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Yahoo Watch: Newt Gingrich

Michael Sean Winters | Aug. 30, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

Everyone loves a convert, but I also like it when they shut up for a bit after swimming the Tiber.* Alas, the ever-prolix Mr. New Gingrich, has become a new voice in the Catholic universe and he speaks as if his was the very voice of the magisterium, even those his is the voice of someone who was a Methodist until yesterday.

He recently addressed a conference [1]sponsored by the Knights of Columbus in California. Needless to say, Mr. Gingrich did not address the indissolubility of marriage, a subject on which he actually has expertise. He did have this nugget: ?Our elites fail to recognize the irony that our own courts are as fully anti-religious as any institution in the Polish dictatorship, and our elite culture is as frightened of Christ and the cross as any secular group in past radical regimes.? Hmmmm. I wonder. Yesterday, I went to Mass and I did not notice any secret police taking photographs of the communicants. And what exactly is ?our elite culture? and how come a man who held the second most important constitutional office in the land, appears regularly on television, and has published countless articles and books is not part of that elite culture?

Mr. Gingrich fancies himself an intellectual and an historian. He may be better informed than Mr. Beck whose knowledge of history has a distinctly ?History Channel? depth to it, but if Gingrich continues to issue idiotic statements like this, he should be banned from Catholic stages not because he offends Catholic teaching, but because he offends basic standards of intellectual rigor.

*Augustine was a convert who wrote a great deal. He is the exception that prives the rule and, in this case, Gingrich is no Augustine. If any commentators push the envelope, I shall insist that we elect Mr. Gingrich bishop of Hippo and dispatch him to the sands of North Africa forthwith! (N.B., I apologize for the typo which had Gingrich going to Hoppi, not Hippo. Thanks to Mark Silk for catching it.)

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