

Kiss my Butker

By **Bill Kilpatrick**

By now many people reading this will have heard of The Kansas City Chief's Kicker, Harrison Butker, and his interesting commencement speech delivered at Benedictine Liberal Arts College on May 11. If not, you're not really missing much. It was anything but what I would call an inspiring speech, it was pretty terrible to be honest, but it started a fire storm in the media. Butker likes to speak his mind like everyone else these days whether he knows about the topic or not, and his speech was an example of ideas that are quite disconnected from reality. Butker's speech probably would not have been given much press 100 years ago, in fact, he probably would not have even mentioned women since St. Benedict's College was "males only" until its merger in 1971 with Mount St. Scholastica, a women's only College. The speech was full of judgement, condemnation, self-righteous indignation, and shame, everything you'd expect from a Catholic education. (That's a joke people? well sort of) His speech is also what you'd expect to be given at a time of deep uncertainty in the world. It harkened back to a simpler better time, where there was never all this strife in the world, because, wait for it? people were real believers in Catholicism and adhered to time honored traditions? blah blah blah. His speech called for a more extreme form of Catholicism, but in reality, it was the same old BS repackaged in an NFL kicker. Butker, while free to speak, should never be listened to. I'm all for religion and I believe in freedom of religion, but religion, like most other human behaviours falls on a bell curve with extremist fundamentalists at one end and those who are only religious by name at the other, and then everything in between. Not only do I believe in freedom of religion, I also believe in freedom from religion and this is an important point, because much of Butker's speech implied that if people did not adhere to his form of Catholicism then they were not "real" Catholics or even Christians and therefore were causing evil in the world. He juxtaposed the Catholic religion, or rather his version of it, with diversity, equity, and inclusion stating, "The world around us says that we should keep our beliefs to ourselves whenever they go against the tyranny of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We fear speaking truth, because now, unfortunately, truth is in the minority." But truth is something that Butker knows little about, so let's examine what Butker believes is true. He makes seriously misinformed claims like, "Our Catholic faith has always been countercultural." No, it has not. It has been about power, conformity, fear, and oppression, sprinkled with occasional humanity. It appears that when he wrote his speech, he mixed up tyranny and counterculture. He's admitted to not being much of a public speaker and can be forgiven for this mix up. What his speech should have said, to be more historically accurate and realistic is "The world around us says that we should keep our beliefs to ourselves whenever they go against the counterculture of diversity, equity, and inclusion," and "Our Catholic faith has always been tyrannical." That would be more accurate. Currently there are 1.3 billion Catholics in the world compared to 640 million people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, or asexual. The majority is rarely part of the counterculture and considering there are twice as many Catholics as 2SLGBTQIA+ people I think it's obvious who's actually part of the counterculture. And call me crazy, but I don't recall in history where those promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion burned people at the stake, helped Nazis escape Europe after the Second World War, engaged in centuries of child sex abuse, participated in the inquisition, or terrorized Jews and Muslims during the crusades. It must have happened during that rarely studied dark epoch of history called the "gay ages" where one country would declare themselves gay and another would claim that they were the real "gay" country, and then they would go to war killing each other with flamboyant fashion, drag contests, and parades. Butker's all for pride, but only a certain type of pride as he points out, "Not the deadly sin sort of pride that has an entire month dedicated to it, but the true God-centered pride that is cooperating with the Holy Ghost to glorify him." If you are part of the counterculture you rebel against the mainstream and given the mainstream in North America has generally been homophobic, Butker's comments ring hollow as a fictional member of the fictional oppressed majority. His bizarre claims don't stop with equity, inclusion, and diversity he also talks about nature and what he considers natural stating, "No matter how you spin it, there is nothing natural about Catholic birth control." Wow, like no one has ever heard a Catholic argue against birth control before. Ugh, again, the same old tired arguments wrapped in a different package. His claims about nature don't stop there either as he brazenly states, "I think it is you, the women, who have had the most diabolical lies told to you." What are these lies you ask? Well, they are the worst kind: lies of equality. Butker goes on, "How many of you [women] are sitting here now about to cross this stage and are thinking about all the promotions and titles you are going to get in your career? Some of you may go on to lead successful careers in the world?" But in Butker's mind that should not be a woman's ambition, they should aim for a career closer to home, a "vocation as a wife and as a mother" adding that "homemaker" for a woman is "one of the most important titles of all." Wow! A religious man telling a woman what's best for her, that's also original. He goes on to chastise "good students" who he says leave the "Benedictine bubble" and then commit the

worst sin of all: ?moving in with their boyfriend or girlfriend prior to marriage.? Yeah, what idiot would dare get to know someone before committing to them for life. That is stupid and so ?new age.? He also speaks of another lie, one that men are told, ?that men are not necessary in the home or in our communities.?Honestly, where does he come up with this stuff? No one, to my knowledge, has ever made that statement because it is ridiculous like much of Butker's worldly advice, and deep down I think he knows it too, because at one point in his speech he admits, ?Everything I am saying to you is not from a place of wisdom?? Yeah Harrison, tell us something we don't know.