

Daring for Stewardship Greatness

Stewardship Conference

11 June 2017

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Introduction

I want to begin by acknowledging your commitment to being stewards of Christ's mission in your parishes and in your various local Churches in Western Canada and the United States. It is indeed a blessing for the whole Church that you have taken the time to deepen your understanding of stewardship and about how to live it in your parish communities.

From the outset allow me to say that stewardship is a great force, perhaps even the greatest force, for the renewal and rejuvenation of Catholic life in the Church.

Let me warn you; I am a convert to the spirituality and practice of stewardship. And you all know how converts are: enthusiastic, and often impatient with why others don't share their same zeal. But you all know that from your own experience, for each one of you is committed passionately to living and fostering stewardship in their parish families. You know how it can enrich the spiritual life of parishioners; how it can enable the doors of the vast storehouse of gifts and charisms to be flung open and offered for the building up of the Church and community; and how it can build stronger, holier and more collaborative parishes where the vocation and mission of the lay faithful can be fully lived.

Introduction to Theme of Remarks

The theme given to me to develop is entitled “Daring for Stewardship Greatness.” I admit to being puzzled at first about what this means, being unfamiliar with the phrase “stewardship greatness.” But, fortunately, I was given five bullet points that the organizers suggested I develop in my remarks. While I may not take up all of them, I will certainly begin with the first one, posed as a question: “What does greatness in the Church look like?” And then I will follow with some remarks on the relationship of holiness and stewardship, and the need for us to replace inertia with missionary zeal if our parishes are to flourish.

The teachings of Pope Francis provide the foundation of my remarks. While he does not often – if ever – use the word “stewardship” in the broad way we do – the most frequent references in a Google search refer almost exclusively to the “stewardship of creation” – nonetheless his magisterium is replete with what we might call a theology of stewardship.

1. Greatness in the Church

So, let’s begin with what “greatness” in the Church looks like for Pope Francis in the parish, the diocese and the universal community of believers.

Radical Reform

Without doubt, the Holy Father has a vision for what greatness in

the Church would look like. This vision is in doctrinal continuity with Benedict XVI,ⁱ though clearly marked by “a discontinuity of style.”ⁱⁱ He has no ten-point pastoral strategy for greatness,ⁱⁱⁱ because, as he says, and what we should sincerely take to heart, the Church is not called to be “a perfectly organized non-profit, with so many pastoral plans.”^{iv} The Pope wants us to remember that the Church will fulfill her mission insofar as she understands that God “is continually surprising us, opening our hearts and guiding us in unexpected ways.”^v This is how he puts it:

When the apostle plans everything down to the last detail and believes that with perfect planning things will fall into place, he becomes an accountant or an office manager. Things need to be prepared well, but without ever falling into the temptation of trying to contain and direct the freedom of the Holy Spirit, which is always greater and more flexible than any human planning (cf. Jn 3:8).^{vi}

Contrary to what many pundits suggest, the Church’s greatness cannot depend on doctrinal changes. That’s not at all what Francis has in mind. He is far too much a “son of the Church,”^{vii} as he puts it, to imagine that any such dogmatic changes are either possible or desirable.

The Church can only be great if she puts Jesus Christ and the Gospel before anything else in her life and teaching. Like his namesake

from Assisi^{viii} the Pope understands that the Church's true and renewed greatness lies in her members embracing "a simple radical return to the real Gospel lived and preached by Jesus," and of their intention to live "the way and style of life of Jesus and of the Apostles described in the Gospels."^{ix}

Conversion: Holiness and Encounter

First on the list of "do's" for stewardship greatness, then, is to recognize that conversion of mind and heart is the essence of all ecclesial renewal and that any "structural and organizational reforms are secondary."^x

Stewards of the Church's mission, then, are first of all to be engaged in spiritual renewal, in a vigorous pursuit of holiness. But what does it mean for us to be "holy"? At the outset we must recall that the word "holy" first of all describes God's own nature, "his completely unique, divine, way of being, one which is his alone. He alone is the true and authentic Holy One, in the original sense of the word. All other holiness derives from him, is a participation in his way of being."^{xi}

To be holy means, therefore, for us to go out of ourselves: to enter his sphere, the divine milieu, so that we no longer belong to ourselves but make a gift of ourselves to God, immersing ourselves in his love. Becoming holy, consequently, transforms our being: who we are; it makes of us truly the "property" of God himself.^{xii}

Holiness is, thus, a giving over of the self to the living God, an immersion in the very life of the Triune God. It entails being “set apart” but is not separation from the world. On the contrary, a holy person starts from God and is therefore available for others, to love them as the Father does. This fulfills the new commandment, “that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (Jn 13:34).

