

Fr. Perozich comments —

*The “**Narrative**” is any current repeated story that is promulgated by those with a microphone, pulpit, or media position.*

It often is propaganda to instill fear and to get the listener to follow the solution proposed by the narrative.

When bishops say that the vaccine is “safe, effective, and moral”, they have only competency in the morality, and that conclusion is open to debate, since it is not church doctrine, and certainly rightfully challenged by the listener.

Ukraine, LGBTQ youth protection, rights, equality, justice, fairness, immigration, climate, race, and on are preached loudly as narratives which affect the listener.

The author Eric Sammons says that clerics including the pope have been influenced by narratives and turned into propagandists for these stories, using their authority to promote them.

He notes: “The quick and total acceptance of The Current Narrative is inherently creepy in its groupthink—it’s likely that very few of those declaring their unconditional acceptance of that Narrative knew anything about the subject in question just days before support for it became mandatory.”

In homilies I have suggested people not listen to more than 1/2 hour of news because the narrative is oft repeated to sway the listener rather than to inform of the events.

Sammons recommends Bible reading and study as protection from being consumed by the narratives in order to develop one’s own view apart from church leaders’ promotion of narratives.

Sammons concludes,

“As we continue to live through The Current Narrative, let us be better prepared for The Next Narrative. This does not mean we simply accept any and all conspiracy theories rejecting whatever that Narrative might be, but it does mean that we see The Current Narrative in the context of our Catholic Faith and how often the motivations of those pushing it are contrary to the truth of Catholicism. Let’s be more willing to resist The Current Narrative in order to better proclaim The Eternal Narrative: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

The Brainwashing of the Catholic Mind

ERIC SAMMONS



Recent years have been dominated by The Narrative. Of course, The Narrative changes regularly, so perhaps it's more accurate to say we have been repeatedly dominated by The Current Narrative. The most prominent Current Narrative has been the Covid Narrative, which commands us to adhere to all the (contradictory) directives of Dr. Fauci unless we want to kill Grandma.

Other Current Narratives include the insistence that a man can declare himself a woman, or that we're all racists or, more recently, that we must stand with Ukraine, even if it means starting World War III.

Each Current Narrative has all the classic characteristics of propaganda. Media expert Renee Hobbs in her book *Mind Over Media* identified four features of contemporary propaganda:

1. It activates strong emotions;
2. it simplifies information;
3. it appeals to the hopes, fears, and dreams of a targeted audience; and
4. it attacks opponents.

Consider just the Covid Narrative and how well it fits this definition of propaganda: Millions and millions will die (strong emotions) unless everyone is in this together (hopes and dreams of audience) and masks/vaccinates (simplified information), but if we don't, that means you want Grandma to die for your own self-centered reasons (attacking opponents).

I remember clearly in March 2020 that anytime I dared question the Covid Narrative I was flatly told that two million people (it was always two million!) would die within a few months. This is the way of The Current Narrative: demonize opponents with unfalsifiable statements (at least, unfalsifiable at the time they are made) that tap into our deepest fears.

Social media is tailor-made for amplifying The Current Narrative. There's little room in social media for nuanced debate, and any views heretical to The Current Narrative are quickly banned by Big Tech. Further, social media fosters a false sense of community in which we can quickly and easily mark our participation in the latest cause.

Just look at the practice of showing support for The Current Narrative on one's social media profile. In just the

past two years, social media profiles have moved from proclaiming “Stay Home to Save Lives” to “Black Lives Matter” to “Mask Up!” to “I’m Vaccinated” to “I Stand with Ukraine.” There’s even a meme mocking this trend: “I Support the Current Thing.”

The quick and total acceptance of The Current Narrative is inherently creepy in its groupthink—it’s likely that very few of those declaring their unconditional acceptance of that Narrative knew anything about the subject in question just days before support for it became mandatory. Yet now we all *must* display our acceptance or else be considered not on the “right side of history.” Our fear of social rejection drives us to endlessly follow the crowd, which history has shown can lead to dire consequences for a society.

Note that The Current Narrative isn’t always, or even usually, 100% false. Propaganda is more powerful when it is laced with a good dollop of truth. Covid, for instance, is truly a deadly disease for some people, and those who are at risk for severe reactions to Covid should take measures (moral ones) to protect themselves. But this truth is twisted to stereotype anyone skeptical of The Covid Narrative as being a “science denier.” Likewise, the people of Ukraine are clearly suffering from an unjust invasion, but questioning the wisdom of the United States getting involved militarily doesn’t make one a “Putin stooge.”

