

# Syria and Russia Clearly Gaining Upper Hand against Terrorists while Globalists Look On

**TERRORISTS OCCUPYING EASTERN ALEPPO** are surrounded by the Syrian army aided by local militia, militia who have gained courage to fight back against terrorists who have occupied their city for years. The Russians and Syrians have established safe exit corridors for civilians but the rebels have refused to let them leave. Consequently, the fighting has continued with thousands of civilians trapped in the city. As expected, the complete liberation of Aleppo by the Syrian Army backed by the Russian Airforce is days away.

According to Canadian diplomat Pat Armstrong, Western leaders are facing a situation they are unaccustomed to, the rebel troops they are supporting are being beaten and about to lose the city of Aleppo. On top of this looming defeat, public opinion in Syria and throughout the world is increasingly turning against imperial liberal overreach into the affairs of sovereign nations. Facing a situation that is getting out of their control, the globalists are not sure what to do to contain it.

The UN and United States have called for another cease fire, but the Syrians are not cooperating. They see it as a ploy that works to their disadvantage. All prior cease fires requested by the UN have been unsuccessful – fighting always erupts after the rebels have been resupplied, regrouped and regained strength; they have never been expelled from the city.

Consequently, the United States and its coalition partners have little alternative but to call for a new round of sanctions to be imposed on the allies of Syria: Russia and Iran who are helping them to defeat ISIL, al Nusra and Daeash. Thus, to garner support for new sanctions and to turn public opinion against Russia, which is winning the war, [according to the President Obama's White House Press Secretary](#) the Russians are bombing civilians and inhibiting humanitarian supplies from reaching Aleppo:

*"A humanitarian disaster is taking place before our very eyes. Some 200,000 civilians, including many children, in eastern Aleppo are cut off from food and medicine supplies. Aleppo is being subjected to daily bombings and artillery attacks by the Syrian regime, supported by Russia and Iran."*

*"We are ready to consider additional restrictive measures against individuals and entities that act for or on behalf of the Syrian regime"*

This announcement comes in the wake of the December 3-4 fall of terrorist forces in E Aleppo. Over the weekend the Syrian Army offered the terrorists a peace treaty in return for their leaving the city, but the terrorists refused the offer to vacate and also refused to let civilians exit by safety corridors established by the Russians and Syrians for this purpose.

Why the Syrian army would want to withhold humanitarian aid to Syrian citizens whom its soldiers are risking their lives to rescue and defend is unclear. It is also unclear why the citizens of Aleppo are cheering the Syrian army and carrying pictures of Assad. According to the [Syrian Free Press](#):

*"Residents of the Eastern parts of Aleppo city took to the streets holding up pictures of Syrian President Bashar Assad"*

*and requesting militants to leave Aleppo immediately...A video footage released on Thursday showed picture of President Assad put on the entrance gate of a mosque, several Arabic-language media outlets reported. The video showed Bashar Assad's picture on the gate of Abu Bakr al-Sadiq mosque in Sakhor district.*

*"According to reports on Thursday, militants that control the Eastern part of Aleppo are trying to suppress mass protests of local residents against their rule. Meanwhile, Al Manar TV channel reported that dozens of people gathered in the Bustan al-Qasr district where one of the humanitarian corridors has been established by the army for civilians to leave the city."*



Image of President Bashar Assad Portrayed in eastern Aleppo Being Freed by Syrian Army

Apparently, the Syrians backed by Russia and Iran have the clear advantage and are not about to let go of it. Nor are they overcome with worries about threatened sanctions and wartime propaganda. In-coming President Donald Trump has indicated that he will put a halt to US nation building and

interference in the internal affairs of sovereign nations as well as his willingness to work with the Russian against the terrorist rather than with the terrorists against the Russians and the democratically elected leader of a sovereign nation.

*"I do think it's a different world today, and [I don't think we should be nation-building anymore](#)," Trump said. "I think it's proven not to work, and we have a different country than we did then. We have \$19 trillion in debt. We're sitting, probably, on a bubble. And it's a bubble that if it breaks, it's going to be very nasty. I just think we have to rebuild our country."*

Trump is also "harshly critical" of John F. Kerry the current Secretary of State and has "questioned the United States' continued involvement in NATO." Along these lines, Mr. Trump has indicated that he seeks to remain neutral in relations with Israel. He also [told the Washington Post editorial board that he would reduce expenditures on NATO](#), consider closing American bases abroad and adopt an "unabashedly non-interventionist approach to world affairs."

According to the Post:

*In spite of unrest abroad, Trump advocates a light footprint in the world, especially in the Middle East. Trump said the [United States must look inward and steer its resources toward rebuilding domestic infrastructure](#)."*

Currently, the world is raising up against global liberalism and Syria is at the center of the resistance at a time that American hegemony and nation building is being challenged around the globe; it looks as if it is about to be curtailed.

Recently (July 2016), a survey of respondents from 18 European countries was conducted by IFOP, the oldest public polling

outlet in France. [According to poll results](#) with a margin of error per country of +/- 3.1% and a confidence level of 95%:

*“The majority of people in Germany (69%), France (55%) and Italy (51%) believe that the United States did a poor job as the only superpower and global leader after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.”*

*“When asked if the United States had succeeded as a global leader after the collapse of the Soviet Union, only 24% of Germans, 35% of French people and 42% of Italians gave a positive response.”*

It appears as if the uni-polar world dominated by global-liberalism (the neo-con and neo-liberal dream for a *Pax Americana*) is eroding. First the collapse of communism and now we are witnessing the collapse of global liberalism as the world moves relentlessly toward a “New Era” of human development, an Era of Peace. With Trump poised to take office, we may soon see a more cooperative international effort consisting of the United States, Europe and Russia.

Currently, the relationship is more and more strained. The EU is still reeling from Under Secretary of State Barbara Nuland’s feverish renunciation telling them to F\*\*K OFF because they were seeking a peaceful resolution to the Ukrainian crisis rather than the interventionist, violent coup scenario preferred by the Americans:

According to BBC diplomatic correspondent Jonathan Marcus describing events that led to the Nuland profanity:

*“The EU is divided and to some extent hesitant about picking a fight with Moscow. It certainly cannot win a short-term battle for Ukraine’s affections with Moscow – it just does not have the cash inducements available. The EU has sought to*

*play a longer game; banking on its attraction over time. But the US clearly is determined to take a much more activist role.” So [“F\\*\\*k the EU”](#)*

With this type of attitude it not difficult to see why US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Ministry Sergei Lavrov have continually failed to reach an agreement over Syria. The United States wants President Bashar Assad out and they are willing to use terrorists to get the job done while simultaneously claiming to be fighting the terrorists. The Russians, confident that the Syrian people will re-elect Assad want to hold a democratic election to let the Syrian people decide who there next president will be. They also insist that the terrorists must be defeated; Trump apparently agrees with them. Because the Russians are opposing the terrorists and the US supporting them, the US and Russia are at odds. The Russians want the terrorists out and the Americans need them to fight the Syrian Army. Consequently, the loss of the primary terrorist stronghold in the central city of Aleppo is quite a blow to American strategy in Syria and the greater Middle East.

