

# **RUNCIE LECTURE**

**MAY 2, 2013**

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## **The Runcie Convocation Lecture Series**

*In the spring of 2000, following the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Robert Runcie, the GTF established The Lord Robert Runcie Convocation Lecture Series in honor and recognition of the loyalty and support he showed, as the head of the Church of England, to the GTF's work in ministry education.*

# **The Papal Resignation of 2013: A Pilgrim's Journey to Emmaus**

The Rev. Dr. Bernard O'Connor

## **Introduction:**

On February 11, 2013, Pope Benedict XVI informed an astonished world of his intention to renounce the papacy, effective on the last day of that month. No such resignation had occurred since 1415. Now we would have a Pontiff Emeritus, in retirement, while his legitimately elected successor occupied the Petrine office. Conjecture flourished about whether Pope Benedict may have been somehow coerced into making his historic decision, or whether a more attentive analysis of his pontificate might verify that his action was entirely consistent with his views on responsible leadership.

What followed, of course, was widespread anticipation relative to a Mid-March conclave. How would the Cardinals choose? Speculation covered a range of possible outcomes. Some were prepared for a Pope who would merely mirror conventional candidacy; one who would guide the Church through a sort of recovery mode from the aftermath of Pope Benedict's rather shocking departure. Their hope was that the new Pontiff would motivate the Church to affirm her essential doctrine, her manner of reflective – though critical – interaction with secular society, and her inclination to preserve a Eurocentric philosophy based upon Papal sovereignty and an administrative style seeped in the attributes of power and of expressly defined lines of authority. In such a scenario, the Roman Curia, for example, with its aggregate of branches or dicasteries, should be expected to visibly adjust. (1) However, despite negative appraisal across the globe, the Curia would likely cling to its professed role of support for the Papacy, though at the same time 'moderating' the tendencies of any new Pope to cross the boundaries of established agendas and protocol. While every Pope since the beginning of the Twentieth Century has sought to influence the Curia's mandate and functions, evidence indicates that structures and titles may regularly alter, but a conservative and resistant

administrative mindset invariably prevails. (2) In theory, the Curia consists of those designated as co-operators with the Pope, but it equally contains those who believe that it is imperative to bring him into alignment with their own ecclesial outlook. Accounts of escalating tensions between Popes and their Curia abound. And questions habitually surface about who ultimately guides whom and of the actual extent to which the Curia may opt to include or exclude the Pope from its dealings. Careerism and external interference have become widely reported. (3) A truly rational Pope should leave the Curia relatively free to perpetuate its well-entrenched approach.

Other Vaticanists proposed that the new Pope should be a kind of interim; yet someone who would enable the Church to regain lost credibility and who could defend the Church from those insisting that its relevance was in near irreversible decline. Such a papacy would then allow for a next Pontiff to more assertively re-authenticate the message of Catholic identity, heritage and teaching. Such a need was manifest, especially given the rate at which Europeans, North and South Americans likewise, were defecting from the Church and were either converting to fundamentalist sects or lapsing into casual agnosticism. And because a serious portion of the world deduced that reliance upon God was nothing other than a form of intellectual primitivism, consequently, for them the very notion of Church was held to be dubious if not utterly void of validity. Church edifices and institutions logically emptied, since the Church per se was being perceived as a lifeless and decrepit anachronism. Surely then the Divine Spirit would grant a transitional Papacy which would culminate in another and which, in turn, would initiate a period of renewal, reunification and restoration. An ecclesial Lazarus was being called to leave the tomb and so become a witness for the Church as agent of Sacred Promise and Sacred Presence. These advocates' perspective combined elements of fear and of the apocalyptic.

