

“A dictatorship requires three things: a man, an idea, and a following ready to live for the man and the idea, and if necessary to die for them. If the man is lacking, it is hopeless; if the idea is lacking, it is impossible; if the following is missing, the dictatorship is only a bad joke.”

Thus [said](#) Joseph Goebbels, the “Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda” for Nazi Germany from 1933-1945. To his list of three requirements for a dictatorship, I would add an obvious fourth (given his office, I’m surprised Goebbels didn’t mention it): *propaganda*. In order for a man and his ideas to amass a following — especially if said man and/or his ideas are bad — it is necessary to *propagate* a favorable narrative, one which typically appeals first to the emotions rather than the intellect, and which omits inconvenient truths.

Propaganda

This sums up the new film [Pope Francis: A Man of His Word](#) quite well (although I’m certainly not equating Francis with Hitler). I decided to go see the film on opening weekend (it premiered on May 18 across North America) — for investigative journalism purposes only, of course — and if I was forced to use a single word to describe it, I would have to go with *propaganda*. From start to finish, it is obvious that the film’s purpose is to (1) propagate a favorable narrative that (2) appeals first to the emotions rather than the intellect and which (3) omits inconvenient truths.

As I opted not to try and take notes in the dark theater, I will do my best to recall the film’s particulars from memory (surely Pope Francis and his dear atheist friend, Eugenio Scalfari, would approve).

False Comparison

For starters, one of the film’s central themes is the inaccurate comparison between St. Francis of Assisi and Pope Francis. The former is falsely portrayed as “an apostle of Vatican II’s new brand of dialogue and ecumenism” (to [quote](#) John Vennari), while the latter is shown to be a veritable “reincarnation” of the pretend St. Francis.

Towards the end of the film, for example, footage from the [2016 World Day of Prayer for Peace](#) ceremony in Assisi is shown (a syncretic gathering modeled on Pope John Paul II’s scandalous [1986 meeting](#)), followed by the narrator saying something like, “Here in Assisi, the legacy of St. Francis lives on.” This is absolute nonsense, of course, seeing that [the real St. Francis](#) was a staunch Catholic who called all men — even the [Islamic Sultan of Egypt](#) — to convert to the one true Faith for salvation.

Globetrotting: For Christ or the New World Order?

The film's documentary "plot" focuses on the Argentine Pope's travels around the world, not to preach the Gospel and convert souls like St. Peter (e.g., "Do penance, and be baptized" - Acts 2:38), but to promote "progressive" causes such as environmentalism, climate change, the rights of workers and migrants, ending poverty, interreligious dialogue, fraternal harmony among all peoples, etc. (For anyone interested, Sister Rose Pacatte describes in greater detail these themes in her glowing [review](#) of the film written, predictably, for the *National Catholic Reporter*.)

"For the first time in history," says the narrator in the film's trailer, "the Pope opens his doors to address the questions and issues we face together...In a divided world, one leader has a mission to bring us together." Together in Christ and His one true Church? Or together in some sort of Masonic brotherhood of man apart from Christ? Since Francis emphasizes in the film, yet again, his strong abhorrence of "proselytism" (i.e., trying to convert souls to the true Faith), let the reader decide what sort of "unity" the current Roman Pontiff is pursuing. For myself, one thing that comes to mind are the following words of Cardinal Willem Jacobus Eijk, Archbishop of Utrecht (Netherlands), at the end of his recent [commentary](#) piece on the German bishops' "[intercommunion](#)" proposal (i.e. the admittance of Protestant spouses to Holy Communion in "some cases"):

"Observing that the bishops and, above all, the Successor of Peter fail to maintain and transmit faithfully and in unity the deposit of faith contained in Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, I cannot help but think of Article 675 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

'The Church's ultimate trial

Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth."

Inconvenient Truths

As for the numerous inconvenient truths about Francis and his pontificate — for example, "the propagation of heresies effected by the apostolic exhortation *Amoris laetitia* and by

other words, deeds and omissions of” his (*Correctio filialis*) — they are completely absent from this film, which is essentially an exercise in shameless self-promotion.