The universal call to holiness is about the immersion of our lives in God’s love and then deliberately and even “programmatically” sharing with others his love for us and ours for him. There is no doubt that “a clearer focus upon the imitation of Christ in holiness of life is exactly what is needed in order for us to move forward. We need to rediscover the joy of living a Christ-centered life.”^{xiii} At the dawn of the third Christian millennium, Pope St. John Paul II’s expressed the conviction: “I have no hesitation in saying that all pastoral initiatives must be set in relation to holiness.”^{xiv}

As our response to God’s free self-giving, a life of holiness embraces everything that we say and do. It is not possible to have a part-time spiritual life or to be spiritual only in one corner of our daily lives. If we are genuine, our response to God’s love permeates every nook and cranny of our inner selves, and every outward action of our busy lives. It embraces everything: our work, our play, our friendships, our hopes and

fears, and our stewardship of the many gifts that God has entrusted to our care.

Encounter with Jesus

A Church wishing to be “great” in God’s eyes, therefore, has as its foundation Christians who live “a vital, personal, authentic and solid relationship with Christ.”^{xv} “The Church’s perennial mission [is]: to bring Jesus Christ to mankind and to lead mankind to an encounter with Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life.”^{xvi}

In *Evangelii Gaudium* the Holy Father wrote this appeal: “I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her.”^{xvii}

For some people the encounter with Christ is a cataclysmic “Damascus road” kind of experience; for others it is more gradual. In either case, encountering Jesus is like meeting the person you are going to marry: you are overwhelmed by this encounter and cannot imagine going forward in life without that person. The Christian life becomes not just one but a series of encounters with Jesus, especially through prayer and the liturgy, which continually deepen our relationship with him.^{xviii}

Francis minces no words about such a personal relationship being the *sine qua non* of a Church which can be said to flourish. At one of his

morning meditations at Mass, which are delivered without notes, he remarked: “when we find decadent churches, when we find decadent parishes, decadent institutions, certainly the Christians who are there have never encountered Jesus Christ, or they have forgotten that encounter with Jesus Christ.”^{xxix}

Church as Mother of Mercy

Not only must stewards of Christ’s mission emphasize the importance of their personal relationship with Jesus Christ but they must also see that their call entails renewing their understanding of what the mission of his Church is. Here, I think, we can share Francis’s “dream of a Church that is a mother and shepherdess.”^{xxx}

People today are looking for the Church to show that she loves and offers mercy in practical ways. That’s what the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy was all about. It was the occasion for everyone to rediscover “the infinite mercy of the Father who welcomes everyone and goes out personally to encounter each of them. It is he who seeks us! It is he who comes to encounter us!”^{xxxi}

To convey his conviction that mercy should be the principal mark of the contemporary Church Pope Francis uses two striking images: she is “a maternal womb of mercy”^{xxxii} and a “field hospital” which tends the wounded in time of warfare.

We have to grow in our understanding that the Church is like a

mother who never gives up on her children, even when they go astray.

The Holy Father puts it this way:

She is a merciful mother who understands, who has always sought to help and encourage even those of her children who have erred or are erring; she never closes the door to home. She does not judge but offers God's forgiveness, she offers his love which invites even those of her children who have fallen into a deep abyss to continue on their way.^{xxiii}

Like a mother, the Church must travel the path of mercy and “find a form of mercy for all.”^{xxiv}

Perhaps the most captivating image that has come to the fore in recent years is the Pope's description of the Church as a “field hospital.”^{xxv} In his famous 2013 interview with Father Spadaro, the Jesuit editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica* recorded these words:

I see clearly that the thing the Church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the Church as a field hospital after battle. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else.^{xxvi}

The health-care staff – both clergy and laity, the stewards on the field of

battle – must first of all deal with major injuries of the wounded and treat them. Field hospitals are usually tents set up near the battlefield. Risks abound, and they have few resources and little equipment. Hours are long. Because a sense of cooperation and teamwork is essential, the staff must rely on one another. Creative solutions and maximum flexibility are the order of the day.

