

# The Politics of Amorality

By Tarcisio Beal

It is obvious now that democracy in America faces a serious crisis, mostly because of the character of politics under the control of Donald J. Trump and his Republican party. Their worship of power and control is propagated by a loud and vociferous rhetorical campaign funded and manipulated by billionaires who handle a large portion of the media. Furthermore, the Supreme Court, whose majority was chosen and enthroned by Trump, made the dreadful decision of “Presidential Immunity,” allowing him to make any decisions he pleases without repercussions. No surprise, then, that after having been certified winner of the 2024 election, Trump continues to deny his role and that of his loyalists in the January 6, 2021 assault on the Capitol and has pardoned and even welcomed to the White House hundreds of them, including the five main organizers and leaders of the assault who were convicted. Intensive propaganda about Trump’s success in improving the economy led most of the white middle class and working class African American males to vote for him while 89% of the women voted for Democratic candidate, Kamala Harris.

Elon Musk, the world’s first trillionaire, dropped nearly \$300 million into Trump’s account and gained control of the government agencies and the White House. He is now dismantling the CIA by offering buyouts for its personnel to give up their jobs. Trump turned his inauguration into a major festival and show of self-glorification and confirmed his plans to turn the country into an autocracy controlled MAGA with its billionaires. At the inauguration, the usual presence of top religious leaders who blessed Trump was another

opportunity to highlight once again what a couple of Protestant pastors had already said during the campaign: that he was part of God’s plan. The Rev. Franklin Graham, son of the well-known televangelist Billy Graham, turned his eyes towards the huge crowd of Trump’s supporters and practically stated that it was God who elected Trump: “Look at the Work of God!” Although the majority of Catholics (54.7%, mostly white men) voted for Trump, an authentically Christian vote for a politician should not be based on propaganda but rather on his/her lifetime behavior.

By the way, Trump’s behavior and self-boasting rhetoric contrasts heavily with that of ex-President **Jimmy Carter**, who died December 29, 2024. A Methodist who lived his faith with a steady moral compass, Carter did not worship power like Trump, and dedicated his whole life to social justice: to improving educational opportu-

nities, carrying out health care reforms and seeking true peace around the world; he gave the Panamá Canal back to the Panamanians and convinced Israel and Egypt to sign a long-needed Peace Treaty; his wife Rosalyn led the fight against **the stigma** of mental **illness** for more than 50 years.

Carter never boasted about his presidential successes and, after retirement, worked for *Habitat for Humanity*; the motto of the Carter Center was “Wage Peace, Fight Disease, Build Hope, and his favorite biblical quote was from Micah 6: 8: “Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God (cf. Thomas Higgins [Deputy Secretary of Carter’s Cabinet], “Remembering a President with a Moral Compass,” *National Catholic Reporter*, Jan. 17-30, 2025, pp. 13 & 15).

On the other hand, Trump, as usual, glorified himself during his Inauguration and exhibited his



The Carters co-founded *The Carter Center* in 1982 with a focus on human rights, public health, conflict resolution, mental health, and the eradication of infectious diseases. Trump’s behavior and self-boasting rhetoric contrasts heavily with that of ex-President Jimmy Carter, who died December 29, 2024

## State Delegates

1932:	FDR Roosevelt	472	1936:	FDR	523
	Herbert Hoover	59		Alfred M. Landon	8
1940:	FDR	449	1944:	FDR	432
	Wendel Willkie	82		Thomas E. Dewey	99

is poor knowledge of American history. For example, he stated that he was now reelected with the largest number of voters ever. That is a poor reading of History, for it is the **number of State delegates that decides every election**, and statistics clearly point to FDR as the only American President elected by the largest number of voters and of voting delegates from 1932 to 1944:

