**Extremism**

**In Antarctica it can get so cold that you wouldn't be able to ice-skate. Even under the weight of your body, the ice wouldn't melt enough to let the blades slip. (*L. M. Boyd, Crown Syndicate)***

**The main dangers in this life are the people who want to change everything -- or nothing*. (Nancy Astor, British-American lawmaker)***

**A second-grader at an Indiana public school was "banished" by his teacher after telling his classmates that he didn't believe in God. The 7-year-old was forced to sit by himself during lunch for three days and not speak to other students because, the teacher said, his views on religion had "offended them." His parents have filed a lawsuit. *(The Week magazine, August 14, 2015)\***

**Fanaticism consists in redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim. (*George Santayana, philosopher)***

**There were 762 extremist right-wing hate groups active in the U.S. last year, up from 751 the year before, according to an estimate by the Southern Poverty Law Center. *(U.S. News & World Report, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 26, 2005)***

**Are your political views always right? The more extreme a person's views are, "the more they think they are right," said psychologists Kaitlin Toner and Mark Leary. In a new study, we've found that both hard-line conservatives and extreme liberals have a strong sense of "belief superiority," with disdain for everyone who doesn't share their views. People with moderate views, on the other hand, didn't think their opinions were the only ones with any merit. They supported a "middle of the road" approach to solving problems, rather than seeking ideological purity. For example, moderates believe that abortion should be legal in some but not all circumstances, while right-to-lifers and pro-choicers insist on either a total ban or total legality. The phenomenon of "belief superiority" explains why so many of today's intensely partisan pundits, politicians, and even commenters on online articles sound so smugly confident of their views, and so certain that the other side is 100 percent wrong -- and even evil. It also explains why the politicians they elect to Congress are now so deadlocked in partisan rancor. If your views alone are valid, why compromise -- or even bother to talk to the idiots on the other side? *(The Week magazine, December 27, 2013)***

**An Alabama student was disciplined for hugging a friend whose parent had just died. Lea Muir said her daughter was chastised and sent to detention for the hug, which contravened the school's zero-tolerance policy on physical contact between students. Officials at Prattville Junior High School say they were merely enforcing school rules, but Muir says the school should use some common sense. "What's it going to come to next?" she said. "You can't high-five or touch anybody?" *(The Week magazine, November 16, 2007)***

**Some people, alas, believe that kind of tortured logic. And while we may scorn, even see it as sacrilegious, still is it not better to believe something, rather than be completely faith-dead? At least there’s a starting point, a foundation system, however feeble, of faith upon which to build better belief. There are two ways to slide through life: believe everything, believe nothing. Of the two extremes, the latter could be the more dangerous and deadly. *(LectionAid)***

**If you wish to go to extremes, let it be in sweetness, patience, humility, and charity. *(St. Philip Neri)***

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