And then there were those such as journalist, John Allen, who interpreted the Post-Benedict conclave as potentially being "clearly and self-consciously, the most anti-establishment conclave of the last 150 years." The electors, poised for taking risk, might perceive themselves "to be ready for a change." That change would not equate

with a rejection of Benedict XVI's papacy, but constitute "a rejection of the (Church's current) management and governance." (4)

On March 13, the conclave chose the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Jorge M. Bergoglio. Taking the name, Francis, the Holy Father is the first South American to become Pope and the first Jesuit, a member of the Society of Jesus, which was founded in the Sixteenth Century by the Spaniard, Ignatius of Loyola. Rumor circulates that Pope Francis was second in the conclave which elected Pope Benedict in 2005. This opinion cannot be verified, however, owing to the obligation of secrecy which binds the voting Cardinals. Still, it is plausible, especially given the fact that a significant majority of Catholics reside in South America. Prior to the 2013 conclave, prominent Cardinals, among them Timothy Dolan of New York, publicly spoke in favor of a South American pontiff. They maintained that the time had come for a de-Europeanization of the papacy. A South American, they opined, would symbolize rejuvenation, a breath of 'fresh air', and a positive response to Catholicism's actual demographics. After all, why should Europe be regarded as the frontrunner in this conclave? The Church in Europe is in chronic disarray and demise, a mere skeleton of the once vigorous 'body' of believers who had inherited the Roman Empire in antiquity.

From the moment when Pope Francis was presented upon the loggia of St. Peter's, people intuited that the Cardinals had reliably identified the practical need of the modern Church and had been unafraid, as predicted by Allen, to venture into the realm of the uncharted. Pope Francis immediately communicated that he is 'his own person' and is neither indebted to Curial interest groups nor fixated upon categories bequeathed by European legacy.

Having provided you an Introduction which affords some sense of context for what has lately transpired in terms of the papacy, the remainder of my remarks will elaborate upon three sub-themes: first, what we as a pluralist community of scholars may learn from the resignation of Pope Benedict; second, observations on the implied bureaucratic model which characterizes the Roman Curia, and third, Pope Francis' model of service and its being his intentional antidote to the bureaucratic paradigm, in

addition to being an inspiration for how ordinary Catholics, together with all persons of good will, might 'ground' their everyday existence.

### **Pope Benedict's Resignation:**

Note that the term is 'resignation'. You will recall how the media often preferred to speak of the Pope's abdication. But the descriptive 'abdication' was entirely incorrect. This is because monarchs abdicate, and Pope Benedict had strenuously reacted against every vestige of monarchy which had accrued to the Papal ministry. Pope Benedict's concept of the papacy was that of a universal shepherd. He saw himself as a brother bishop within the College of Bishops. And he saw himself as a mediator, in conformity with the mediatorship of Christ, who was willing to share with the world the Church's patrimony of wisdom, experience and resources. As had his predecessor, Blessed John Paul II, Pope Benedict embraced Christians of all denominations; adherents of non-Christian faiths, and individuals who denied Deity and disdained reason's appeal to religious premises and tenets. Pope Benedict viewed his role as that of catalyst, urging the Church to enhance dialogue and to facilitate whatever means which would permit mankind to recognize its commonality, tolerance, respect and solidarity. For him, only consolidated effort might offset the program of unbridled secularism to eradicate God and religion from the core of contemporary civilization. Thus motivated, Pope Benedict also realized the inherent incompatibility of a monarchical papacy with that of the otherwise capacity of the papacy to unify and to promote awareness of the challenges confronting humanity.

Not surprisingly, with his election in 2005, Pope Benedict annoyed some critics by his refusal to reinstate the *sedia gestatoria*, the portable throne to carry the pontiff during liturgical ceremonies. He would not be carried as if being a man above men, but he would walk among his brothers and sisters, as did the earthly Jesus. Pope Benedict also eliminated the Papal tiara from his Coat of Arms. This was the beehive-like crown which, for centuries, was a reminder of Papal claims to overlordship in matters spiritual and, within Christendom at least, entitlement to political and social fealty. Pope Benedict replaced the crown with the mitre, comparable to what is worn by fellow

bishops. He thereby emphasized that the Pope was to be a pastor, never a king. And, at the onset of his pontificate, Pope Benedict restored the usage of the ancient form of the pallium. The pallium is a band of wool, used liturgically, and conferred by the Pope as a symbol of collegiality with Metropolitan Archbishops. By his return to a very early version of the pallium, Pope Benedict showed that the Church must revert to the simplicity of her origins and liberate herself from extraneous and contradictory accretions. (5)