What we find everywhere today are people who are spiritually gravely wounded: alienated from God, stuck in spiritual worldliness, adrift with no sense of direction or purpose. They need healing by direct personal contact with disciples who will lead them to Jesus.^{xxvii}

The consequences which follow from comparing the Church to a field hospital are just beginning to be seen in our pastoral practice where “pastoral accompaniment” is given greater emphasis. This shift in focus from admonition to healing, “putting love and mercy and healing first, before rules and doctrines”^{xxviii} admittedly causes discomfort in some quarters, but it is undoubtedly one of the signs of the times which deserves our closest attention.

2. Stewards Are Called to Be Missionary Disciples

Following the call of Pope Francis, we must be resolved to undergo a “missionary conversion,” a change in our parish and diocesan culture, such that every person at every level of the Church, through personal encounter with Jesus Christ, embraces his or her identity as a

son or daughter of God and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is formed and sent forth as a joyful missionary disciple:

I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are. “Mere administration” can no longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be “permanently in a state of mission.”^{xxix}

For families this means that every family embraces its role as the domestic church and, in connection with other families and single persons, actively seeks the spiritual and social renewal of its neighbourhood, schools and places of work.

For parishes and diocesan services this should mean the renewal of structures to make them Spirit-led and radically mission-oriented. This missionary conversion entails a strikingly countercultural way of living grounded in prayer, Scripture, and the sacraments; unusually gracious hospitality; a capacity to include those on the margins of society; and joyful confidence in the providence of God even in difficult and stressful times.^{xxx}

Missionary Nature of the Church^{xxxi}

The very last words Jesus spoke to his disciples before he ascended into heaven were the commission to evangelize all people: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

This mandate defines the Church for all time. As Blessed Pope Paul VI wrote, “Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize.”^{xxxii} Evangelizing is therefore a responsibility not only of bishops, priests, and religious, but of every individual Christian.

Evangelization is, very simply, proclaiming the good news of Jesus to those around us. This proclamation is to be both in word and in deed. If we share the good news of Christ’s love in words only, not demonstrably living what we preach, people will rightly suspect us of hypocrisy, and we may even give Christianity a bad name. On the other hand, if we share the good news in deeds only, people will not learn of the One who is the source of the joy and divine love we carry within us. Those around us are thirsting for the Gospel, the words of eternal life, even if they do not realize it. How can we fail to share generously what we have freely received?

Over the centuries, as the Church became accustomed to existing within almost entirely Christian societies, it became all too easy to lose sight of Christ’s mandate. Parishes and dioceses slipped almost imperceptibly into a mode of maintenance rather than mission. Many Catholics came to think of evangelization as a special calling, primarily for priests and religious in the foreign missions. But in the last half century, even as the western world has become increasingly

secularized and countless people have abandoned the faith into which they were baptized, the Church has been ringing out a call for all Catholics to awaken to their baptismal identity as missionary disciples.

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. *Mt 28:19*). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples."^{xxxiii}

New Evangelization

All are being summoned to engage in a new evangelization—a

renewed proclamation of the good news of Christ to the people of our time.

The term “new evangelization,” coined by Pope St. John Paul II, takes account of the fact that the Church in our time exists in a vastly changed situation. It is not that the Gospel has changed, but that we are called to a renewed effort that is “new in its ardour, methods and expression.”^{xxxiv} The new evangelization is directed not only to those in distant lands who have never heard the Gospel, but to those around us in our own post-Christian society. The new “mission territory” is our own neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools, and even our own homes.

