

# Radical Traditionalists Falsely Accuse Pope Francis of Error Regarding Death Penalty

## New Era World News and Intelligence

RECENTLY [LIFE SITE NEWS](#) and [1 PETER FIVE](#), trying to do their parts to make Pope Francis look like a liberal pretender who purposely confuses issues in order to stealthily slip in moral errors, these supposedly “Catholic News Agencies” reported that the Vicar of Christ erred once again, *this time on the death penalty*. Life Site (LS) and 1 Peter Five (1P5) have a penchant for misrepresenting the Vicar of Christ. They seem to want their readers to think that the pope is a miscreant liberal shepherd who purposefully or inadvertently introduces egregious errors into papal pronouncements. The world does not need supposed Catholic news agencies to identify the pope’s theological errors because the pope is *not* guilty of any of the false charges they have brought against him. In fact, if they continue *acting* as papal judges (Raymond Arroyo and covert anti-papal agents at EWTN even have the audacity to refer to themselves as the “[Papal Posse](#)” [50 second mark of linked video] as if they were bringing a fugitive to justice), they might be bringing condemnation upon themselves.

In this regard, Jesus, speaking to Peter and the other members of the episcopate reminded them that no student is greater than his master; thereby indicating that they would be falsely judged by members of their own household ([Matt 10:24](#) and [36](#)). However, the Lord also indicated that those who falsely or ignorantly judge others while concealing their own errors do so to their own detriment. This detriment has its origin in at

least two possibilities: (1) The papal detractors are ignorant, that is they honestly do *not* understand what the pope is saying but brazenly report on it anyway as if they did or (2) properly construing his words, instead of clarifying and elucidating them (as is proper), they feign to misunderstand their correct meaning in order to introduce confusion thereby making themselves guilty of what they falsely accuse the pope of doing, *i.e.*, introducing confusion.

**Jesus has indicated that those who accuse others** (such as the self-righteous pharisees) **are often the ones who are most blind and for this blindness coupled with their arrogance** (an arrogance by which they exalt themselves, making themselves judges, in the Jewish case of Christ, and in the current case, of the Vicar of Christ *not* in private but boldly and by means of a public media) **they will be judged for hypocrisy**. He has warned them of the danger in judging, *especially* when it is accompanied by hypocrisy and pride. Those who judge falsely will have difficulty attaining mercy; instead they might find themselves judged in the Tribunal of Justice. They who think it justice to falsely defame and reject the Vicar of Christ, might find themselves defamed and rejected by the same Christ whom they claim to be serving ([Matt 7: 21-23](#)).

*“Stop judging and you will not be judged...For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you”* ([Luke 6: 37-41](#)).

To which Jesus added:

*“Can the blind lead the blind? do they not both fall into the ditch?...Why seest thou the mote in thy brother’s eye: but the beam that is in thy own eye thou considerest not?... Hypocrite, cast first the beam out of thy own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to take out the mote from thy brother’s eye.*

These papal detractors would have men and women believe that

the pope is blind and thus his reaching out in mercy to embrace sinners in order to lead them to Christ is misguided. They think it is more effective to condemn them, to immediately reprimand them and straighten them all out because they alone, unlike the pope, are capable of understanding the modern world and the need for harsh medicinal treatment they seemingly insist upon for the curing of souls. The pope wants to bring souls to Christ, not drive them into further rebellion. But these detractors reject his merciful approach and claim that he is blind; they act as though they alone are capable of guiding the flock because they alone are able to "see". At least, that is what they would like everyone to believe. **It would be better for them if they were blind and confess their inability to understand how the Spirit is moving in the modern world:**

*"Jesus said to them: If you were blind, you should not have sin: but now you say: We see. (Therefore) Your sin remaineth" ([John 9:41](#)).*

Because they claim to see, but are in actuality blind, the Lord refers to such men as "blind guides" ([Matt 23:24](#)) and cautions his humble followers, those who hear His voice, to ignore them:

*"Let them alone (ignore them or leave them): they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the pit.*

The Apostle John is more adamant, he rightly informs the growing flock that Jesus said to "flee from them" ([John 10:11-15](#)).