Is there anything in Pope Benedict's idea of the papacy which suggests that his resignation was foreseeable? Yes, for example, since he thought the papacy to be in general continuity with the Church's episcopate, and it is normal for bishops to resign, then why not the resignation of a Pope? Indeed, Canon Law makes provision for the same. Canon 401, paragraph 1, discusses the resignation of bishops who have reached their seventy-fifth year. Paragraph 2 considers the case of resignation due to decline in health. Similarly, Canon 354 contemplates the resignation of Curial cardinals and Canon 332, paragraph 2, deals with a papal resignation. For the validity of the Pontiff's resignation, such an act must be made freely and "be duly manifested." Acceptance by anyone is not a formal requirement. Pope Benedict's declaration to the College of Cardinals on February 11 met the canon's criteria. (6)

But the declaration further contains several crucial implications. Among them: Pope Benedict behaved courageously, humbly and reflectively. Upon examining his "conscience before God," he concluded with "certainty" that he lacked the "strengths, due to an advanced age" for "an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry." Doubtless he remembered the precarious condition of Pope John Paul II when advanced Parkinson's disease wreaked havoc upon his mind and body. Moreover, in 2010 Pope Benedict gave two interviews to journalist, Peter Seewald. Seewald raised the issue of possible resignation, and to which the Holy Father responded. "When a Pope realizes clearly that he is no longer physically, mentally, and spiritually capable of carrying out his role, then there is legally the possibility, and also the obligation, to resign." (7) And so the later declaration refers to deterioration of "strength;" to the "incapacity " to

engage “today’s world, subject to so many rapid changes and shaken by questions of deep relevance for the life of faith.” A Pope, then, has to be able to meet and to address the demands of a vibrant and alert society. A Pope cannot be passive or preside as a titular figurehead. He must be active, vigorous and participatory within a world which looks to his actions as well as to his words.

The declaration also attests to Pope Benedict’s humanity, a humanity schooled in realism and in compassion, a humanity shaped by the grace of the Gospel. The Pontiff stresses the redemptive necessity of suffering; suffering being inseparable from Christian fidelity. The effects of old age and diminished health cannot be ignored. But neither should they be dreaded. For human nature is always blessed, and never ceases to be within the scope of the Divine Will, even where there is frailty and inner turmoil. It therefore behooves each of us, the Pope included, to be transparent, direct and candid. We are not self-sufficient or absolute in ourselves. We have defects, and for which the Pope begs “pardon.”

As for Pope Benedict’s retirement, commencing on February 28, the declaration concludes by stating that his will become “a life dedicated to prayer.” Hence, he will absent himself from all public involvement in Church decision-making. There is an obvious lesson. Active ministry is not an excuse to abandon prayer. Sorry, but the dictum ‘my work is my prayer’ is woefully flawed. Rather, our work flows from our prayer and our prayer infuses our work. Cardinal Sodano expressed to Pope Benedict his confidence that “your mission, however, will continue.” (8) Through his prayer, the Emeritus Pontiff, will, indeed, continue his mission – his mission as intercessor, his mission as ‘prayerful contributor’ to the Church’s progress and development, his mission of pleading for the reconciliation of the world and Church to the Eternal Spirit of Creative Love. During this period of special vocation to prayer, Pope Benedict will validate St. Augustine’s assertion that “prayer is the encounter of God’s thirst with ours. (The Lord of the Church) thirsts that we may thirst for Him.” (9)

One can evaluate Pope Benedict’s pontificate on diverse levels, beyond what has been described. They might include: his concern for justice with regard to sex abuse victims;

authorship of books on Christology; his attempts to extend diplomatic ties to Russia, Viet Nam and China; his repeated emphasis on the rapport between faith and reason; his critique of Capitalism and his analysis of political ethics. But it is his resignation for which history will probably most remember him. Because of his discernment and his resulting decision, he has made the papacy less aloof and remote, rendering it more accessible for interreligious dialogue. The ecumenical dimension of his resignation thus soon became the subject of non-Catholic attention. On February 17, Metropolitan Hilarion of the Russian Orthodox Church spoke on Moscow television to a national audience. He paid tribute, for instance, to Pope Benedict's desire to cooperate in various charitable and cultural projects. But quite importantly, Hilarion stated, is that the impact of the Pope's resignation is by no means "known to leaders," religious or secular. We are left to struggle; left to reassess our presuppositions and to probe what we think we know and probably do not! Russell D. Moore, a Protestant Evangelical, lauded Pope Benedict for his having "stood against the nihilism that defines human worth in terms of power and usefulness. (...) Benedict has stood firmly to point to the human forces the world is seeking to wipe away." (10)