Today, as the Syrian Army is preparing the final liberation of Aleppo the United Nations (UN) adopted a draft-resolution on Syria (submitted last year-adopted today). By a vote of 122 in favor and 13 opposed, the resolution acknowledges that the future of Syria should be determined by “an inclusive and Syrian-led political process.” To reach this goal it requests the establishment of “an inclusive transitional governing body with full executive powers.”

[According to a UN Press Release:](#)

*“The Security Council today endorsed a road map for a peace process in Syria, setting out an early-January timetable for United Nations-facilitated talks between the Government and opposition members, **as well as the outlines of a nationwide***

*ceasefire to begin as soon as the parties concerned had taken initial steps towards a political transition*

This is *not* a peace making move. Not only does the resolution call for a cease-fire (something neither the Russians nor the Syrians are likely to accept), it also stipulates that Assad must go. According to the Working Paper, "[Syria's Transition Governance and Constitutional Options](#)" prepared by the Carter Center:

*"[The United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSCR or SCR\) 2254 \(2015\)](#) calls for a new constitution for Syria to be approved within 18 months and for internationally supervised elections to be held under the new constitution. It also calls for an "inclusive transitional governing body with full executive powers, which shall be formed on the basis of mutual consent while ensuring continuity of government institutions" (Preamble Para. 5)."*

*"However, the resolution is silent on the constitutional arrangements required for the 18-month transition period during which a transitional governing body will be exercising executive powers. The Syrian opposition and its international supporters interpret Para. 5 to mean **President Assad must relinquish executive powers from the outset of, or early during, the transition.**"*

Newera does not believe that the Russians or Syrians so close to victory will accept the terms of this resolution.

Moreover, the Russians are adamantly opposed to the American interpretation of events related to Syria and are determined to keep Assad in power until a free election can take place, an election that includes Assad. The Russians and Americans continue to have different versions of the war effort in

Syria.

According to the Russians the United States along with its allies Saudi Arabia and Turkey are responsible for the unrest in Syria and for the creation and support of ISIS, and other related terrorist organizations. The unrest in Syria is interpreted as another covert operation to topple a legitimate government because it is opposed to the foreign policy initiatives of Israel, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the United States and to their liberal anti-Christian agenda. Syria is seen as another in a series of "spring revolutions" promoted by covert intelligence units such as the CIA and Mossad *et al.* President Obama *has even admitted to some of this:*

President-elect Trump has even accused Obama of being the founder of ISIS:

["In many respects, you know, they honor President Obama," Mr. Trump told a raucous and rowdy crowd in Florida on Wednesday night. "He's the founder of ISIS. He's the founder of ISIS. He's the founder. He founded ISIS."](#)

The US State Department under President Obama has claimed there is a civil war in Syria to overthrow the butcher Assad. It is difficult to accept the veracity of this statement when in fact the Syrian Army has been, and is, extremely loyal to Assad as are the people of Syria. Given Trump's adamant statement about ISIS and Obama's tacit approval as well as the facts on the ground and others unmentioned for sake of brevity, it is simply difficult to accept the veracity of this statement.



If there was a civil war in Syria, a civil war supported and backed by the United States and a coalition of over fifty nations including the citizens and dissatisfied elements of the Syrian armed forces in addition to an overwhelmingly large cadre of rebels imported from throughout the Middle East, all against Assad, Assad should have been overthrown a long time ago. Yet, after five years he is still president and growing stronger. Given more than ample opportunity and plenty of time, the Syrian people have not risen up in revolt against their president. Instead, they are being held captive by terrorists supported by the United States, and Assad is increasingly seen by the Syrian people as their champion; he is the one who is freeing them from the stranglehold of the terrorists in such places as Aleppo. Consequently, against all odds and predictions, Assad has the growing support of the Syrian Army, which, with Russian air support, is ridding the country of foreign sponsored terrorism.

The United States should be fighting with Assad against the terrorists, not arming terrorists to fight against Assad.

This whole scenario seems unreasonable; it is a scenario that because it is unreasonable, Trump, being a reasonable man, does not grasp; he is looking to work with the Russia to defeat the terrorists, to defend the rights of a sovereign nation and the will of its people. The incoming Trump administration is likely to focus on defeating ISIS and Daesh. In light of this, it is highly probable that the US and Russia will do the reasonable thing and cooperate. This scenario is anathema to the globalists who prosper by engineering division and unrest necessary to advance their global liberal agenda and to protect their multinational financial and economic interests to the detriment of many people. But as Newera continues to forecast, this is all coming to an end. The fall of Aleppo, taken in concert with the surging crescendo of rising nations, is another clear sign of the impending debacle of liberalism.

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# Pope Francis and The Ultra Conservatives Continued

AS PRESENTED IN PART ONE, Pope Francis is doing his theology from an integral heart-mind unity, that is, integral dogmatic and pastoral theology. Because pastoral decision making is often “fuzzy” because it deals with “grey” matters that are not black and white, a document such as [Amoris Laetitia](#) , is also somewhat obtuse. Nonetheless, at every point there is an ambiguity there is also a clarification close by or previously stated in the document. Often times the ambiguity is on the part of the reader who misses what the pope is actually saying. His method is not to write this exhortation in black or white but to leave it somewhat grey because pastoral theology is itself somewhat grey. However, for those who can see in grey, it is not overly difficult to discern what the pope is communicating.

*Thus, it is necessary to put on a grey lens before proceeding to review the document.*

Having done so, it should be possible to read the so-called problematic paragraphs and interpret them pastorally in order to show that they are indeed clear enough. Pope Francis’ writing style is, in fact, rather ingenious; it could be argued that it is an illustrative exercise birthing pastoral thinking. That is, it is intended to induce pastoral thought in the mind of the reader, if he or she is capable and willing to engage in that type of thought rather than the simple black and white thought of dogmatic theology that many have grown accustomed to.

