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Romney's Ugly Exit

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 15, 2012 Distinctly Catholic

I am sure that losing a presidential race you thought you were going to win is one of life's more difficult experiences. Mitt Romney delivered a gracious concession speech on election night and should have walked quietly off the stage of public life. Certainly, he has many homes to which he can repair for solace.

Instead, he spoke to a group of contributors yesterday by phone and said that President Obama had won because of the many "gifts" the President had bestowed on his core constituencies. Of course, Mr. Romney supported the TARP bailout of Wall Street, so he has a certain amount of expertise when it comes to government gifts. And, I suppose as well that the many tax breaks he harvests every year are a kind of government gift. But, the real problem is different. Seeking to make student loans more affordable, both for families and for the government, is not a gift, it is an investment. The middle class tax cuts, such as the temporary reduction in the payroll tax for workers, may seem like a gift to Romney but to most of us it seems like justice.

In assessing how to assess blame for his loss, Mr. Romney needs look no further than his mirror. He chose a running mate who hardened, instead of softened, his ideological rough edges. He put together a campaign staff that was incapable of winning a news cycle most weeks, declined to push back all summer against the Obama campaign's ads depicting Romney as an out-of-touch elitist, and then entered the final week of the election with the wrong Get-Out-the-Vote template and ad deceitful ad in Ohio that backfired royally. Mr. Romney spoke throughout the campaign about President Obama's failure to take responsibility for his own policies. Now it is Romney who is refusing to take responsibility for his own campaign failures. Exit stage right, Mr. Romney, while you still have a modicum of good feeling among the American electorate.

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