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by Michael Sean Winters

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[In The Washington Post](#), E.J. Dionne on former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama both speaking out against the coarsening of our nation under Trump, and how Gen. John Kelly was forced into the dreadful role of humiliating a member of Congress on the president's behalf.

You want fake news? It should not surprise that FOX News takes the cake, having to issue an apology because the decorated Vietnam SEAL they featured defending President Trump [actually was not decorated](#), not a SEAL and not a Vietnam vet. You can't make this stuff up. But, does it surprise? The last two weeks, if you have been watching FOX, you would think the expose about Harvey Weinstein was the only real story of import, and this without ever mention Roger Ailes and Bill O'Reilly.

[At Politico](#), President Trump is headed to the Senate for lunch, where he will encourage Congress to pass a budget so they can move on to tax reform. The GOP is running around D.C. buying all the lipstick they can so they can put it on their tax plan pig, but whatever they come up with is only going to be a socially regressive pig with populist lipstick. And, they are likely to get this reform passed and signed into law. The consequences to the country will be felt for decades.

I suppose that we shouldn't be surprised that [Fr. Zuhlsdorf](#) is quibbling about the translation of the unprecedented letter from Pope Francis rebuking Cardinal Robert Sarah. Dear Fr. Z: I do not know how you say "wiggle room" in Latin, but that is what the pope is giving the cardinal in the paragraph that has you all worked up. I will have more on this controversy tomorrow.

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Under the radar screen, [a short but wonderful talk](#) by Pope Francis to a meeting organized by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences on exclusion, inequality and the relationship between civil society, the State and the market.

[Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.]

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