Most Catholics are aware of, or have heard that, the Church's approach to scripture is "Systematic". Systematic theology is uniquely Catholic theology. It means that every scripture must be interpreted in the light of all the other scriptures because scripture forms one unified whole, one body of infallible truth. No scripture should be interpreted in isolation from other scriptures. Most certainly scripture cannot be interpreted correctly if other passages are ignored or treated as if they did not exist.

This is the case with *Amoris Laetitia*. The document must be read and interpreted in its entirety not in parts, "cherry picking" difficult passages and interpreting them in isolation from the rest of the document, from points that have been made elsewhere that clarify the issue.

For example, Pope Francis specifically states:

*"This discernment (to live together under the conditions just stated and perhaps others) can never prescind from the Gospel demands of truth and charity, as proposed by the Church... These attitudes are essential for avoiding the grave danger of misunderstandings, such as the notion that any priest can quickly grant "exceptions", or that some people can obtain sacramental privileges in exchange for favours" (para 300).*

Clearly, exceptions are infrequent and not easily given! Moreover, according to Pope Francis

*"It must be said that, precisely for that reason, what is part of a practical discernment in particular circumstances cannot be elevated to the level of a rule. That would not only lead to an intolerable casuistry, but would endanger the very values which must be preserved with special care" (para 304).*

As will be illustrated below, Pope Francis upholds traditional church teaching on marriage; his intent is to uphold the "very values which must be preserved with special care". Although

his pastoral theology might at first glance appear to be leading in another direction, a close and systematic read will clearly show that it does not; as he states; “it may never prescind from the Gospel demands of truth and charity, as proposed by the Church. *Amoris Laetitia* does not prescind from the Gospel. The difficult paragraphs must adhere to the perennial truths upheld by the Church according to the pope’s own statements within the document (para 300 and 304).

## **THE SO-CALLED DIFFICULT PARAGRAPHS (300-305)**

### **Para 300**

*“Priests have the duty to “accompany [the divorced and remarried] in helping them to **understand their situation according to the teaching of the Church and the guidelines of the bishop... What we are speaking of is a process of accompaniment (the couple is not alone) and discernment which “guides the faithful to an awareness of their situation before God. **Conversation with the priest, in the internal forum, contributes to the formation of a correct judgment on what hinders the possibility of a fuller participation in the life of the Church and on what steps can foster it and make it grow”****”*

1. “Given that gradualness is not in the law itself (cf. *Familiaris Consortio*, 34), this discernment can never prescind from the Gospel demands of truth and charity, as proposed by the Church.... These attitudes are essential for avoiding the grave danger of misunderstandings, such as the notion that any priest can quickly grant “exceptions”, or that some people can obtain sacramental privileges in exchange for favours.”

Actually, the entire dilemma is solved right here. Francis clearly states that in helping divorced and

remarried understand their situation, priests must do so **“according to the teaching of the Church”**. He is concerned about the establishment of a relationship so that there can actually be a **“process of accompaniment and discernment”** necessary to **“guide the faithful”** to the truth of their situation as they stand before God. It is due to such a close bond between priest and couple that it becomes possible to eventually form a **“correct judgement”**, a correct judgement that is highly unlikely unless a relationship exists in which a priest pastor is guiding a couple to the truth about their relationship before God, how to improve it, and what steps can be taken to obtain fuller participation in the life of the Church – a judgmental attitude practically makes all of this impossible.

### **Para 301**

*“For an adequate understanding of the possibility and need of special discernment in certain **“irregular”** situations, one thing must always be taken into account, **lest anyone think that the demands of the Gospel are in any way being compromised. The Church possesses a solid body of reflection concerning mitigating factors and situations.** Hence it is can no longer **simply** (automatically) be said that **all** those in any **“irregular” situation”** are living in a state of mortal sin and are deprived of sanctifying grace. More is involved here than mere ignorance of the rule (which is as mitigating circumstance-but there are other more detailed and better ones). A subject may know full well the rule, yet have **great difficulty in understanding “its inherent values”** or be in a concrete situation which does not allow him or her to act differently and decide otherwise without further sin (for example not being able to live singly and afford taking care of the children thus sending them to public school because the Catholic school is not affordable or because a father figure is needed due to family alienation coupled with living in a crime ridden neighborhood.)*

Because it is clear that there are mitigating circumstances such as fear, duress, ignorance etc. there is room for mitigation in the case of the divorced and remarried.

*“That servant who knew his master’s will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was **ignorant** of his master’s will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating **shall be beaten only lightly**. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more” ( [Luke 12:47-48](#)).*

**An irregular situation is not necessarily a sinful situation.**

**In fact, Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary lived in a highly “irregular situation”; could they receive Holy Communion?**

An unmarried couple or a couple married civilly might be living in continence or earnestly striving to overcome their physical attraction – it does happen. Francis’ point, I believe, is that continence is more likely to be achieved to the extent that the couple shares a close relationship with a priest and participates in the life of the Church as long as they are committed to improving and striving to do so including regular confession, prayer and penance.

## **Para 302**

*“The Catechism of the Catholic Church clearly mentions these factors: “imputability and responsibility for an action can be diminished or even nullified by **ignorance, inadvertence, duress, fear, habit, inordinate attachments, and other psychological or social factors**” (that inhibit a free decision necessary for a “human act” versus “an act of man” – a human act requires both knowledge and willful consent, an act of man is an act done by a human but under compulsion without a free will or with a free will but in ignorance). In another paragraph, the Catechism refers once again*

*to circumstances which mitigate moral responsibility, and mentions at length “affective immaturity, force of acquired habit, conditions of anxiety or other psychological or social factors that lessen or even extenuate moral culpability. Under certain circumstances people find it very difficult to act differently. Therefore, while upholding a general rule, it is necessary to recognize that responsibility with respect to certain actions or decisions is not the same in all cases.”*

Francis is merely pointing out the more common mitigating factors, but he is not excusing anyone; they are still “responsible” for their actions and decisions; however, before any black and white judgments are made, mitigating factors should be considered and if applicable, applied.

