



OPINION: POPE FRANCIS BLAMES AMERICA FIRST - STEPHEN MOORE

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When I was growing up and attending Catholic schools, I was taught that the pope is infallible.

But then I read Pope Francis' updated encyclical letter last week, and now I can only conclude that at least *this* pope is fallible. In fact, the declaration is so filled with anti-Christian fallacies that one has to wonder whether we have a pope that is actually Catholic.

Pope Francis was full of doom and gloom as he warned that the Earth is "collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point" because of climate change. He takes a metaphorical ruler and whacks the knuckles of climate "skeptics" who are preventing the draconian/statist actions that are apparently necessary to cool the planet off. What comes next for the "deniers"? A knock on the door from the Spanish Inquisition.

The pope has given a new voice to the "blame America first" globalists and denounces Americans' "irresponsible lifestyles" for the ruination of the planet.

What about China? Amazingly, the pope pointedly gives the world's greatest polluter a free pass. He declares that "emissions per individual in the United States are about two times greater than those of individuals living in China, and about seven times greater than the average of the poorest countries." This is naked appeasement to a country with some of the worst human rights violations on the planet. President Xi Jinping is loving life right now.

It's also intentionally lying with twisted statistics. Yes, the U.S. has more emissions and uses more energy than many other nations, but that is because we *produce* far more output per capita than all other nations except China. It's the reason the United States is the breadbasket of the world. Africa doesn't use much energy. And that's why it is a desperately poor continent. The solution isn't for the U.S. to consume less energy, but for poor nations to have access to much more energy.

As Catholics, we are taught to help the least among us to help end poverty, hunger and deprivation, but the primary victims of the environmentalists' crusade against fossil fuels will be those in the poorest nations of Africa and Asia -- deprived of cheap and reliable power from coal and natural gas.

China, meanwhile, emits two times more greenhouse gases into the Earth's atmosphere than America -- but we are the problem, not them.

Worst of all, we now have a Vatican that has aligned itself with the radical "limits to growth" theology of leftist environmentalists. The radical greens view human beings as the problem, not the solution, which is contrary to Catholic dogma that there is dignity in every

human life.



Has the Vatican forgotten that the more radical voices of climate change hysteria have come right out of the sinister population control movement of the 1960s and 1970s, when we were told that the world was running out of everything and that the only solution was fewer people? This movement led to some of the most barbaric government actions of modern times: forced abortions, mandatory sterilizations of women, and brutal one-child policies.

The theology in the Pope Francis letter called "Laudate Deum," which means "Praise God," is a direct contradiction of the teachings of our greatest pope in modern times, John Paul II, who magnificently declared that economic freedom and human ingenuity have always been the solutions to our planetary problems and the sometimes winds of change that Mother Nature throws at us. People, he reminded all Catholics, are the greatest resource.

Another way of saying this is that the Western world's economic affluence and our advanced "lifestyles" haven't held back the poor countries or jeopardized civilization. We have made life on Earth profoundly better for everyone. The pope's call for energy poverty is a call for everyone to get poorer. That hardly seems to be a very Christian solution.

If climate change really is the existential threat that the pope sermonizes that it is, we will confront this challenge the way humans have combated every problem since the days when human life on Earth was nasty, brutish and short: We will harness human know-how and new-age technologies that will tame Mother Nature's savage outbursts.

Thanks to the freedom agenda and scientific advances, deaths from natural disasters have fallen by 90% over the past 100 years. Has anyone in the Vatican told the pope that?

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