3. Going Out to the Peripheries

The Church then must step outside herself to go to the outskirts of existence, whatever they may be.^{xxxv} With a language that is distinctly his own, the Pope is constantly challenging us to focus our service and justice initiatives, charitable activities and evangelizing mission on the world’s “peripheries.”^{xxxvi} This is where Jesus began, on the outskirts of privilege and comfort, for he “himself was a man from the periphery, from that Galilee far from the power centres of the Roman Empire and Jerusalem. He met the poor, the sick, the demon possessed, sinners, prostitutes, gathering around himself a small number of disciples and a few women who listened to him and served him.”^{xxxvii}

Francis points us in this direction because he fears that we have

become too insular in our parochial concerns, anaesthetized to the plight of millions, and have abandoned outreach to the world for the comfort of the sacristy. He wants us to open the Church's doors, literally and figuratively, to the world outside. "A Church closed in on herself," he maintains "is a sick Church."^{xxxviii} To the cardinals gathered before the conclave that later elected him, he said: "The evils that, over time, appear in Church institutions have their root in self-referentiality, a kind of theological narcissism."^{xxxix} When the Church forgets she is only the *mysterium lunae*, he went on, the "mystery of the moon" which has no light source of itself but only reflects the light of Christ, she falls into a corrupt "spiritual worldliness." A "self-referential Church keeps Jesus Christ within herself and does not let him out."^{xl}

To drive his point home, the Holy Father draws on an image from the Book of Revelation. Jesus is standing at the door and knocking; he knocks to be let into our hearts (cf. Rev 3:20). However, Francis gives this traditional image a twist. "But, ask yourselves this question: how often is Jesus inside and knocking at the door to be let out, to come out? And we do not let him out because of our own need for security, because so often we are locked into ephemeral structures that serve solely to make us slaves and not free children of God."^{xli}

But this defensive hunkering down will not do for the Pope, because "missionary outreach is paradigmatic for all the Church's

activity.”^{xlii} While St. John XXIII opened the Church’s windows to the world, Francis is opening her doors. He challenges those who think that she should be inward-looking, protected by closed security doors, where only the supposed elect are allowed in and which shelters those afraid of bearing witness in the world.

He counsels us “to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel.”^{xliii} If we do this, we are fulfilling the Pope’s dream “of a ‘missionary option,’ that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today’s world, rather than for her self-preservation.”^{xliv} All ecclesial structures are to be more mission-oriented,^{xlv} and everything is to be put into “a missionary key.”^{xlvi} The Church of the future, if Francis has his way, will be decidedly more missionary, more “outgoing” than ever before.

Preach the Kerygma First

In going out to the margins, we bring with us the heart of the Gospel, the *kerygma*, the core of its message, which is the “proclamation of God’s love, mercy and forgiveness, revealed to us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”^{xlvii}

After two thousand years of development of doctrine, we are used

to focusing on the need to transmit Catholic teaching on faith and morals in its fullness. This is indeed essential, but it does not come first. The proclamation of the kerygma must precede catechesis, because people are ready to receive the Church's doctrine only after they have heard the kerygma and responded in faith.^{xlviii}

Therefore, “the first proclamation must ring out over and over again: ‘Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you’.”^{xlix}

Three consequences follow from such a kerygmatic emphasis.

First, preachers and teachers must increasingly express themselves simply – a trait the Pope himself cultivates in his own lyrical, accessible and pastoral style, always careful to avoid stale phrases.¹ Why this simplicity? Because, “at times we lose people because they don't understand what we are saying, because we have forgotten the language of simplicity and import an intellectualism foreign to our people.”^{li} In using this popular linguistic register, however, “the integrity of the Gospel message must not be deformed.”^{lii} At the same time, today's rapidly changing culture demands that the Church constantly seek ways of expressing unchanging truths in a language which brings out their freshness.^{liii}

Second, now more than ever, the Church's message must

concentrate on doctrinal essentials. Precious time and effort cannot be squandered by reducing the Gospel “to some aspects that, although relevant, on their own do not show the heart of the message of Jesus Christ.”^{liv} We should both distinguish clearly between what is of greater and what is of lesser importance in proclaiming the faith, and observe scrupulously that order in our homilies, catechetics and theology.^{lv}

A third consequence of this kerygmatic emphasis is the place he gives to questions of morality, the so-called “hot button issues.” Rules – moral, liturgical, canonical and so on – are necessary, but they make sense only in light of what is truly primary: the person’s encounter with the mercy of the living Christ.