<https://youtu.be/iKwabH-k2fg>

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep."

Jesus came so that sinners could have life and have it more abundantly. For this, they must be introduced into the Church through the door of baptism, continue receiving the sacraments, regularly confess their sins and venial faults etc. However, the sad truth is that many fall away and have to be rescued and saved, a process that requires patience and understanding, but these modern day lay (and clerical) pharisees would prefer to see them condemned and driven out. Likewise, they take it upon themselves to arrogantly and erroneously judge the pope and complain about his emphasis on mercy toward sinners. They refuse to listen to Pope Francis when he reminds pastors that they must have the “smell of their sheep”, to labor for them and become like them rather than be concerned about what soutane they are wearing, about obtaining a cardinal’s hat or making the church a career. True pastors, those who love the weak and fallen sheep they serve protect , accompany them, have mercy on them, assist them when they fall. Robbers and thieves attend to their own preferences, those whom Francis refers to as “careerists” and “collectors of antiquities”:

*“When a priest (Francis says) ‘doesn’t put his own skin and own heart on the line, he never hears a warm, heartfelt word of thanks’ from those he has helped. This is precisely the reason why some priests grow dissatisfied, lose heart and become in a sense collectors of antiquities or novelties – instead of being shepherds living with the smell of the sheep...This is what I am asking you, (he said with emphasis, looking up from his prepared text): be shepherds with the smell of sheep” ([Catholic Telegraph](#)).*

To smell like sheep means to be amongst the people. For the priest, although his primary duty is to offer the Holy Mass, it means drawing grace and strength from the Mass and being mercifully engaged, like the Good Shepherd, in the life of parishioners and all those with whom he comes in contact, esp. those whom Our Lady calls “poor sinners” whom her Son came *not*

to condemn, but to save.

Traditionalists like those at 1P5 and LS belittle both Pope Francis and the Message of Mercy while foolishly demanding condemnation and exclusion, like those at [Novus Ordo Watch](#) who proudly announce their preference for justice:

*“As Francis’ fake Year of Mercy is drawing to a close, so is **our** Year of Exclusion, Judgment, and Condemnation, which is being observed in direct contrast to the former. As with all other posts in this series, so too this...installment will focus on some forgotten truth of the holy Catholic Faith that is considered by our sorry society to be extremely judgmental, exclusionary, negative, hateful, bigoted, intolerant, condemnatory, unwelcoming, dogmatic, narrow-minded, and everything else that oh-so-enlightened modern man despises and detests.”*

Wise men are careful *not* to belittle mercy; **those who deny mercy to others might have trouble receiving mercy from the Lord themselves.** They know well the Lord’s prayer but seem to forget it: *“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”* They demand justice, perhaps they will receive it on Judgement Day. They have the audacity to falsely incriminate the pope of confusion and error and fail to realize that in doing so they enter the family of accusers. *Jesus, however, is not the Father of Accusers; Jesus is the Father of Excusers.* He died to save all men, to excuse them *all of all* the debt due to their sins ([John 3:17](#)).

Satan, however, wants to accuse all men of their sins; he dared even to accuse Moses ([Jude 1:9](#)), how much more lesser men? No, Jesus is the excuser ([Matt 26:28](#)), the devil is the accuser ([Rev 12:10](#)). The Pharisees failed to grasp the centrality of Mercy ([Matt 9:10-13](#)) and then wrongly accused Jesus of teaching error ([John 10:33](#); [Matt 26:59-64](#)). Wise men, especially Catholic wise men, should think twice before

accusing, before repeating the pattern of the Pharisees false accusations against Christ by falsely accusing His Vicar, especially when they should know that Jesus taught Peter that he would be falsely accused, that his accusers would come from his own house, and that they would be condemned as blind guides, guides who present themselves as being more able to see than the Vicar of Christ – and *no* this is *not* pope idolatry. Of course the pope can act morally wrong and also be in error, but not in the cases for which they are accusing him.

