



Religion, Politics, Et Cetera

Don't Read This Email

Dear Readers:

Perhaps you are like me in that your greatest enemy is your inbox. You'll never master it, will you? What you can do is accept that you'll never master it. If, like me, you have suspected that true liberation comes not from completing all your tasks but giving up the quixotic hope for completion, then this week's [Arc: The Podcast](#) is for you. I interview Oliver Burkeman, author of *Four Thousand Weeks* and *Meditations for Mortals*. He is the self-help writer who is against self-help, the productivity expert who is suspicious of the idea of productivity. As he tells me in our far-ranging interview, "The problem is not that you haven't found the system yet; the problem is that you can't do this." It's an interview suffused with common sense, Buddhism, and laughter.

And over at the magazine this week, a religious Catholic argues that New York mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani is [not Muslim enough](#). If Mamdani really wants to reach across the aisle to more conservative, family values-minded voters, he needs to lean into his Islamic faith, Stephen Aduato tells us. It's a surprising, counter-intuitive piece, one we are proud to have run.

Finally, if you haven't yet read Ari Y Kelman's [essay](#) about antisemitism in America, well, please do—it's the best treatment yet of the proposition that life is actually pretty good for Jews in America, that antisemitism is low and can't reasonably be expected to go much lower, and that the whole national discussion going on misses the point. The piece is provocative, you might disagree, but you won't be bored.

Just today, I got an email asking me if religious Christians and Jews celebrate Halloween. To which I replied, "It's complicated." So to those who celebrate and those who do not, I wish you a ghoulish season.

Sincerely,
Mark Oppenheimer
Editor, *Arc*





The Podcast

Episode 13: Oliver Burkeman

Mark sits down with Oliver Burkeman to discuss high-brow self-help books, nostalgia for the past versus dread for the future, and the lasting value of blowing through deadlines.



Zohran Mamdani Is Not Muslim Enough

Why the mayoral candidate should lean into his religion more

By Stephen G. Aduato

ENTRE NOUS

Poems by Tim Dlugos



Identity as Burden, Identity as Grace

How Tim Dlugos became a gay Christian poet

By Blake Smith

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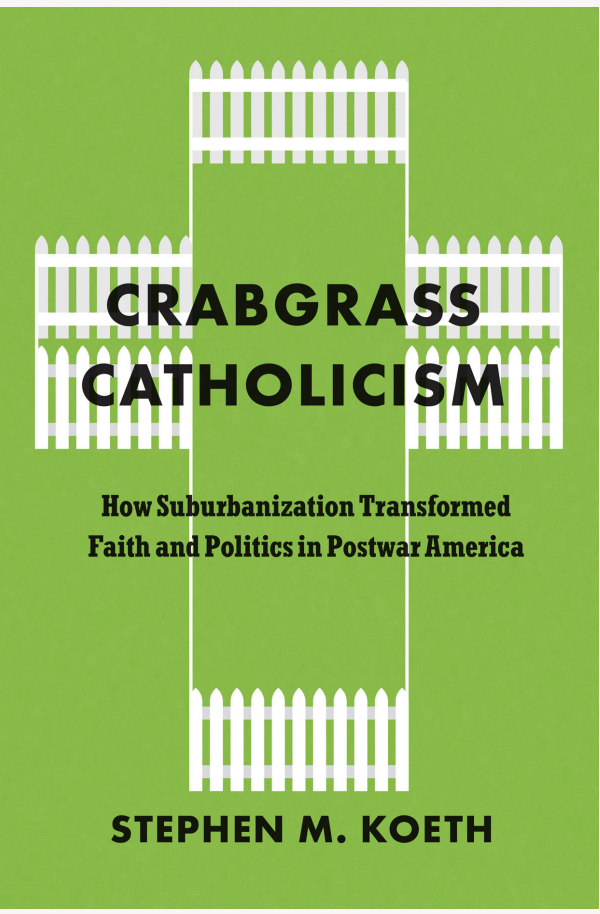
This week's picks come from Stephen G. Aduato, author of [our recent piece](#) about Zohran Mamdani not being religious enough.



After being forbidden from watching as a pre-teen back when it first came out, I've finally gotten around to watching *The Sopranos*. In addition to being fascinated by the themes touching on ethnic identity, gender relations, and psychoanalysis, watching the series has helped me understand my North Jersey Italian family's dynamic much better.



The Return of the Assassin. Geoff Shullenberger joins the *Wisdom of Crowds* podcast to discuss the larger historical implications of the shooting of Charlie Kirk, and what it tells us about shifting dynamics of power in the era of mass media.



Crabgrass Catholicism: How Suburbanization Transformed Faith and Politics in Postwar America, by Father Stephen Koeth. As a fervent critic of cultural assimilation and suburbia, I've been waiting a long time for a book like this. Koeth's painstaking historical research into the great migration of ethnic Catholics from the cities to the suburbs sheds an important light on the past and future of evangelization in the United States.

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