### **The Roman Curia: A Bureaucratic Model**

As the papacy of Benedict XVI drew to a close, the media debated how a 300 page report, prepared by a three-Cardinal commission (assigned to the task by Pope Benedict), may have been the last straw in persuading him that he could no longer cope with the corruption and internal divisiveness which marred his own Curia. Cardinals J. Herranz, S. De Georgi and J. Tomko submitted data which was purportedly explosive: Mafia attempts to blackmail Vatican officials; homosexual cliques within the Curia; and self-destructive influence peddling by prelates. The Pope was said to have reviewed the report. And although he decided to reserve it for his successor, the report's contents became the topic for informational sessions among the Cardinals, prior to their entering the conclave. (11)

Am I of the opinion that the findings of this report led to Pope Benedict's resignation?  
No. Its pages would contain nothing which would startle the former Prefect of the

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The problem facing the Pope was probably not derived from 'horrific revelations', but of his not having the strength and energy to apply himself to Curial investigation. As stated, if anything 'brought down the Pope', so to speak, it was the infirmity associated with "old age," nothing more. And most probably, Pope Benedict would have also realized that this report did not embody the whole record of Curial commitment. Offensive actions by some Curial officials do not qualify for an indictment of all of them. I strongly endorse, however, a careful scrutiny of Curial behavior, attitude and procedures. What the report highlights definitely merits honest critique and response. But it is the bureaucratic model which imbues the Curia that warrants both revision and vigilant oversight.

Let me preface the following remarks by stating that after my six years with the Vatican's Congregation for Eastern Churches, I am pleased, yes, delighted to say that more than 85% of my colleagues were persons of integrity, maturity of character, sincerity, intelligence, and an undiluted love for those entrusted to their care. That some 15% were rather less than admirable in my estimation is a statistic which is low by comparison to other complex institutional systems. But, again, it is the bureaucratic model itself which should be examined and reformed. Good and competent people cannot thrive when they are attached to a model which is often self-serving, inefficient and sterile. The Curia could benefit from basic instruction in organizational management. In what areas, specifically? Five may be cited. (12)

First. My Congregation espoused what may be called a hub and spoke paradigm. Because of the volume of requests which had to be handled, each staffer was given a particular sector of responsibility. My jurisdiction was that of the St. Thomas Christians, the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara *sui iuris* Churches, located mainly in India. Even after bi-weekly colloquia of the total Congregation, each of us, the Minutanti, knew virtually nothing of our peers' duties and activities. Only the Superiori (consisting of the Cardinal Prefect, the Archbishop Secretary and Undersecretary) knew the complete 'picture' of the Eastern Churches in communion with the Holy See. And it was the Superiori alone who had to approve or veto each Minutante's drafts and proposals. The

hub, in other words the Superiori, was in full control. The rest of us, the organizational spokes, informally referred to ourselves as the 'inferiori'. Typically, our self-image was that of a cog in a machine – deprived of any real incorporation in the Congregation's superficially conveyed mission.

Management theorists, such as Mary Coulter, have long researched the shortcoming of this type of paradigm. Nobody feels that they truly belong. Nobody believes that they are important for the Congregation's endeavors. Only the Superior genuinely 'count'. The rest of us are merely counted. (13)

Second. Supervision in the Congregation is usually negative. Seldom is a Minutante treated with appreciation and affirmation. One is always made aware of what they have done wrong. Never are they told when their performance is exemplary. Ed Fuller, President of Marriott Lodging International, describes leaders as being "role models for the truth telling and fair-minded critiques they expect from their followers." (14) In the Curia, disagreement with the Superiori means 'career' suicide. Critique is always one-sided, never mutual.

Third. My Congregation suppressed individualism and thought that if a Minutante's professional gifts and expertise were to be acknowledged, this would only arouse jealousy and mistrust. Friendships among Minutante were often looked upon with suspicion. When my articles were published monthly in Inside the Vatican, the magazine was removed from the Congregation's bookshelves. Only unsigned articles were made available. In such an environment, Minutanti therefore retreated into silence, afraid to vocalize their feelings and concerns.

