

## **What's Tony Thinking? Posted April 17, 2017**

**Save the Mainline.** NYT columnist, Ross Douthat, who is himself a Catholic, [urges secular liberals](#) to return to or get involved in mainline Protestant congregations. He is singing my song. Our society needs these churches, this tradition, to be robust. Our families need these communities. And we need them. Thank you, Ross.

**Easter over and done for another year?** Yes and no, Easter Day is behind us, but Eastertide is the seven week season from Easter to Pentecost. As we continue to live with the startling truth of the resurrection, [here's an article](#) from several years ago by friend, Tom Long, on "Easter at Old First Gnostic," that I find important and nourishing. Maybe you will too?

**More part-time clergy and lay ministers?** That's the future that is projected for many of the mainline congregations that Ross Douthat (see above) urges liberals to support. This development has many causes, but one is that clergy are themselves so uneven in skill and capacity. Given a couple experiences with mediocre clergy, a congregation not only can't afford more than part-time, they may find it preferable! [Here's a link.](#)

**Dragged from the friendly skies.** Jesuit writer, James Martin, [sees last week's](#) much viewed dragging of a passenger off-board as a sign of a larger problem, the problem of capitalism.

**If humble types are better leaders, why do we go for narcissistic jerks?** (One answer: not all of us do.) [Here's an essay](#) exploring this timely question.