It is saddening that such men exist. The proper response to their pride is humble correction accompanied by reparation prayer *esp.* Holy Communion as requested by Our Lady at Fatima. Sad as their case might be, it is not difficult to understand; even lay and pagan depth psychologists have understood the enigma associated with their primary defense mechanism: *projection*. Minds dissociated from reality, they tell us, cover their own error by falsely projecting it onto another. To the extent they are conscious of their malady, the more they are culpable. Nonetheless, in reality (conscious or unconscious) the man who cries wolf falsely is eventually devoured by the wolves along with those who have had the great misfortune of listening to and believing him (them). As the Lord said, disassociate yourselves from them, from those who prefer things such as fighting with the pope and wrangling over the liturgy to minding their own business and laying down their lives for the sheep.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60MgGBh0pYQ>

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No, it is *not* the pope who introduces confusion by twisting texts, employing subtle vocabulary to introduce foreign

teachings or who stealthily misrepresents those teachings. NO, IT IS NOT THE POPE THAT EMPLOYS THESE METHODS BUT THE ANTI-PAPAL FAKE NEWS MEDIA THAT ADROITLY EMPLOYS THEM TO MISLEAD UNSUSPECTING READERS. Those eager to trip the pope up either are unaware of, ignore, or overlook their own errors and then in the name of truth, zealously foist error on their readers, such as the errors introduced recently by [Pete Baklinski writing for Life Site News](#) and Dr. Joseph Shaw writing for 1P5.

According to Balinski,

*“Pope Francis has gone beyond the position held by **Pope St. John Paul II and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI** who, while opposing capital punishment, **never held that it was, in itself, intrinsically evil.**”*

Unfortunately for Balinski using Pope John Paul II to advance his case against Pope Francis and in favor of the death penalty, unfortunately for Balinsky, the pope he uses to advance his fallacious argument\_ended his homily on the death penalty ([July 9, 2000](#)) with these words:

*“Compassionate Father, give us wisdom and hearts filled with your love. Guide us as we work to end the use of the death penalty and to build a society that truly chooses life in all situations.”*

Likewise, according to [Shaw](#):

*“**Pope Francis’ statement** (about the death penalty), **by so simply and so clearly contradicting his predecessor of 65 years ago (Pope Pius XI), demonstrates the falsity of Ultramontanism** (those who are loyal to Rome – in this case to Pope Francis) **in a way I would never have thought possible...**The contradiction of one Pope by another on a matter of faith and morals is possible, given*

*the fallibility of most of their pronouncements,... but usually Popes are far too careful in preparing their public remarks to allow this to happen, except in the most subtle and tacit way. But Pope Francis has done it. The game is up...Ultramontanism as a practical guide for Catholics only works, insofar as it can work at all, in times of great stability. At times like the present, it is self-contradictory and absurd. After Pope Francis' statement on the death penalty, no Catholic with intellectual integrity can continue to hold it (loyalty to the pope, at least to this pope)."*

Balinski and Shaw might be surprised to learn that **Pope Francis, like his predecessors, never stated that capital punishment is intrinsically evil nor has he contradicted them as they falsely claim.** Balinski and Shaw however do *not* seem interested in the truth, they are too proud or too busy endeavoring to defame the pope, a fetid task for which they have need of a papal straw man that they can confidently, but fallaciously, knock down in front of an audience of indiscreet admirers. The problem is that both Balinski and Shaw *appear* to lack the intellectual sophistication to make the proper distinctions necessary to understand what the pope actually said *or* they are **purposefully distorting his words.** If they actually possess the intellectual tools needed to critique a pope, they should be able to clarify what the pope actually said rather than act as false accusers and purveyors of confusion. Apparently they, like the pharisees, misunderstand the Message of Mercy and then, like them, proceed to make false accusations. Gentlemen, the pope *never* said that the death penalty is intrinsically evil; please stop misrepresenting him.

