Montana Gov. Gianforte Picks Beef With The Pope, Declares "National Beef Day" On Lenten Friday To Prove Montana Catholics Answer To Helena, Not Rome

In the guise of a Babylon Bee article- this is a satirical article based on true events. Governor Greg Gianforte really did proclaim March 20, 2025, as "Montana Meat Day" in an official state document urging everyone to eat Montana beef, pork, lamb, chicken, or other livestock products.

By Staff Writer

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HELENA, MT — In the most audacious power play since the Avignon Papacy, Governor Greg Gianforte has officially declared March 20 "Montana National Beef Day," a bold proclamation designed to remind the Vatican that while the Pope may have infallible authority over the universal Church, he has zero jurisdiction over a Montana rancher's smoker.

The governor's decree—complete with flowery "WHEREAS" clauses praising meat as "pure and nutritious protein," sustainably raised under the Big Sky, and under vicious attack by "individuals and groups who would outlaw commonsense animal husbandry practices"—conveniently falls on a Friday during Lent, when every good Catholic is supposed to be choking down a sad Filet-O-Fish like it's penance for original sin.

Insiders say Gianforte has been nursing a grudge ever since Pope Francis called for less meat consumption to fight climate change. "The Holy Father can kiss my sustainably-raised brisket," one source close to the governor's office quipped. "He's got the Swiss Guard. We've got the National Guard, AR-15s, and a constitutional right to barbecue whatever we want."

Local Catholic and lifelong Montanan Hank "Steak" McTavish summed up the state's theological realignment perfectly: "Look, I love the Pope. I really do. But when the Governor says 'eat Montana beef' and the Pope says 'have a tuna melt,' I'm siding with the guy who can actually impact my property taxes. Sorry, Leo—your move is in Latin, ours is in medium-rare."

The proclamation makes zero mention of the 1,700-year-old Catholic norm of meatless Fridays, nor the special Lenten guilt multiplier that makes skipping a ribeye feel like you personally nailed Christ to the cross. Instead, it urges every Montanan—including the 15% who are Catholic—to "support our producers by enjoying a meal with Montana beef, pork, lamb, chicken, or other livestock products."

At a press conference, Gianforte doubled down with the confidence of a man who knows his voters prioritize Second Amendment rights over the Third Commandment. "If the Pope has a problem with it, he can come out here and try to take my grill. We'll settle this like real men: whoever eats the bigger tomahawk steak gets to keep the Catholics."

The Montana Catholic Conference responded with a carefully worded statement that somehow included the phrases "pastoral disappointment," "prudence in observance," and "please don't excommunicate the entire state, we're already short on priests."

At press time, local ranchers were selling "Papal Indulgence Brisket" with a label that reads: "One (1) Friday meat consumption = 300 days off Purgatory, signed by the Governor of Montana (way more binding than some Italian guy in a white robe)."