

Another View of Pope Francis
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Editor:

As much as we admire charming Pope Francis and as much as we usually dismiss columnist George Will as a conservative mouthpiece, his column (September 21) was brave and well worth reading! Will takes on Francis' attack on capitalism as wrongheaded and supports that view with solid facts.

Capitalism (and the scientific revolution) have been responsible for the tripling of life expectancy even in the poorer countries; increase in food supply thanks to fertilizers; better clothing thanks to synthetic materials and fertilizer-dependent cotton; and health thanks to clean water and modern medicines. As much as we dislike coal and oil, they are certainly better than depleting forests for fuel and using horses and humans as sources of energy. The Pope ignores this.

Without these things, the world would retreat to conditions supported by the Catholic Church before the industrial revolution. There would be more poor, hungry, and miserable to comfort than today.

Will touches briefly the Church's position on social issues: abortion, contraception, divorce, same-sex marriage. If he had more room in this column, I would suggest that the reason that there are so many refugees from conflict today come from countries in which women are compelled (by religion and custom) to have so many children. Yes, we should help them, but the best help would be freeing women from the tyranny of patriarchy and childbirth. Would any of us choose to live as Afghan women live? Even Pope Francis cannot comfort them enough.

Finally, as much as I admire the ecology movement, it has skewed the view of nature as beneficent. It is not. Natural subsistence farming cannot feed the world. And Will reminds us "For most of mankind, nature has been, and remains scarcity, disease and disasters."

Love the Pope, don't buy his message.

296 words

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