It is unclear if these men purposefully misrepresent Pope Francis or are actually that poorly trained in moral theology that they are unable to make a proper distinction between justice and mercy and an even more basic distinction BETWEEN



OBJECTIVE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES AND THEIR SUBJECTIVE MORAL APPLICATION (*moral casuistry*). Balinski reminds me of a recent seminary graduate whose mind is still in the classroom and not yet attuned to the real world, to a man whose head is in the clouds, a man who likes to appear like a philosopher but does not yet have enough experience to actually be one. **Philosophy is not just speculative, that is, in the head. No philosophy also has a moral and political or very real practical component** in which the principles learned in the classroom must be applied to reality. This is known as moral *prudence* or "*phronesis*", something Aristotle long ago recognized as **the most difficult part of moral and political philosophy**. Anyone possessing the requisite intellectual and moral virtues can learn the principles, but **it takes practical wisdom (prudence) and much experience to learn to apply them correctly**. Unfortunately, some pastors, philosophers, and investigative reporters have failed to acquire this intellectual and practical gift; worse, some are unaware that a distinction exists or act in such a way that it seems that they are unaware.

Writers like these are either ignorant of the distinction, lack the necessary experience requisite for the acquisition of prudence, or would like to pretend that moral principles can be applied equally in every case, thus making pastoral discernment "black and white". Unfortunately, **it is only the objective universal principles that are black and white**; when they are applied to ever changing and contingent circumstances they turn "grey" because every situation in which they are applied is somewhat different. Moral casuistry is the field of intellectual synapse, where the objective principles meet subjective realities. Subjective criteria *not* only differ in every case, they sometimes are so complex that they actually mitigate moral culpability or excuse it altogether (vincible and invincible ignorance – something every Catholic school girl should know). Anyone who thinks he or she can simply apply universal principles to every case without the

necessity of factoring in all the contingent circumstances sadly errs in judgement and will soon find himself unpopular and under attack from those whom he thinks he is serving by supposedly administering justice.

It does not do to “*go by the book*”. Failing to understand the “context”, reporters such as Balinski falsely broadcast fake news, such as reporting that liberal Pope Francis (contrary to a long line of magisterial teaching) teaches that the death penalty is *illicit* because INTRINSICALLY EVIL. Mr. Balinski, the pope is *not* a schoolboy to be spanked by a neophyte philosopher. Francis is a well seasoned priest, a man who knows both the principles and has the experience necessary to apply them correctly in widely varying circumstances and in an environment such as the present one, an especial time of supernatural grace in which the King of Kings has pronounced His desire for an Hour of Mercy, an Hour of Mercy before the dread hour of vindictive justice from which no man can escape. [Just about everything that Francis speaks of must be interpreted within the context of Mercy.](#)

***“Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My merciful Heart. I use punishment when they themselves force me to do so; My hand is reluctant to take hold of the sword of justice. Before the Day of Justice, I am sending the Day of Mercy. ... I am prolonging the time of mercy for the sake of [sinners].”*** (Jesus’ message to Saint Faustina; Diary, 1588 and 1160).

**The purpose of this article** (and its companion) **is to introduce and then explore the absurdity of what now seems to be daily base assertions**, assertions that are so clearly fallacious that they tend to force the inquiring mind to pray for rational insight that explains their ongoing dogged persistence, a persistence that has the net effect of defaming

this pope. When this issue (death penalty) is examined, when it is demonstrated that any person trained in rudimentary catechesis should be able to grasp what the pope is saying, it should be clear, or at least plausible, that it is *not* Pope Francis who is causing confusion; rather, the confusion is being engendered by a set of dubious detractors.

Part II, will explore both Bilinski's and Jones' fallacious arguments to demonstrate precisely how they misinterpret the pope's exhortation about the death penalty and how they misinterpret, misunderstand and thereby distort the clear meaning of his words and those of Pope Pius XI and John Paul II as well.

## **INTRODUCTION TO PART II**

Pope Francis *never* stated that the death penalty is somehow intrinsically evil nor did he ever say that it is morally ILLICIT. What Pope Francis did say is that the death penalty is "INADMISSIBLE". When something is *inadmissible* it implies that it can also at times be admissible. Inadmissible is a *procedural* not a *substantive* term – that is, it has to do with correct procedures employed in a criminal or civil case *not* with the substance of the case. It has to do with the introduction of evidence and/or with the procedures employed in the hearing of a case *not* with the substantial moral facts of the case. Admissibility regulates judicial procedures so that a correct decisions can be rendered.

*To be Continued Sat Dec 2*