FDR's *New Deal* legislation and action confronted the disaster of the *Great Depression* and shaped the character of the American Republic better than any other President. Trump's proclamation of his reelection victory numbers as breaking the record is clearly contradicted by the facts and statistics of history. Furthermore, we are witnessing the mobilization of his "worshippers" and a number of billionaires who are shaping an authoritarian administration that uses the judicial system to take over all the federal agencies and resources, as we noted above. Along with taking steps to abolish *Medicare* and *Medicaid*, Trump appointed Robert Kennedy Jr. to run the Department of Health. A well-known opponent of vaccination, RFK Jr. is the opposite of his father Robert. His niece Caroline Kennedy calls him nothing but "a predator." Kash Patel, now in charge of the Department of Justice, already fired hundreds of the FBI investigators and prosecutors of the January 6 assault on the Capitol. Furthermore, **the Pentagon has been ordered to stop contacting the media and to make use only of sources loyal to the White House.**

Another major controversy is Trump's order of a **freeze of federal funding**, so much so that two federal judges have already declared it illegal. On February 1, Trump threatened to impose tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico, and China, which not only have begun to harm America's economy, but also have invited retaliation from those nations. China has already retaliated with 10% tariff on its major exports to the US. Trump also gave orders for the **expulsion of millions of immigrants** from the USA, even some of those who carry American birthright citizenship, and is sending airplanes full of Central Americans back to their countries. It was his deceptive propaganda that led about 70% of Americans to support the expulsion of the "illegals" because of their supposed association with gangsters and criminals.

Another action which characterizes the racist, anti-feminist, and exclusivist stance of Trump and his associates is the closure of **DEI** (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) programs and elimination of perceived **DEI** personnel, (a term which perhaps intentionally means the work "**OF GOD/DE DIOS.**") It deals with the ugly realities of discrimination and denial of basic human rights in American society. Incredibly enough, Trump even blamed **DEI** for the recent crash (February 1, 2025) of an American Airlines and an Army helicopter over the Potomac River, near the Reagan International Airport. The crash caused the deaths of 67 people who were recovered from the freezing waters of the Potomac. Trump is implying that **DEI** is responsible

for the crash because it unwisely hires women and other "unqualified employees." His shutting down of **DEI**, however, is mostly due to its work towards basic human rights and basic justice for the LGBTQ community. As a consequence, a great percentage of transgender youth are now at risk of committing suicide. On February 1st, many Republican-controlled States ordered their medical centers and hospitals that deal with transgenders to shut down and prohibited them from passing on information to the media. Furthermore, anti-abortion laws have been enacted by most Republican State legislatures and are costing the lives of pregnant women all over the country, mostly because they are denied medical care. Most of the Republican-controlled States adopted horrible laws against transgenders and pregnant women. Just today, February 5th, surrounded by beautiful women applauding him, Trump signed an order banning transgenders from participating in women's sports.

As it is becoming quite clear these days, a major characteristic of the nation's present socio-political crisis is the **absence of true morality** on the part of politicians and many of the supporters of those in control of most of the States and of the federal government. What has become dominant now is a system of *amorality* that is used to disguise moral actions which demand love of neighbor and authentic dialogue to achieve the common good. Standard dictionaries define **amoral** as **neither moral nor easily detected as immoral**, but lacking a true sense of morality which leads them to justify all kinds statements and actions for their own advantage. This is what we have been seeing daily done by Trump, his associates, and by his defenders on mainstream media. When confronted with the facts and the truth, they always find justification or denial.

As we noted above, President Jimmy Carter was/is clearly an example of true Christian morality. As for Trump, **amorality** defines most of his behavior, speeches, and actions. His amoral politics sometimes even spell out a form of ultraright, Nazi-Fascist ideology. He has even praised Hitler, plays very softly with Russia's Putin, and is making friends with some European right-wingers like Hungary's President Viktor Orban. His foreign policy of the next four years will tell us much more because he sees himself as the solver of all problems, including those of international relations. In the afternoon of January 4, for example, he declared that he would order American forces to occupy the **Gaza Strip** in order to solve its tragic situation and bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians. More recently, he suggested that Gaza be "cleaned out" moving Palestinians elsewhere while the U.S. takes ownership of Gaza. Clearly, the turmoil and the controversy over his foreign policy tactics will certainly skyrocket and place his administration in a situation never before seen in American history.

BIO: Tarcisio Beal, PhD & STL, Professor of History, Political Science, and Theology of the University of the Incarnate Word (1970-2013) and author of 5 books about Jesus and the History of Catholicism.