The Pope regrets that, because of the media attention given to a handful of moral questions, the heart of the Gospel risks becoming obscured. What happens, he says, is that “certain issues which are part of the Church’s moral teaching are taken out of the context which gives them their meaning. . . . [rather] the message has to concentrate on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary.”^{lvi} He particularly laments the practice of those who, ignoring the *kerygma*, “move straight to the catechism, preferably the section on morality.”^{lvii} Before someone can understand and live the Church’s moral teachings, that person must first grasp that he or she is gazed upon and loved by a merciful God. The Holy Father

has undoubtedly set in motion a new way for presenting *when* the Church's moral teachings should be proclaimed, not *how* they are to be overturned. He repositions them in relation to the heart of the Gospel.

4. Enemies of Missionary Zeal: Hindrances to Greatness^{lviii}

Those who aspire to stewardship greatness cannot allow their zeal and commitment to be influenced by certain attitudes, misunderstandings or deceptions that hold us back from fulfilling our mission. Let me list some "bad habits" that can and have crept into our mindset.

1. A worldly notion of the Church

Too often the Church is viewed, even by Catholics, as simply a human institution, and the Catholic faith as merely a lifestyle enhancer. In this outlook the Church's value is based primarily on its contributions to society, whether in education, health care, advocacy, or service to the poor. The priest is seen as a kind of ecclesiastical civil servant. When this outlook prevails the Church's mission can become captive to human plans, and the clarity of our witness to the Gospel is compromised.

Cardinal John Henry Newman observed that perhaps one of the reasons Christ's disciples in a particular time and place seem to escape being persecuted is that they have conformed themselves to the thinking and behaviour of their society.

What is lacking in such a worldly mindset is a humble recognition

that the Church belongs to *Christ* as his Body, his beloved Bride. It is Christ who directs the mission and activity of the Church and who will bring her without fail to her final destiny. All of us, clergy and laity alike, are servants of the Lord who will one day render an account of our service to him.

2. Spiritual lethargy of individuals

The second vice is closely related to the first. If the Church is viewed as a human institution, then it is easy to become overwhelmed by the challenges that face us. The feeling that we have to carry the burden of a struggling Church contributes in turn to weariness, discontent, and defeatism. It may seem as if we are pushing a rock up a steep hill and getting nowhere.

Where there has been such lethargy, dear brothers and sisters, let us repent! It is a little like a marriage that has become stale: it is time to “return to our first love” (cf. Rev 2:4), to go through a “marriage encounter” between ourselves and Jesus—or perhaps to fall in love with him for the first time. If our ardour has cooled, let us ask the Lord to touch us once again with a burning ember from his altar (cf. Isa 6:6) that we may be rekindled in our zeal for him.

3. “Status quo” mentality in the parish or diocese

There can be a kind of institutional hardening, a resistance to change. We may consider that certain institutional forms, customs and

practices have carried us in the past and we do not want to put in the effort to reform them. Pope Francis speaks of “the complacent attitude that says: ‘We have always done it this way.’” Instead he urges all local Churches to “be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities.”^{lix}

4. A complaining attitude

A common temptation in reaction to problems is to lament that we no longer have the power or prestige we once had. We don’t have as many priests, as many resources, as much money, as much support. Like the Israelites in the desert, we can take on an attitude of “murmuring,” finding fault with God and others. But complaining leads only to discouragement and paralysis.

God thinks we have enough, because we have him. “I can do all things in him who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13).

5. Fear

The fifth bad habit can sometimes be more hidden. We can be subtly influenced by a combination of fears: fear of taking risks, fear of failure, fear of losing control, fear of going beyond our comfort zone. But yielding to fear keeps us in spiritual bondage (cf. Heb 2:15). How often Scripture tells us, “Fear not!” How often the Lord assures the fearful of his steadfast love and his help (cf. Isa 43:1-2). We must

choose not to be guided by fear. Whenever we become aware of fears and anxieties influencing us, we can bring them before the Lord in all honesty and ask him to replace them with apostolic courage.