For the sake of combating the propaganda, let us recall just a small sampling of his most scandalous “words, deeds and omissions” that continue to wreak havoc:

- **July 25, 2013:** During his inaugural World Youth Day as Supreme Pontiff, he [told](#) a group of 30,000 Argentinian youth gathered in Rio de Janeiro’s Cathedral of St. Sebastian to “make a mess, to disturb complacency.” (He has certainly [led by example](#) in this regard!)
- **July 28, 2013:** During the flight back to Rome from the same World Youth Day, when asked about Msgr. Battista Ricca (a notorious and active [homosexual](#) whom Francis had recently appointed to oversee the Vatican Bank) and “the gay lobby” in the Vatican, he [responded](#), “If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will, then who am I to judge him?”
- **Nov. 24, 2013:** In his inaugural apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis singled out those who hide “behind the appearance of piety and even love for the Church” (n. 93), as well as those who “observe certain rules or remain intransigently faithful to a particular Catholic style from the past” (n. 94) — in other words, traditional Catholics — as being guilty of “gnosticism” and “self-absorbed promethean neopelagianism” (*ibid.*). In this same document, he commended “true followers of Islam” and [falsely](#) asserted that “authentic Islam and the proper reading of the Koran are opposed to every form of violence.” (n. 253)
- **Oct. 2014:** During the Extraordinary Synod on the Family, the first of the two family synods, he [approved](#) the scandalous [mid-term report](#), which included a section called “Welcoming homosexual persons” that spoke of “accepting and valuing their sexual orientation”.
- **Jan. 19, 2015:** While en route back to Rome from his trip to Sri Lanka and the Philippines, in answer to a question about population levels and contraception, he [stated](#) that “three [children] per family” is sufficient “according to the experts, for maintaining the population.” He further opined that Catholics do not need to “be like rabbits” (referring to large families).
- **July 2015:** During his visit to Ecuador, Bolivia, and Paraguay, Pope Francis was given a blasphemous “[hammer-and-sickle crucifix](#)” by President Evo Morales, the Communist leader of Bolivia. When asked about the incident during the flight back to Rome, he [praised](#) Fr. Luis Espinal, S.J., the Marxist priest who designed it (a design based, as Francis admitted, on “a theology that uses Marxism”) and said, “Under this kind of hermeneutic [i.e. liberation theology], I understand this work. For me, it wasn’t an offense...”

- **June 16, 2016:** While speaking at a diocesan pastoral congress in Rome, Francis incredibly [asserted](#) that cohabiting couples (those living as husband and wife outside of marriage) who are faithful to one another possess “the grace of a real marriage”, while also claiming that “the great majority of our sacramental marriages are null” because spouses do not sufficiently understand the life-long commitment involved.
- **Nov. 2016:** In one of his infamous interviews with Italian journalist Eugenio Scalfari, the Pope was asked if he supports “a Marxist type of society”, to which he [responded](#), “It has been said many times and my response has always been that, if anything, it is the communists who think like Christians.” (For those who doubt the authenticity of Scalfari’s quote, bear in mind that it squares perfectly with Francis’ praise of Fr. Espinal and his “hammer-and-sickle crucifix” mentioned above.)
- **Jan. 2018:** When asked about Bishop Juan Barros, the Chilean prelate accused of [covering up](#) crimes of child sexual abuse committed by Fr. Fernando Karadima (found [guilty](#) by the Vatican in 2011), Pope Francis defended Barros (his appointee), [stating](#), “There is not one piece of evidence against him. Everything is slander. Is that clear?” He voiced this view in spite of substantial [evidence](#) to the contrary, some of which he was well aware, including the testimony of abuse victims like Juan Carlos Cruz.
- **Mar. 2018:** During his most recent [interview](#) with Scalfari, Francis yet again allegedly denied the eternal punishment of any souls in hell, claiming instead that the damned are simply “annihilated” (cease to exist). His exact words, as [quoted \(not paraphrased\)](#) by Scalfari, were, “Hell does not exist, only the disappearance of sinful souls.”

These examples are truly just the tip of the iceberg, but I believe the point has been sufficiently made. (For those interested in more, see [“The A - Z list of concerns with Pope Francis”](#) at *LifeSiteNews*.)

“Don’t Trust Him An Inch”

To conclude this brief critique, I can do no better than to quote what Henry Sire (aka Marcantonio Colonna), author of *The Dictator Pope*, told me about the film towards the end of our recent [interview](#):

“If you look at the trailer for this film, it begins: ‘No matter what divides us, his words unite us.’ This, about the most divisive pope the Church has seen for centuries. It is typical of the whole tenor of liberal propaganda, which depends on standing the truth on its head. ... [I]f there were a film-maker prepared to do his homework, a good subject for a film would be Bergoglio’s career in Argentina in the forty years prior to his papal election. It could be titled: ‘Jorge Bergoglio: Don’t Trust Him An Inch.’”

A Man of His Word — But His Word Is the Problem!

Well said, Mr. Sire.