### **Para 303**

*“Naturally, every effort should be made to encourage the development of an enlightened conscience, formed and guided by the responsible and serious discernment of one’s pastor, and to encourage an ever greater trust in God’s grace. Yet conscience can do more than recognize that a given situation does not correspond objectively to the overall demands of the Gospel. It can also recognize with sincerity and honesty what for now is the most generous response which can be given to God, and come to see with a certain moral security that it is what God himself is asking amid the concrete complexity of one’s limits, while yet not fully the objective ideal. In any event, let us recall that this discernment is dynamic; it must remain ever open to new stages of growth and to new decisions which can enable the ideal to be more fully realized.”*

An “enlightened conscience” must be sought and its chance of occurring is greatly increased when a priest is present and able to act as a spiritual guide. The pastor can help a

couple recognize and cooperate with God's grace to become consistently better. It is not enough to tell a couple that they do not correspond objectively to the overall demands of the Gospel and then leave them – that is a black and white dogmatic judgment, not a loving pastoral one. Pastoral care begins when a priest discerns the situation and if after discerning it he does make such a judgement, he is in a position to now help educate and form the consciences of the couple before him. It is too easy to merely say you are sinning and cannot receive the sacraments – this is not love!

### **Para 304**

*“I earnestly ask that we always recall a teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas and learn to incorporate it in our pastoral discernment: “Although there is necessity in the general principles, the more we descend to matters of detail, the more frequently we encounter defects (in the head it is all perfect but not in reality)... In matters of action, truth or practical rectitude is not the same for all, as to matters of detail, but only as to the general principles; and where there is the same rectitude in matters of detail, it is not equally known to all... The principle will be found to fail, according as we descend further into detail. **It is true that general rules set forth a good which can never be disregarded or neglected, but in their formulation they cannot provide absolutely for all (Summa Theologiae, I-II, q. 94, art. 4.236) particular situations.**”*

Now, appealing to Saint Thomas Aquinas, Pope Francis is appealing to perhaps the all time favorite of the ultra-conservative crowd (one of my own too). The pope is simply making the point that was iterated in Part One about pastoral and dogmatic theology, speculative and practical thought and the necessity of fusing heart and mind in decision making. It is clear that Pope Francis knows what he is talking about, he is the Vicar of Christ after-all. Quoting Aquinas, he clearly



states that “ **general rule, principle or truth can “never be disregarded.”**”

HOW MUCH CLEARER CAN IT GET?

However, in their particular “*formulation*” or application, general rules are no longer universal. This is not the pope’s opinion; it is the constant teaching of Aristotelian Philosophy and Scholastic Theology. Aquinas’ “[Treatise on Man](#)” (the human soul) and “Aristotle’s [De Anima](#)” are tough reading, perhaps this helps explain why some ultra-conservatives do not get it. Nonetheless, the issue is clear and the pope has firm grasp of metaphysics and the essence, powers and operations of the human soul a highly abstract and difficult intellectual attainment; few come away having mastered it like the pope has.

#### **PARA 304 Continued**

*“At the same time, it must be said that, precisely for that reason, what is part of a practical discernment in particular circumstances cannot be elevated to the level of a rule. That would not only lead to an intolerable casuistry, but would endanger the very values which must be preserved with special care.”*

Again, Pope Francis is simply correct, a particular practical discernment cannot be elevated to the level of a general rule, to the level of an absolute truth or an ontological judgement. This again is proof enough that he does *not* condone illicit relationships. No matter how great a particular mitigating circumstance might be, it can never replace the general truth given by Christ to man in both the natural and divine laws. **If a licit mitigating circumstance cannot rise to the level of a general truth then certainly the licit but potentially illicit behavior that it makes acceptable can never rise to the level of a general truth – that would “endanger the very values which must be preserved with special care.”** The pope is

saying so much clearly right here – why all the confusion? Pope Francis is in absolute support of the truth and demonstrates it to wise and loving eyes that can look and see. In fact, he even states that the very truths and “values” that we hold dear *“must be preserved with special care.”* He is not excusing sin; he is mercifully and pastorally guiding souls to the best of his ability within the objective parameters of the law, stretching it to its horizontal bounds as Christ spread His arms on the cross.

### **Para 305**

*“For this reason, a pastor cannot feel that it is enough simply to apply moral laws to those living in “irregular” situations, as if they were stones to throw at people’s lives. This would bespeak the closed heart of one used to hiding behind the Church’s teachings, “sitting on the chair of Moses and judging at times with superiority and superficiality difficult cases and wounded families”. **Let us remember that “a small step** (like having the couple sleep in separate rooms) (making a house rule and vowing to stick to it) (vowing that they will always be fully dressed in front of each other; agreeing to have separate rooms etc.) **in the midst of great human limitations, can be more pleasing to God than a life which appears outwardly in order, but moves through the day without confronting great difficulties”** ( that is, a life where everything is in order and abundantly provided for. One might be a life fully screwed up, dysfunctional family, unformed conscience, the whole thing, the other hardly a care). The practical pastoral care of ministers and of communities must not fail to embrace this reality.”*

### **FOOTNOTE THAT GOES WITH PARA 305:**

*“In certain cases, this can include the help of the sacraments. Hence, “I want to remind priests that*

*the confessional must not be a torture chamber, but rather an encounter with the Lord's mercy" (Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium [24 November 2013], 44: AAS 105 [2013], 1038). I would also point out that the Eucharist "is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak" (ibid., 47: 1039)."*

Christ is merciful, so merciful that he wants to excuse sinners. He did not come to condemn them but to forgive them. To the extent that a couple feels love and compassion coming at them from the Church community, they are all the more likely to open up and cooperate with their pastor. Of course, the pope is presuming that "small steps" in difficult situations are being made, that confession is taking place, and people are making a real effort to improve – like a penitent homosexual trying to refrain from illicit relationships and going to confession, he or she might backslide, in fact, falls are expected. But to the extent that they are sincere, penitent and really trying, to that extent the mercy of God is showered over them, communion is denied to no one who has confessed and is sincerely trying to live a proper life.

Thus, Cardinal Ratzinger taught

*"If the divorced are remarried civilly, they find themselves in a situation that **objectively contravenes God's law**. Consequently, they cannot receive Holy Communion as long as this situation persists. ... The faithful who persist in such a situation **may receive Holy Communion only after obtaining sacramental absolution** ... when for serious reasons, for example, for the children's upbringing, a man and a woman cannot satisfy the obligation to separate, **they take on themselves the duty to live in complete continence, that is, by abstinence from the acts proper to married couples.**"*

Pope John Paul II stated the same:

*“Reconciliation in the sacrament of Penance which would open the way to the Eucharist, can only be granted to those who, repenting of having broken the sign of the Covenant and of fidelity to Christ, are **sincerely ready to undertake a way of life that is no longer in contradiction to the indissolubility of marriage.** This means, in practice, that when, for serious reasons, such as for example the children’s upbringing, a man and a woman cannot satisfy the obligation to separate, they “take on themselves the duty to live in complete continence, that is, by abstinence from the acts proper to married couples” ([Familiaris Consortio, 84](#)).*

Pope Francis, Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI all agree; civilly remarried divorcees must go to confession and strive to be chaste (in mind and body) and have a valid and compelling reason for living together that precludes sexual encounter.