Just as in the Upper Room at Pentecost, it is the Holy Spirit who transforms Christ's disciples from ordinary people into Spirit-filled evangelizers. Before the coming of the Spirit, the early Christians did not seem a particularly impressive group of people. They had good reason to be filled with fears, concerns, and feelings of inadequacy as they contemplated the awesome task Jesus had given them: to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. They were still struggling to comprehend the events of recent days: the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord.

But when the Spirit fell upon them, their hearts were set ablaze with the fire of God's love and they could no longer keep the good news of Christ to themselves. They went out from the Upper Room overflowing with the joy of the Gospel. Through their witness, the Gospel was unleashed in Jerusalem and from there throughout the ancient world.

Peter

The transformation caused by the Spirit was most visible in the apostle Peter. Before Pentecost, Peter had left everything to follow Jesus and was earnestly seeking to live by his teaching. But his ability to fulfill

his apostolic mission was compromised by his own fears and failings. He vehemently resisted Jesus' prediction of his passion, which seemed senseless to human reasoning. Then after boasting of his loyalty to the Master, he came face to face with his own weakness and cowardice. But after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Peter was filled with an unshakable inner conviction of the truth of the Gospel and a love that compelled him to share that good news with all who would listen. Even under persecution, his evangelical boldness and joy were uncontainable (Acts 4:12-13; 5:40-42). It was because of such a transformation in Peter and all the members of the Church that "The word of God continued to spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly" (Acts 6:7).^{lx}

Today no less than two millennia ago, there is no limit to what the Lord can do in our midst. His part is to clothe his Church with "power from on high" (cf. Luke 24:49) for the accomplishment of her mission. Our part is to give him our wholehearted "yes"—to let ourselves be transformed, guided, and sent forth by the Holy Spirit, who is the "principal agent of evangelization."^{lxi}

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to cite the wise, straightforward words of St. Teresa of Calcutta who, without using the terminology, understood that the stewardship greatness to which we aspire flows from a

foundational principle that she formulated so succinctly: “If God, who owes nothing to us, is ready to impart to us no less than himself, shall we answer with just a fraction of ourselves?”

We live in world, which though it is fallen – and we certainly can’t ignore this fact – is, in fact, in Gerard Manley Hopkins’ words, “charged with the grandeur of God.” We live amidst the bounty of God’s grace, of his graciousness. In simple words, we are recipients: of life, of new birth, of eternal life. St. Paul asked his followers: “What have you that you have not received?” The answer is straightforward: “nothing.” Bernanos’s “all is grace” at the end of *Diary of a Country Priest*, sums this up beautifully. Who we are, what we can do, where we are going: all are gifts of grace.

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Endnotes

i. Cf. Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 88-89. He refers to Francis as taking Benedict “on the road.” For a contrary views, see Massimo Faggioli, *Pope Francis: Tradition in Transition* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2015), 77: “If the long Wojtyla-Ratzinger pontificate was characterized by the teaching of the Church on moral and social issues, with a strong emphasis on ‘anthropology’ linked to the idea of the ‘natural law,’ Pope Francis appears to be motivated by a more historical and cultural vision, in line with the Latin American theology he comes from, and by a more spiritual than theological vision for the ministry of the Roman pontificate”; and Ross Douthat, “Will Pope Francis Break the Church?” *The Atlantic* (May 2015): “Yet the media are not deceived in thinking that Francis differs from his predecessors in substance as well as style. He may not be a liberal Catholic as the term is understood in an American or European context, but he has a different set of priorities than the previous two popes did.”

ii. Massimo Faggioli, *Pope Francis: Tradition in Transition* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2015), 8.

iii. Cf. Michael O’Loughlin, “How Pope Francis Is Changing the Catholic Church,” *America* (12 January 2017): <http://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/01/12/how-pope-francis-changing-catholic-church>: “Father Spadaro considers a question about the pope’s overarching goals and concedes that there is no master plan. ‘He decides what to do by looking at events and praying,

which means he doesn't build big plans,' he said. 'He goes step by step, step by step'." For a different view, see Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), xv: Francis is "a church leader who from an early age felt called to be a reformer, and was given the authority to do so. This is a story not just of the man but his three reforms: of the Argentine Jesuit province, of the Argentine Church, and now of the universal Church. His lodestars have been two French theologians, Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac, who taught him how to unite God's People by a radical reform that will lead them to holiness."