David S. Hames discusses 13 positive and 13 negative emotions in the measurement of Emotional Intelligence. I notice that 10 of the negative emotions were conspicuous in the routine day of the Congregation. (15)

Fourth. Avoidance of conflict adds to the causes of conflict. In the Preface to the Directory of the Syro-Malabar Church, there is reference to the curious case of the Southists, the Knanaya. (16) This group is endogamous in that they vigorously oppose

inter-marriage with Catholics who belong to other *sui iuris* Churches. Knanaya insists that its members must retain purity of blood lineage. Those who marry outside of the Knanaya circle are treated as tantamount to excommunicate. The Knanaya position on baptism, marriage and evangelization is unequivocally opposed to Catholic doctrine. And the pastoral consequences for inter-Ritual relationships are a constant source of controversy and resentment.

But Knanaya is allowed to proceed unchecked for their obvious heterodoxy by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. Why? Knanayites are usually affluent and influential. The Curia, notably the Eastern Congregation, has adopted a strict avoidance approach to conflict arising from the Knanaya 'problem'. Rather than confront the proverbial 'elephant in the living room', avoidance has led to a preference for analysis over action. And there the Congregation has become stuck, while injustice abounds. (17)

Fifth. Appeasement yields power imbalance, manipulation and inequity. And it becomes futile. Think of the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, and his euphoric optimism after his return from the 1938 Munich Conference. Mistakenly, he 'wanted' to believe that Hitler would refrain from going to war.

Probably the issue which most vexes India's St. Thomas Christians is that the dominant Latin Church deliberately restricts their pastoral movement. This is referred to as the Problem of All India Jurisdiction. These Eastern Catholics, though theoretically the equal of their Latin counterparts, are, in fact, subordinated to them. For decades, the Easterns have implored the Curia to uphold their cause. And for decades, the Curia has declined to do so. Why? Despite blatant injustice, it is thought imperative to appease the Latin hierarchy and to erect a façade of congenial co-existence. Relationship with the Latins is a priority for the Eastern Congregation, but which is preserved in a manner which is "weak and retracting." (18)

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The novelist, Gore Vidal, once commented that “there is something about a bureaucrat that does not like a poem.” (19) He had in mind that bureaucracy can consume a person and rob them of their soul. It can lure them into the temptation to conclude that whatever the organization it is a worthy end in itself and deserving of maximum allegiance. The Roman Curia, seen through the lens of the five aspects of the ‘unconscious’ model which I believe to be operative, seeks that its membership be submissive and obedient. The prophetic impulse has become quiet, if not overtly reviled. But this is how the Curia seems to express its operational stance. It is not the immutable norm, however, for how the Curia must be. Because of the fine caliber of so many in the Curial community, that community only awaits to incorporate a new model; one which it cannot deny; one which it cannot dismiss, and one to which it cannot be immune. The papacy of Pope Francis appears determined enough and decisive enough to purge the curia of improper disposition and to recast its model in the image of conversion to Christian discipleship.

### **Pope Francis: A Model of Service**

When he was elected on March 13, the throngs which assembled to welcome him echoed their conviction that the breath of the Spirit was in the process of touching every crevice and corner of Catholic life. One lady captured the mood of expectancy at the Pope’s installation Mass. “I think he will change the Church, return it to its humble roots as a ministry to people in need. I love him and what he stands for,” she said.

In his homily on that occasion, Pope Francis summarized his view of the nature of the papacy. The Pope symbolizes the vocation of each believer to act on behalf of others. “Never forget,” he stated, “that authentic power is service, and that the Pope, too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service.” (20)

What can we deduce about how Pope Francis understands such service? His discourse throughout the past month allows us to identify several elements of a pattern for what may actually constitute a ‘model’ for that service. They include:

First. That service involves involves us in a journey. Each of us is like the travelers who ventured to Emmaus after the crucifixion of Jesus (Lk. 24:13f). They knew where they were going, but they lacked the recognition that they were being accompanied by the Risen Lord. In truth, they had a very limited comprehension of their own identity. We might say in psychological parlance that the “two of them” had ‘baggage’. They were fixated on their sorrow, their grief and their loss. They could not grasp that they now had an opportunity to heal their brokenness by readjusting their glance to look carefully at Him Who “walked by their side” (v. 16). The Jerusalem Bible’s translation of this New Testament event fittingly describes the intensity of their dilemma and the reality of their ‘human condition’. “Their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.” And they are said to be “talking together.” But the Greek text contains more the notion that their words were an “exchange” with each other. Theirs was not so much a conversation as a ‘vent’ of words, words which masked their pervasive inner anguish. And, as is often found with illness, their bodies conformed to their state of mind. When questioned by Jesus, “they stopped, their faces downcast.” They had been exposed by Him, to each other and to themselves. Now their situation could be transformed and their approach to life reformed.