A priest leading people this way is exercising real pastoral care. **Sins are not being excused; sinners are being healed.** Penitents are being chastised, but they are being chastised by wisdom in mercy and love.

These situations present real pastoral moments that should be cherished, moments that bring people closer to Christ and to His Church while at the same time gently putting discipline into the lives of penitent sinners in the context of mercy and love. If they fall, as expected they will, they are to be corrected, forgiven, and encouraged to take up the cross again. According to tradition, even Jesus fell three times and He told us to forgive [seventy seven times](#). He knows we all will fall, so why are we upset when a divorced and re-married couple fail at chastity when they are sincerely trying to attain it? More specifically, why is anyone upset when a divorced-remarried couple for the sake of the children vow to live with each other in chastity, frequent confession, regularly pray and sacrifice under the direction of a pastor

who is leading them to spiritual perfection because they love and trust him who first showed mercy and compassion to them while gently guiding them and progressively leading them to the fullness of truth and communion?

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## **Pope Francis and the Ultra Conservatives – Francis is Right – “They Don’t Get It”**

**RECENTLY FOUR CARDINALS** (Carlo Caffarra, Raymond Burke, Walter Brandmüller, Joachim Meisner) presented Pope Francis and Cardinal Gerhard Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with a series of five questions or “*dubia*” (or *doubts*) requesting that he clarify certain sections of his recent Apostolic Exhortation, [\*Amoris Laetitia\*](#) (The Joy of Love) which, they claim has caused “*grave disorientation and great confusion*” in the Church.

The central issue revolves around the admissibility of divorced and remarried couples to Holy Communion. The four cardinals assert that *Amoris Laetitia* seems to contradict earlier papal teachings, specifically *Familiaris Consortio* given by Pope John Paul II. Specifically, they point out concern with Chapter Eight paragraphs 300-305, which they claim are being used by some bishops to permit divorced and remarried couples to receive the sacraments in violation of perennial Church teaching.

Pope Francis is accused of being fuzzy, unclear and dogmatically in error. The real problem really is that people

who are making such allegations, for the most part, “don’t get it”.

The Church just passed through a “Year of Mercy”. Presently, the entire universe is resounding with the echo of Divine Logos: “Mercy-Mercy-Mercy” and of His Mother who is asking for reparation from her children for the sins of others, asking penance from those who love God for those who are steeped in sin. Our Lord and Our Lady are asking for love, mercy, compassion, and sacrifice for sinners while Catholic ultra-conservatives are calling for their heads, calling for punishment, divine retribution, alienation and chastisement. The pope is correct, they “don’t get it”. But neither do the ultra-liberals who make excuses for sins, condone them, militantly embrace their own sin and that of others and refuse to ask for forgiveness – they don’t get it either.

The Holy Father is the Vicar of Christ – His representative on earth. As such, he is expected to mirror the wishes, will, and desires of his King. And it is the King’s will, at this special moment of human history, that mercy be the theme of His Church, that mercy be showered over all the earth from the rising of the sun until its setting in every clime and place. Jesus, Himself, revealed to Saint Faustina that this gift of mercy is His last gift to the Church before He returns in glory as the world’s judge.

Until that time, between now and then, He desires Mercy, especially mercy for the greatest sinners. Thus, He further revealed to Saint Faustina that those who have the most right to His mercy are the most grievous sinners:

***“Let the greatest sinners place their trust in My mercy. They have the right before others to trust in the abyss of My mercy. ... Souls that make an appeal to My mercy delight Me. To such souls I grant even more graces than they ask”*** [\*\(Diary of Saint Faustina Para 1146\)\*](#).

*Jesus has a*

*“...[special compassion for the worst sinners](#), because they are most in need of His mercy.”*

Pope Francis is keenly aware of God’s mercy and of His desire to extend it everywhere, especially toward hardened sinners. He is acting accordingly as the Vicar of Christ; he expects Catholic clergy and laity to do the same. God wants forgiveness, mercy and compassion, not judgment, severity and legalism.

The Hour of Mercy is a time to pronounce, to pronounce the good news, *not* to renounce.

*“For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world”  
([John 12:47](#), [John 3:17](#)).*

With this Message of Mercy ingrained in mind, it is easy to unravel the confusion. We are living in an Hour of Mercy. Mercy is the universal theme of the Church being announced and lived by its universal shepherd. The pope is *not* in error; he has *not* forgotten or rejected earlier church teaching about the sanctity of marriage and the sinfulness of illicit union.

However, **he is teaching as a pastor**, as a “Good Shepherd”, the good shepherd who has “come to save that which was lost”, the good shepherd who leaves ninety-nine righteous people and goes in search of the one that is lost because **it is the will of the Father than none of his sheep be lost:**

*“What think you? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray: doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the mountains, and go to seek that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he find it: Amen I say to you, he rejoiceth more for that, than for the ninety-nine that went not astray.*

*Even so it is not the will of your Father, who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish” ([Matthew 18: 12-14](#))*

Now, if no one goes after them, the stray and sinning sheep, but instead reject, criticize, judge and in their self-righteousness ostracize them, how are they to be saved? The pope unlike the self-righteous Pharisees who murmur, saying: [“This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them”](#), is willing to embrace a sinner with mercy and compassion; mercy and compassion are slow to judge but quick to love.

If the first thing a person does *vis a vis* a hardened sinner is judge, the relationship is over. **The quickest way to the mind is through the heart – it does not work the other way for most people**, especially people who have been conditioned by a culture of sin, by a constant barrage of propaganda and manipulation, psychological warfare by means of association etc. In such a world as this, there are many sheep gone astray and they need a shepherd. If clergy and lay evangelists act with a judgmental attitude, few will be evangelized.

Modern men and women are like sheep in desperate need of a wise and loving friend to shepherd them; however, they often remain without a shepherd because the shepherds on the extreme left are often too blinded by concupiscence and irascibility to properly lead anyone, while those on the ultra-conservative right are often too busy satisfying themselves intellectually and too judgmental to have compassion.

What is the attitude of Jesus the Good Shepherd? When He looked upon the vast throng of lost humanity, He had **COMPASSION ON THEM**” because they were lost and in agony – being lost in deep sin is not fun!

*“And seeing the multitudes, he had compassion on them: because they were distressed” ([Matthew 9:36](#)).*



It was then that He said to His apostles, "[The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few](#)".