iv. Francis, Address to Rome's Diocesan Conference (16 June 2014).

v. Francis, Homily, Closing Mass of the III Extraordinary Synod and Beatification of Paul VI (19 October 2014).

vi. Francis, Address to the Roman Curia (22 December 2014).

vii. Francis, Interview on Return Flight from World Youth Day (28 July 2013); cf. Antonio Spadaro, "A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis," *America*, vol. 209:8 (30 September 2013); John L. Allen, Jr., "At 3-year mark, Francis is a both/and pope in an either/or world," *All Things Catholic* (16 March 2016): www.cruxnow.com/church/2016/03/13/: "Yet Francis is also clearly 'conservative,' in the sense that he's been pope for three years and hasn't changed a single comma in the Catechism, the official compendium of Church teaching. He's said no to women priests, no to gay marriage, defined abortion as the 'most horrific' of crimes, defended the heart of the ban on birth control, and on every other contested issue declared himself a loyal 'son of the Church'."

viii. Leonardo Boff thinks that the choice of the name "Francis" was not just a *nomen* but an omen: "Francis is more than a name – it's a plan" (Paul Vallely, *Pope Francis: Untying the Knots* [New York:

Bloomsbury, 2013], 198).

ix. Raniero Cantalamessa, *Saint Francis of Assisi and the Reform of the Church by Way of Holiness*, Meditations for Advent for the Papal Household (December 2013), Manuscript, 7; cf. George Weigel, “Franciscan Churchmanship,” *First Things* (January 2017), 47.

x. Antonio Spadaro, “A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis,” *America*, vol. 209:8 (30 September 2013).

xi. Benedict XVI, Homily at Chrism Mass (9 April 2009).

xii. Cf. Benedict XVI, Homily at Chrism Mass (9 April 2009).

xiii. Benedict XVI, Homily at Vespers with American Bishops (16 April 2008).

xiv. St. John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 30.

xv. Francis, Address to the Roman Curia (22 December 2014).

xvi. Francis, Address to the College of Cardinals (15 March 2013).

xvii. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 3; cf. *Ad Limina* Address to the Polish Episcopal Conference (7 February 2014): “The Christian religion, however, is not an abstract science, but a living knowledge of Christ, a personal relationship with God who is love. One needs perhaps to insist more on formation in the faith lived as a relationship, in which one experiences the joy of being loved and able to love”; Letter to Italian Journalist on Church’s Dialogue with Nonbelievers, *Origins*, 43:17 (26 September 2013), 262: “For me, faith was born of an encounter with Jesus. It was a personal encounter that touched my heart and gave new direction and meaning to my life. At the same time, it was an encounter made possible by the community of faith in which I lived and thanks to which I gained access to understanding sacred Scripture, to new life in

Christ through the sacraments, to fraternity with all and service to the poor, who are the true image of the Lord”; Address to the University Community of Roma Tre (17 February 2017): “I profess myself Christian and the transcendence to which I open myself and look at has a name: Jesus. I am convinced that His Gospel is a force of true personal and social renewal. Speaking thus, I do not propose to you illusions or philosophical or ideological theories, nor do I wish to engage in proselytism. I am speaking to you of a Person who came to meet me when I was more or less your age, who opened horizons for me and changed my life. This Person can fill our heart with joy and our life with meaning. He is my fellow traveller; He does not disappoint and does not betray. He is always with us. He puts Himself with respect and discretion along our life’s path, above all, He supports us in the hour of loss and defeat, in the moment of weakness and sin, to always put us back on the way. This is the personal testimony of my life.” See the summary of Timothy P. Schilling, “Rediscovering Jesus,” *America* (16 March 2015).

xviii. Cf. Allen Vigneron, *Unleash the Gospel* (3 June 2017), 4, 2.1.

xix. Francis, Morning Meditation (4 September 2014); cf. Address to Ecclesial Movements, Vigil of Pentecost (18 May 2013): “What is important is our encounter with Jesus, our encounter with him.”

xx. Antonio Spadaro, “A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis,” *America*, vol. 209:8 (30 September 2013).