In his “First Greeting” after election, from the balcony of St. Peter’s, Pope Francis spoke to the world and to his Diocese of Rome. “We take up this journey.” I can only imagine that he was alluding to pilgrimage and probably to an ‘update’ of scripture’s Emmaus account. As bishop, he journeys with fellow travelers, the “people.” And, collectively, the Church of Rome has embarked upon a journey, too, that of presiding “in charity over all the Churches.” The language synthesizes traditional Catholic teaching. But here the Pope’s accent was upon “charity,” not rulership. The journey of all, and the journey of each, is the same. Unlike those who were burdened and depressed enroute to Emmaus, this journey, the Pope said, is intended to be a “journey of fraternity, of love, of trust among us.” And it is a “journey of the Church,” the Pope said, in which traveling pilgrims “always pray for one another” and “for the whole world.” Such a prayer exemplifies service and the Pope says that it is profoundly fecund, “fruitful for (...) evangelizaion.” And so it was after Emmaus, that those who met the Lord in the

Eucharistic-like liturgy of “the breaking of bread” now “told their story of what had happened on the road” (v. 35). That “story” endures. It is a story of abundant generosity and non-violence. It is the story of willingness to invoke “the prayer of the people asking (...) blessing for their bishop.” (21)

Second. Service is uninhibited to acknowledge gratitude. On March 16, Pope Francis addressed “representatives of the Communications Media.” He did not chastise them or warn them or caution them. Rather, without hesitation, he said to them: “thank you in a special way for the professional coverage which you provided during these days.” For the Pope, their labor was rich in meaning. It contained the gift of themselves. “You really worked, didn’t you?” he queried. And he informed them how he had observed that “those who presented these events (e.g. the conclave, election) of the Church’s history (did so) in a way which was sensitive to the right context in which (these events) need to be read.” And for this, the Pope could say, “I am particularly grateful.” (25)

Third. Service has no hidden agenda. Because service implies openness and disclosure about its values, its ideals and its beliefs. There is no ‘avoidance’. By contrast, service is able to confront those who “gossip,” as did those who hurled harsh accusations against the Apostle Matthew when he chose to “associate with sinners.” So much for being ‘politically correct’. And so much for ‘appeasement’. We should celebrate, unabashedly, that Our Lord “has a special capacity for forgetting.” Jesus “kisses you, he embraces you,” and He never condemns. This reflection, given in a homily at the Vatican’s Parish of St. Anna, expresses the Pope’s theological view that “The Lord never tires of forgiving: never! It is we who tire of asking his forgiveness.” (23)

Fourth. Service savors the wisdom embodied in the mind and heart of those who are non-influential. In his Angelus message for March 17, Pope Francis recalled his once having met “an elderly woman” who told him “with conviction” that “The Lord forgives all things.” He asked, “But how do you know, Madame?” Her response was a marvel. “If the Lord did not forgive everything, the world would not exist.” Amazed, the Pope asked her – with humor – “Tell me, Madam, did you study at the Gregorian (University)?” In

the same Angelus message, the Pope spoke of a book on mercy by Cardinal Kasper and which “did me a lot of good.” Both the “clever theologian” and the “over eighty year old” woman, possibly uneducated formally, gave him remarkable insights. For both were inspired by the same Spirit.