Francis is acting like a good laborer in the Hour of Mercy. He is acting like St. John Bosco, a saint who did get it, a saint who reached out to the street boys, the gang-bangers, of Northern Italy and beyond when no one else, including many clergy, wanted anything to do with them – too upsetting to a comfortable life-style, too filthy to bring home – too risky to deal with – too impure to mingle with their cultural refinement. St. John Bosco had many adages, a man full of folk-wisdom. One of his many: "**The time is long, but the cure is sure**". Dealing with sin requires time and patience, patience that grows out of love and mercy. With love, with mercy, over time healing can occur; it does not occur (in most people) by a quick intellectual fix following some sage advice from a counselor – this is for relatively advanced people, which a sinner – lost in sin – is not.

At this time in human history, a time of MERCY, the Church must do its evangelical work pastorally. To fail pastorally is to fail as a shepherd. Shepherds *pastor* sheep, they do not discuss philosophical and theological treatises with them. Clergy formation involves much detailed philosophical and theological formation and deep intellectual growth. *The proper place for this type of discussion is the seminary*. It is hoped that before a man leaves a seminary that he makes a connection between his intellectual formation and the pastoral care he must give to his sheep. Intellectual learning is intended to facilitate his work as a pastor. A college professor is *not* a pastor. Many clergy and laity, usually among the ultra-conservative, the crowd accusing Pope Francis of heresy etc., have failed to make the transition. They act as if they were still in the seminary; instead of love, mercy and compassion for sinners they are deeply dissatisfied with the state of things and want to lecture people about their faults and especially about the faults,

short-comings and theological errors of the pope and bishops; indeed they want to lecture the pope himself. Instead of seeing a soul to be saved, they see a sinner to be disciplined and a pope to be castigated for not being more severe.

Correction and discipline should and must be forthcoming, but they work better after a relationship has been established on the basis of mercy and love. In the last analysis, [love is greater than knowledge, love alone endures for eternity.](#)

Saint Francis de Sales understood this well: **“More bees are attracted by a spoonful of honey than by a barrel of vinegar.”**

Some people, for whatever reason, just do not get this – do not get the intersection of learning and knowledge with love and mercy, the intersection of dogmatic and pastoral theology, the intersection of heart and mind.

Then, infected by this inability, they proceed to read papal teachings such as *Amoris Laetitia*. Because they “don’t get it”, they approach the document as if it were an *intellectual exercise*, when in fact, it is a *pastoral exhortation*.

They just cannot put the whole thing together. Like some Protestants who cherry-pick scriptures picking passages that support their point and neglecting or ignoring others that do not support their position, they act like the others do not exist.

### **Practical and Speculative Intellect- Have the Clergy forgotten Their Philosophical Education?**

Every priest and many lay men and women have studied philosophy, but afterward many forget what they learned or fail to apply it to their service of others. Every priest and student of classical and scholastic philosophy has learned (or should have learned) the difference between the “speculative intellect” (SI) and the “practical intellect” (PI). In short,

the SI begins its work by grasping first principles and reasoning from them to reach logical conclusions that must be accepted if the principles are true and the logic is correct (logical deduction from premise to conclusion: A-B therefore C). The PI operates differently; it is not involved in deductive logic, a purely intellectual exercise. Rather, the PI involves the intellect in its *application mode*, that is when the intellect applies truths grasped by the SI to everyday practice. The SI operates in the intellectual realm of acquired wisdom, the realm of dogmatic truths that are discovered by the intellect BEFORE they are afterward applied outside the mind to practical everyday reality, where theory must meet practice if it is to be successful. The SI operates interiorly, the PI must operate in the real exterior world. The mind and the world are two very different places.

The PI does *not* begin with logical first principles, it begins with the end or the conclusion reached by the SI as a result of reasoning to conclusions from principles, discursive logic. A logical conclusion or end is the last thing discovered by the SI, but it is the first principle of the PI, which must make prudential judgments about which means are to be chosen to reach a desired end. The human mind *necessarily ascends* to a logical conclusion derived by way of the SI, but the means derived by the PI to achieve a derived end are only probable. No one necessarily ascends to them because many other means may be discovered, some better than others, some faulty some not – no one knows for sure if the means they choose will actually result in the acquisition of the end – they are only probably sure. Thus, for the SI the end is last in the order of acquisition (the end or fruit of as long train of thought), but for the PI, the end is first in the order of operation because without the end no one would know where they were going or how to derive means to get there.

Thus, the work of the practical intellect begins with the end and is calculative and probable while that of the SI begins

with first principles to discover an end and it is rational and certain of its conclusions. That is, the SI necessarily ascends to its conclusions in order to avoid a logical contradiction. The SI begins with first principles to reach certain conclusions, but the PI begins with ends to reach probable conclusions.

For example, if after an exhaustive study of the human soul, the SI determines that human beings should pursue happiness as an end then it is up to the PI to determine just how the end of happiness should be achieved. To achieve happiness, the PI must first know what happiness is and then figure out how among a world of constant change and flux that happiness can actually be attained. Because **circumstances are always changing, what works in one time or place might *not* work in another. Even if the SI discovers necessary truths, no progress can be made toward their attainment if the PI is deficient.** Knowing that happiness is an end to be achieved is a “black and white” issue – it is clear. But knowing how to achieve happiness in a given place or time among an endless array of possibilities and constantly shifting contingencies is a very difficult exercise. It is this later that Pope Francis is concerned about; nothing is black and white in the practical realm of constantly shifting contingencies i.e., the pastoral realm. Even if a priest, or lay evangelist, is certain of the highest truths, this certainty is practically useless unless the PI is capable of making prudential judgments about how best to achieve these truths in diverse environments and among diverse people and cultures.

*Clearly knowing the truth, knowing black and white dogma is necessary but insufficient for the work of evangelization, which is the major work of the Church!*

Pastoral theology depends upon the PI as much as it depends on the SI, perhaps moreso. Pastors must deal with constantly changing realities and shifting situations that effect how

they might or might not succeed given a set of unique circumstances. Moreover, before a practical or prudential judgement can be made, facts must be gathered, the greater the quantity and quality of the information the better. Clearly, it is a mortal sin to divorce, remarry, and receive the Eucharist. This much is black and white. However, there are subjective and mitigating circumstances that might alter the judgement if they were known.

**In the case of human moral decision making, the acquisition of facts presupposes proper relationships,** making prudential or practical judgments requires information and knowledge of unique circumstances. Pope Francis is coming from this perspective, the pastoral perspective of the PI, while those who are confused are coming at the question dogmatically from the black and white understanding of the SI.