Sadly, Catholics from the pope to the plain parishioner show no built-in resistance to this brainwashing. For example, although the Church has a long history fighting racism, and Catholicism is likely the most diverse religion on the planet, suddenly in the summer of 2020 we heard all the Current Narrative Catholics telling us that the Church, like the world, was inherently racist. We

needed to create new programs and invest vast resources fighting a problem that almost no one knew about, or at least cared about, a few weeks prior. This wasn't a case of addressing long-standing issues—it was an exercise in submission to groupthink.

Of course, the most egregious example of Catholics blindly accepting The Current Narrative occurred two years ago when every single bishop in America—and most in the Western world—shut down all public Masses, simply because everyone around them was freaking out and shutting everything else down. I realize it's easy in hindsight to criticize our bishops for this totally unnecessary action, but at the same time we should ask ourselves why they were so quick to do it, and why so many Catholics accepted it as a reasonable response.

I fear the same blind acceptance of The Current Narrative could have dire global consequences today, as now the latest Current Narrative is to proclaim our undying support for Ukraine—even if that undying support could lead to millions of people dying. While we might (and should) be sympathetic to the sufferings of innocent Ukrainians and Russians, that sympathy should not translate into supporting actions that expand that suffering to the rest of the world.

Here's where it's important to reflect on the motivations behind any Current Narrative. There's always a reason given for the propaganda (“Save lives!” “Stop Racism!” “Defend Ukraine!”), but the reality is that the most powerful of those pushing The Current Narrative usually have ulterior motives. After all, doing what we're told to do by The Current Narrative-pushers rarely achieves the stated goal and typically even makes things worse (see: Covid lockdowns).

Does that mean the elite Narrative-pushers failed? No, it likely means the stated goal was not their actual goal.

In the case of the corporate media, often the true motivation is simply more viewers, which means more advertisers and more money. At the outbreak of the Ukraine war, CNN's Brian Stelter [tweeted](#), "The past 24 hours are a reminder that consumers in an era of YouTube and TikTok still gravitate to trusted, established news outlets during emergencies. They 'know where to go,' so to speak. And television coverage is essential."

Stelter is essentially saying that emergencies (particularly wars) are good for CNN's business. Corporate media thus has an incentive to rile up the masses and extend and expand the conflict as much as possible. Nothing sells shampoo and smartphones like death and destruction.

Of course there might be other, more sinister, motivations behind pushing The Current Narrative, such as the Great Reset or President Biden's connections to Ukraine. Not long ago I would have discounted such speculations as tinfoil-hat conspiracy theories, but with the conspiracy theorists having a better batting average than mainstream pundits lately, I'm not so fast to discount them now.

Ultimately, however, the point isn't necessarily to divine all the motives behind Current Narrative-pushers, but to understand that there is a propagandist Narrative being pushed.

So how can Catholics resist falling hook, line, and sinker for The Next Narrative? I think one great corrective is to spend more time reading the Bible than reading social media. Not just because social media has an amplifying effect on The Current Narrative, but because going deep into the story of our salvation gives one an altered

worldview. The person formed by the Sacred Scriptures sees that all the warped efforts of today's world leaders are fundamentally no different than the schemes of all the enemies of God's people. Knowing the Bible helps us to see how God is always at work in the world, and in spite of all the machinations of men the providence of God still reigns.

So, for example, when Covid broke, the person formed in the Bible kept a properly spiritual perspective, understanding that in times of crisis, nothing is more important than the Sacraments, particularly the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Further, a Biblically-formed Catholic worldview reminded him that physical death is not the worst thing in the world; sin is.

As we continue to live through The Current Narrative, let us be better prepared for The Next Narrative. This does not mean we simply accept any and all conspiracy theories rejecting whatever that Narrative might be, but it does mean that we see The Current Narrative in the context of our Catholic Faith and how often the motivations of those pushing it are contrary to the truth of Catholicism. Let's be more willing to resist The Current Narrative in order to better proclaim The Eternal Narrative: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



By [Eric Sammons](#)

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