trillion. This is \$91,000 per citizen, \$242,000 per taxpayer (see usdebtclock.org for a running total).

Appalachians should realize for every dollar the Democrat places in the right hand of the poor, he snatches nine dollars from the left hand. The difference goes to their political allies, funding wasteful partisan programs.

Many Appalachians are already red-pilled, and realize Democrats are no longer the party of the poor. They vote accordingly. However, a sizeable block

turns a blind eye to Democrat wickedness.

Maybe abortion is overlooked because murdering the unborn is expedient for national economic reasons. U.S. Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, claims abortion is good for the economy. Conscientious mothers raising children interrupts the labor supply.

I urge Biblical believers to vote in light of their faith profession. Don't support the Biden administration and the woke agenda.

Additionally, I strongly disagree with a recent letter to the editor indicating Christian government authorities should not reason from a Christian worldview and should keep their faith private, due to separation of church and state.

Secular woke authorities employ their worldview, based on unprovable presuppositions. Previous legal arguments regarding abortion center upon arbitrary, secular, materialist measures of personhood based on stages of development.

It is hypocritical to expect Christian government authorities to refrain from expressing their worldview, while secularists employ their own faulty worldview.

Separation of church and state means there can be no specific state church. It does not mean Christian governmental authorities are prohibited from reasoning based on a Biblical worldview. It was not the intention of the founders to exclude Christians from expressing the Biblical worldview in classrooms, legislatures or courts.

Robert Sparkman
Rome City

Mixed signals in an American bishop's leap

BY TERRY MATTINGLY

Two years before long-standing rumors about Cardinal Theodore McCarrick leapt into headlines worldwide, America's most outspoken activist on clergy sexual abuse, Richard Sipe, met with his local bishop — San Diego Bishop Robert McElroy.

"It was clear to me during our last meeting in your office, although cordial, that you had no interest in any further personal contact," wrote the now-late Sipe, a former Benedictine priest who then worked for the Seton Psychiatric Institute in Baltimore. While church officials asked him to report to McElroy, "your office made it clear that you have no time in your schedule either now or 'in the foreseeable future' to have the meeting that they suggested."

Sipe's 2016 letter to the San Diego bishop was later posted online and is frequently cited as an example of the bishop ignoring warnings about the now-defrocked McCarrick, who often boasted about his clout as a Vatican kingmaker. Now it will receive more attention because Pope Francis has named McElroy to the Sacred College of Cardinals. This promotes the San Diego bishop over several prominent archbishops — including Los Angeles Archbishop Jose Gomez, who leads America's largest Catholic archdiocese and is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In his hand-delivered report, Sipe told McElroy that his ongoing research indicated that 6% of American priests were guilty of sex with minors. Meanwhile, a "systemic" trend was clear: "At any one time no more than 50% of priests are practicing celibacy."

As for the powerful McCarrick, Sipe noted: "I have interviewed 12 seminarians and priests who attest to propositions, harassment, or sex with McCarrick, who has stated, 'I do not like to sleep alone.'"

Debates about McElroy's elevation have focused on other divisive issues in Catholic life, although decades of sexual abuse crimes loom in the background. He has, for example, supported the ordination of women to the diaconate, allowing them to preach, perform weddings and serve — one step from the priesthood — at Catholic altars.

McElroy has openly clashed with American bishops anxious to address "Eucharistic coherence" as prominent Catholics, especially President Joe Biden and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, support — with words and deeds — abortion and LGBTQ rights.

It was McElroy who told an online 2021 Georgetown University forum: "I do not see how depriving the president or other political leaders of Eucharist based on their public policy stance can be interpreted in our society as anything other than the weaponization of Eucharist and an effort not to convince people by argument and by dialogue and by reason, but, rather, to pummel them into submission on the issue."

In that context, McElroy's elevation sends a "strong message to the US hierarchy," tweeted Christopher Lamb, Vatican correspondent for *The Tablet*. And it's important, he added, that McElroy has "called for a more welcoming stance to LGBT Catholics saying, 'what we need to project in the life of the church is 'You are part of us

and we are part of you.'"

Papal advisor Father Antonio Spadaro also said giving McElroy a red hat was "a strong and clear message for the Church in the United States," noted J.D. Flynn of *The Pillar*. Catholics will now ponder the meaning of that message from Rome.

In terms of strategy on abortion, in 2019 McElroy told U.S. bishops that their efforts to focus on "abortion as a preeminent priority — the killing of nearly a million unborn children each year — was 'discordant with the pope's teaching, if not inconsistent,'" noted Flynn. On this and other divisive issues, the "cardinal-elect is not aligned with most American bishops ... and has seemed entirely undisturbed by that."

As a man of the left, Sipe agreed with McElroy on many, if not most, issues in modern Catholicism. However, he confronted his bishop because he believed the sexual abuse crisis is an issue that transcends left-right arguments.

Thus, after 12 pages of text and footnotes, Sipe concluded: "I have tried to help the Church understand and heal the wounds of sexual abuse by clergy. My services have not been welcomed.

"My appeal to you has been for pastoral attention to victims of abuse and the long term consequences of that violation. This includes the effects of suicidal attempts. Only a bishop can minister to these wounds."

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