Fifth. Service realizes that grace is embodied in vulnerability. There is no shame in cultivating “tenderness” nor in “building sincere friendships.” Like St. Joseph, the Pope stated in his homily for the inauguration of his Petrine ministry, we are “protectors.” Therefore, this “means keeping watch over our emotions, over our hearts, because they are the seat of good and evil intentions: intentions that build up and tear down. We must not be afraid of goodness or even tenderness.” For these traits are not indicative of weakness. They are “a sign of strength, (of our) capacity for concern, for compassion (...) for love.” And “only those who serve with love are able to protect.” (25)

Sixth. Service elicits dialogue, dialogue which is free from the urge to contrive and induce agreement. Service is content with difference, with what is distinct in religions and cultures. Attending Pope Francis’ Mass of Installation were “31 heads of state,” along with “delegations from 33 Christian denominations, 16 Jewish delegations, and delegations representing Muslims, Buddhists and Sikhs.” (26) The following day, on March 20, he met with their representatives. He assured them of his “firm intention to pursue the path of ecumenical dialogue.” Together, we are meant “to counter the dominance of a one-dimension vision of the human person, a vision which reduces human beings to what they produce and to what they consume.” In his remarks, Pope Francis paid special tribute to “the Jewish people” through whom “God’s plan of salvation” has been so intrinsically linked to “the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets.” And he saluted the Muslims, for they “worship God as one, living and merciful, and (who) invoke him in prayer.” (27)

Seventh. When we serve we risk. We risk being isolated and rebuffed by common opinion. We risk being misunderstood and rejected. And we risk being shunned. Still, the Pope told confirmandi on April 28, we must persevere in “the courage to swim against the tide (...), the courage to go against the current.” And so we should “push on

toward the highest principles,” staking our “lives on noble ideals.” (28) His mention of principles and ideals is significant. For ours is a ‘quick fix’ era, obsessed with instant gratification. Moreover, we have become addicted to what is utilitarian. And we are forgetting that, without principles, we degenerate into the robotic and mechanistic. Principles humanize. They also provide philosophical foundation for our aspiration and action. Otherwise, everything about us becomes random and ad hoc and we disconnect from the accomplishments of our past and the resources of our present.

## **Conclusion**

Analysts have described Pope Francis as a “moderate realist.” Already he has chosen to eliminate the regal and to adopt the familiar. He has dispensed with his limousine and the elegant Papal apartments. He laughs. He smiles. And he listens. He also takes incremental steps to refurbish the ‘bark of Peter’ (29) so that it may bear us away from the vagaries of fate and toward the joy of our God-filled destiny.

## **References**

1. As for schools of thought concerning the dynamics of the conclave, see Flavia Krause-Jackson and Patrick Donohue’s, “Pope’s Successor to Face Challenges,” The Indianapolis Star, February 12, 2013, p. A4.  
The Dicasteries include: Congregations, Councils, Committees, Judicial Tribunals, Secretariats, etc. These and their membership are enumerated in the Vatican’s annual edition of the Annuario Pontificio.
2. Modern efforts to reform the Curial system were undertaken by Pope Paul VI in his 1967 Constitution, Regimini Ecclesiae Universae, and by Pope John Paul II, in his 1988 Constitution, Pastor Bonus. But concern about weaknesses in the Curia have been voiced well prior to these reforms. It is significant that a 1931 Vatican report severely criticized the Curia and for reasons which have since been repeated thereafter until today. Research on this 1931 report has been

published by Hans De Valk in a text in honor of the seventieth birthday of Jesuit historian, Marcel Chappin. De Valk's findings are discussed in pp. 183-205 of Suavis laborum memoria: Church, Papacy, Roman Curia – between history and theology. This book of essays is edited by Paul van Geest and Roberto Regoli, and is published by the Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City, 2013. It is summarized by Sandro Magister in his "Vatican Diary: future curia, old project," [www.chiesa.expressonline.it](http://www.chiesa.expressonline.it) , April 25, 2013.

3. Primarily, such disclosures led to the arrest of the Pope's butler, Paolo Gabriele, and the scandal dubbed 'Vatileaks'.
4. John Allen, commenting to Nicholas S. Hahn III, in The RealClear Religion Interview, April 16, 2013.
5. Reference to the Papal tiara and pallium is based upon an interview with the Very Rev. Richard E. Donohoe, doctoral candidate in theology at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University, and a priest of the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama. The interview was conducted on February 15, 2013.
6. "Pope Renounces Papal Throne," Vatican Information Service, Number 130211, February 11, 2013.
7. "Director of the Holy See Press Office on Pope's Resignation," Vatican Information Service, idem. Frederico Lombardi cites from Peter Seewald's, Light of the World (2010).
8. "Cardinal Sodano Expresses College of Cardinals' Nearness to Pope," Vatican Information Service, idem.