The latter *only* works in the classroom, in the university or seminary where truths are being ascertained and acquired. **The real world, however, is not a place of truth acquisition, it is a place of truth implementation,** implementation of truths previously acquired in the classroom. A parish is not a seminary; it is a place of practical reality where souls must be served and saved among a constantly shifting array of unique circumstances. If a pastor fails to acquire this information because he fails at relationships, his parish will most likely fail and his sheep, will be poorly served. He cannot treat them as a pedagogue teaching theology lessons; first the heart must be reached. This requires *mercy* and *compassion*, especially in a time as far gone as the present.

Practical decisions – pastoral decisions are *not* black and white. Priests must realize that they are no longer in the seminary. Moral casuistry (application of speculative or dogmatic truths to everyday contingencies) is always probable. While theological truths are unchanging and universal, their application is ever-changing and relative. Thou shall not kill is a black and white clear moral precept. However, what

about self-defense, what about soldiers defending their country, what about the mitigating circumstances of killing in the heat of passion versus pre-meditated murder etc. Things become quite complex when the move is made from speculative black and white principles to the grey area of their application – the realm of pastoral theology.

*“Some priestly formation programs run the risk of educating in the light of overly clear and distinct ideas, and therefore to act within limits and criteria that are rigidly defined ... and that set aside concrete situations.”*

In short, people complaining that they are confused want everything to be black and white as Pope Francis asserts.

*“In life, not everything is black over white or white over black. No! The shades of gray prevail in life. We must teach them (seminarians) to discern in this gray area”* ([National Federation of Priests Councils](#)).

No one can make a practical moral judgement without first acquiring the facts of a case (the gray area). But no one can adequately acquire the facts from a person living in sin if he or she does not first dismiss and overlook many faults and repulsive behaviors, which enable him to withhold judgement and enter into a relationship necessary for the acquisition of information and to make correct assessment of the state of a soul. If instead, a priest makes snap judgments based on black and white dogmatic truths pertaining to right and wrong behavior, relationships will be strained and end prematurely, or fail to develop at all, in which case there is no hope of conversion, the very purpose of evangelization.

Many rigid ultra-conservatives are looking at Francis' teachings through the lens of dogmatic theology rather than through the lens of mercy and compassion, pastoral theology, which is often very confusing. Unfortunately, practical

pastoral decisions are rarely black and white. Dealing with divorced and remarried couples is a pastoral issue. It certainly involves the application of black and white speculative or dogmatic principles, but no case is the same; shifting circumstances require prudential insight because sometimes circumstances that appear objectively sinful might be morally licit, such as the case of divorced-remarried couples living together chastely as brother and sister. If a Christian fails to acquire practical knowledge of the facts, in this case, a chaste living arrangement, but quickly jumps to a black and white conclusion thereby condemning an innocent couple, he or she sins not only against justice, but also against charity. It is necessary to see both with the eyes of the intellect and with the eyes of the heart. One **without** the other is always deficient. **Speculative wisdom must be united to and enlightened by emotive love** because:

*“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices **with** the truth” ([1 Corinthians 13: 4-6](#)).*

Priestly learning does not involve education alone – it involves education and formation. EDUCATION in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, and FORMATION in self mastery, mercy and love. Without the later, priests and laity alike are “confused” and tend to see everything in “black and white.” The remedy is growth in mercy and love as Pope Francis continually stresses!

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**END OF PART ONE – TO BE CONTINUED**

**PART TWO WILL EXAMINE THE ALLEGED DIFFICULTIES WITHIN “AMORIS LAETITIA” IN LIGHT OF WHAT WAS PRESENTED IN PART ONE**

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# Italy Next in Line to Oppose Liberalism and Exit the EU?

UNTIL YESTERDAY ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER MATTEO RENZI had been advocating a referendum to “slim down” and “defang” the Upper Chamber of the Italian Parliament (from 315 to 100). A move that would in effect eradicate a check on the lower house and empower the central government thereby enabling Renzi to more efficiently implement his pro-European program. A widely advertised and highly emotional campaign resulted in a near 70 percent turnout of Italy’s electorate. Of this large group a significant 60 percent voted no for the referendum.

A “No-Vote” to the Renzi sponsored referendum could be interpreted as a vote of no-confidence in Renzi and his attempts to strengthen ties with Paris and Berlin in favor of the EU and Eurozone. However, it should be pointed out upfront that this referendum did *not* involve an exit from the European Union *per se*. Unlike the Brexit referendum, the Renzi referendum sought to tie Italy closer to the EU. Thus, its failure may be indirectly interpreted as a vote to widen the gap between Italy and the EU.

Renzi promised his countrymen that if he failed to get his referendum approved, he would tender his resignation and step down from office. In wake of yesterday’s referendum’s failure, Renzi is faced with a dilemma, keeping his word and actually stepping down or ignoring his statement as political rhetoric. Renzi, has chosen the former.

Being a man of principle, he has kept his word. Sunday morning the Prime Minister announced:



*“When you lose you cannot pretend that nothing has happened and go to bed and sleep. My government ends here today” ([Fox News](#)).*

*“I take full responsibility for the defeat. I will greet my successor with a smile and a hug, whoever it might be” ([CNN Money](#)).*

The main beneficiary of the Renzi defeat seems to be the Italian “**Five Star**” movement, which is in favor of imitating Brexit in Italy by spearheading plans for another referendum asking the Italian people to withdraw from the European Union and the Euro Zone thereby discontinuing use of the Euro and reinstating the Italian Lira in its place.

In the wake of Brexit and aspiring Euroskeptical movements in France, Greece and Spain exacerbated by successful Euroskeptical movements in Hungary, Poland, Moldova, and Slovakia, liberal globalists are awakening to the likelihood that another populist party, such as Five Star, will rise to national prominence in Italy thereby creating ever-deepening crisis leading to questions about the on going viability of the EU itself.

Matteo Renzi Accepts Defeat Giving Rise to Hopes among Euroskeptical Parties such as Five Star for an Italian Exit

## **WHO IS FIVE STAR**

As stated in the above video, Five Star is a “populist, anti-establishment, anti-European, increasingly popular” movement in Italy. Five Star was established by an Italian comedian, Beppe Grillo and web strategist [Gianroberto Casaleggio](#) in 2009. As stated, the party is populist, Euroskeptical, and anti-globalist. It is named Five Stars because it coalesces around five primary issues: (1) transportation (2) water (3)

development (4) internet access (5) non-violence. Five Stars is in favor of direct digital democracy (direct participation of all citizens in public affairs by use of computer technology) and rejects foreign military intervention in the Middle East and specifically American intervention in Syria.