9. See Article 2560 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1995).
10. See Russell D. Moore in “Moore to the Point,” February 11, 2013. (<http://www.russellmoore.com/2013/02/11/an-evangelical-looks-at-pope-benedict-xvi/>)
11. I disagree with John Hooper, author of “Papal resignation linked to inquiry,” in The Guardian, February 21, 2013. My opinion is that the Commission’s Report did not directly lead to Pope Benedict’s resignation.
12. I recommend John Allen’s book, All the Pope’s Men, (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2004), as a balanced study of Vatican policies and philosophy. My view of the bureaucratic model is not comprehensive. The elements which I have selected are based solely upon my personal experience.
13. By contrast, consider Mary Coulter’s assertion of the importance of “establishing the overall direction the organization wants to go.” Cogs, spokes, do not help to define that direction. Instead, they are pressured to move in accordance with what is imposed upon them. Refer to page 183 of Coulter’s, Strategic Management in Action, (Boston, MA: Pearson, 2013).
14. Page 131 of Ed fuller’s, You can lead with your feet on the desk, (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011).
15. Page 333 of David S. Hames, Negotiation, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012).
16. Note pages xxii-xxix of The Directory of the Syro-Malabar Church 2004, (Kochi, India: Major Archiepiscopal Curia).

17. The passivity which pertains to avoidance is discussed on page 9 of Janet Hogberg and Terry Donovan's, Conflict Resolution Tool, (Plymouth, MN: personal Power Product, 2002).
18. Cited from page 32 of J. P. Folger, M. S. Poole and R. K. Stutman's, Working Through Conflict, (New York, NY: Longman, 1997).
19. See the Preface to Vidal's, Sex, Death and Money (1968)
20. Both the comment by Maria Susana Saugar (Buenos Aires) and the excerpt from Pope Francis' homily were stated in USA Today's, "Pope Francis urges protection of the weak," an essay by Eric J. Lyman. That essay was featured by The Indianapolis Star on March 30, 2013, p. A6.
21. Hereafter, quotes from the discourse of Pope Francis are derived from the Vatican web site ([www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)).  
Pope Francis spoke of "journey" in his "First Greeting," March 13, 2013.
22. Paragraphs 2-3 of "Address of the Holy Father to Representatives of the Communications Media," March 16, 2013.
23. Paragraph 4 of the "Homily of Pope Francis" for the Fifth Sunday of Lent, in the Parish of St. Anna, Vatican City, March 17, 2013.
24. Paragraph 3 of the "Angelus," St. Peter's Square, March 17.
25. Paragraphs 5-6, 8-10, of Pope Francis' Homily on the Solemnity of St. Joseph, St. Peter's Square, March 19, 2013.
26. The Indianapolis Star, March 30, 2013, *ibid*.

27. Paragraphs 7-9 of the ecumenical Address given in the Vatican's Clementine Hall on March 20, 2013.

28. No. 3 of the "Homily of Pope Francis" for the "Holy Mass and Conferral of the Sacrament of Confirmation," St. Peter's Square, April 28, 2013.

29. Pope Francis is mindful of the suggestions which arose from the congregations which preceded the conclave. Among them was a plea for Curial reform. Therefore, he appointed a commission of eight cardinals who are charged to "advise him on the government of the universal Church" and who are to "study (a) plan for revising the Apostolic Constitution on the Roman Curia, Pastor Bonus." Details are outlined by the Vatican Information Service, No. 130413, for April 13, 2013.

This commission is being monitored carefully. For example, its assignment is discussed in No. 3 of Dr. Robert Moynihan's "Meeting with Peres." This is Letter #65 of The Moynihan Letters series, for April 30, 2013.

Similarly, Pope Francis is acutely aware of the highly debated theme of the role of women within the Church. Thomas Kington writes in The Telegraph for April 23, 2013, that "Pope Francis (is) to appoint more women to key Vatican posts." We might remind ourselves, too, that during his General Audience on April 3, 2013, the Pope stated: "The Apostles and disciples (found) it hard to believe in the Risen Christ, not the women however."