Five Star favors green technology, is anti-pollution and social justice oriented, ecological-minded, anti-capitalist and anti-consumerist. As such, it favors limited but sustainable growth, reduced production and consumption, and the growth of arts and more humane use of leisure time. Currently, Five Star has 109 deputies in the lower house known in Italy as the Chamber of Deputies, which consists of 630 members.

The BBC and other media agencies are focusing on Five Star and presenting it as the apparent front runner leading the way to change among Euroskeptic elements throughout Italy. New Era does *not* agree with the BBC, which seemingly forecasts and implicitly promotes the rise of Five Star. Five Star is a left wing movement committed to an aberrant moral agenda. The BBC is apparently pinning its hopes on a Five Star rise to power thereby presenting the movement as another populist party like those coming to the fore throughout Europe. Unfortunately, Five Star is not one of these.

### **A MORE LIKELY SCENARIO**

There are other populist parties developing in Italy, parties more in tune with what is happening in Eastern Europe, France, Asia and Africa than Five Star. Five Star has many valid and potentially good ideas, but without a moral foundation, it risks running the gamut of just another "hippie movement" backed by technological savvy.



Beppe Grillo, and Gianroberto Casaleggio Co-Founders of Five Star

Technological savvy and direct democracy, however, are not the answer to future problems. Future problems require deep roots in philosophy, theology, spirituality, social science and then technology and professional expertise.

Five Star is being presented favorably by outlets such as the BBC because the BBC and others are fully aware that the Euroskeptic anti-liberal movement is in full swing. Unfortunately, although Five Star has an innovative *political* and *economic* reform package, *morally* Five Star is just another liberal program masquerading in progressive populist guise. [In 2014 the party voted for gay rights and same sex unions.](#)

That was 2014, given the current political landscape, Five Star is back peddling on the issue. According to the [Guardian](#):

*“After seemingly supporting the legislation for months, Beppe Grillo, the former comic who heads the protest party (Five Star), announced that members of his party could vote their conscience on the bill (advocating same sex unions).”*

*“It was a reflection, analysts said, of the changing political landscape in Italy. The country’s [conservative and right-wing parties are largely in disarray](#) and Grillo likely sees an opportunity to pick up conservative voters in upcoming local elections if he can scupper or weaken the civil unions bill.”*

*“There is an element in this of M5S (Five Star) generally not being reliable partners. They are also opportunistic. There is an opportunity to grab votes from centre-right parties, which at this point cannot even put forward candidates in key cities,” said Wolfango Piccoli, an analyst at Teneo Intelligence in London.”*

This is an opportunistic vote and party that is not to be trusted. **Beppe Grillo is asking his followers to “trust their gut not their brain”**

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37aUvz-v0FE> at 2:57 in video) as if they were a pack of animals unable to think for themselves. Thus, BBC and others are hoping that people are still dim-witted enough to be unable to see through the propaganda, but that is exactly what the Euroskeptic anti-liberal movement is about: People are tired of the propaganda and will see through this campaign with just a little insight:

*A win for Five Star is a win for liberalism.*

To hide this fact, leaders of Five Star are beginning to strategize. According to the Economist, [“Five Star is Smartening Up”](#) :

*“EVEN fans of the Five Star Movement, an Italian political group often described as populist, maverick and anti-establishment, would never have credited it with slickness.”*

Slickness, however is not wisdom. Given the current Christian family values renewal under way in Europe, and Five Star's reluctance to form political alliances with other parties, Five Star's chances of making it to power on a pro-gay agenda are slim. The Party has not definitively disowned or modified its agenda; it has merely refused to make a statement at this time and in an attempt to be "slick" it has merely left the vote to individual conscience. This ploy will have its effect, but it will not result in victory. A more likely political party candidate for the future of Italy is **Lega Nord**.

As reported by the Guardian:

*"When Matteo Salvini took over the leadership of the Northern League (Lega Nord) at the end of 2013, Italian politicians and the media said his job would be to officiate at the party's funeral. Two years later, it is back from the near dead – and stronger than ever."*

*"Whether you credit the refugee crisis, the [Marine Le Pen](#) bandwagon or what party insiders prefer to call the [#effettoSalvini](#) (the Salvini effect), the party that sank to an historic low of 4 percent in the 2013 election – below the threshold for seats in the Senate – now has [16-17 percent support](#) in nationwide polls."*

A likely scenario for Italy is a coalition movement consisting of Silvio Berlusconi's **Forza Italia**, right-wing **Fratelli d'Italia** and **Lega Nord**.

Lega Nord, promotes Italy's cultural values, supports the traditional family, is opposed to same sex union, globalism, and the spread of liberalism.

Recently, Salvini, leader of Lega Nord, hosted a Milan Conference for a new group in the European Parliament known as

Europe of Nations and Freedom Group (ENF), which includes Marine Le Pen and other Euroskeptic party leaders from throughout the continent. ENF is working to establish a “Europe of free nations in which power is fully returned from the European Union to the voters of sovereign states. The group’s commitments are to sovereignty, democracy, freedom and ending mass immigration so that members may advance their own interests at the domestic level.”

In the words of Marine le Pen VP of ENF:

*“Each day, the Europe of Brussels unveils its fatal design: deconstructing nations to build a new globalist order, dangerous for the security, prosperity, identity, the very survival of the European peoples.”*

*“Faced with the proponents of federalism, we are the guardians informed of the national spirit and the defenders of the interests of European peoples.”*

*“An opposing force that embodies the patriotic alternative to the globalist Europe, Brussels...”*

*“This pole of resistance, which today unites the elect of eight European nations, pursues a compelling purpose: to free Europe from the chains of servitude...and build a continent of peace and prosperity.”*

At the close of the Milan meeting of ENF hosted by Salvini, Salvini had a photo taken with Le Pen and others containing the caption:

*““We will not surrender to the clandestine invasion.”*

In a recent Facebook Post carried by the Guardian, Salvini stated:

[“We are the real alternative to Renzi.”](#)

Then he thanked supporters on Twitter and beckoned Renzi

*“We’re coming”, #Salvini.*

If *Lega Nord* or *Five Star* happen to pull a surprise victory (a surprise victory like the Trump surprise and the many similar surprises occurring throughout Europe) in the next election, Italian voters should expect a referendum to withdraw from the European Union or Euro Zone.