xxi. Francis, Homily (8 December 2015).

xxii. Francis, Address to the Bishops of Brazil (28 July 2013).

xxiii. Francis, General Audience (18 September 2013), 2.

xxiv. Francis, Interview on Papal Flight from Rio de Janeiro to Rome

(28 July 2013).

xxv. Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014): “Francis’s metaphor of the Church as a battlefield hospital almost certainly came, consciously or not, from the lazaretto in Manzoni’s *The Betrothed*, the Italian epic his grandmother Rosa used to read to him as a child, which was on the pope’s desk when Spadaro interviewed him. . . . As a metaphor for the Church as channel of mercy, rather than regulator and rule maker, it was extraordinarily powerful.”

xxvi. Antonio Spadaro, “A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis,” *America*, vol. 209:8 (30 September 2013); cf. Address to the General Assembly of the Focolare Movement (26 September 2014): “We must go out! Because – I have said this many times – the Church seems like a field hospital. And when one goes to a field hospital, the first task is to heal the wounded, not to measure cholesterol. . . this will come later. . . . Is this clear?”

xxvii. Cf. Robert Barron, “The Church Is a Home for Everybody,” *Catholic Register* (13 October 2013), 13.

xxviii. Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 381; cf. Massimo Faggioli, *Pope Francis: Tradition in Transition* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2015), 81: “In this sense, there is a parallel between John XXIII and Francis: as pope, John tried to disengage Catholicism as such from the Cold War; Francis is trying to disengage Catholicism from the ‘culture wars.’ The objections (or worse than objections) against both popes arrive from the ones who see their attempt as an appeasement.”

xxix. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 25.

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- xxx. Cf. Allen Vigneron, *Unleash the Gospel* (3 June 2017), 2.
- xxxi. Cf. Allen Vigneron, *Unleash the Gospel* (3 June 2017), 3.1.
- xxxii. Blessed Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14.
- xxxiii. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 120.
- xxxiv. St. John Paul II, Address to CELAM (9 May 1983).
- xxxv. Cf. Francis, Address to the Ecclesial Movements, Vigil of Pentecost (18 May 2013).
- xxxvi. Cf. Francis, Video-Message for the Vigil of Prayer on the Occasion of the Opening of the Year of Consecrated Life (29 November 2014): “Reach all the peripheries that are in need of the light of the Gospel (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 20). Live on the frontiers. This will ask of you vigilance to discern the novelties of the Spirit; lucidity in recognizing the complexity of the new frontiers; discernment in identifying the limits and the appropriate manner to proceed; and immersion in reality, ‘touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others’ (*ibid*, n. 24).”
- xxxvii. Francis, Address to the Fourth National Missionary Conference Sponsored by the Italian Episcopal Conference (22 November 2014).
- xxxviii. Francis, Address to the Ecclesial Movements, Vigil of Pentecost (18 May 2013); cf. “General Audience (16 October 2013): “A Church that is closed in on herself and in the past, a Church that only sees the little rules of behaviour, of attitude, is a Church that betrays her own identity; a closed Church betrays her own identity!”
- xxxix. Cited in Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 358.

xl. Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Address before the Conclave (12 March 2013).

xli. Francis, Address to the Ecclesial Movements, Vigil of Pentecost (18 May 2013); cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 49: “More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: ‘Give them something to eat’ (Mk 6:37).”

xlii. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 15.

xliii. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 20.

xliv. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 27.

xlv. Cf. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 28.

xlvi. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 34.

xlvii. Francis, Homily (12 October 2014). In a 2010 interview, he said: “the most important thing about a sermon is the message of Jesus Christ, which in theology is known as the *kerygma*. It summarizes the core Christian tenets: that God is in Jesus, He made Himself man in order to save us, He lived in the world like one of us, He suffered, He died, He was buried, and He came back to life. This is the *kerygma*, the message of Christ” (Francesca Ambrogetti and Sergio Rubin, eds., *Pope Francis: Conversations with Jorge Bergoglio* (New York: New American Library, 2014), 103; cf. Cf. Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 53: “As a Jesuit priest and provincial, and later as cardinal, bishop, and now pope, Bergoglio always insisted that the Church should offer people what he called this ‘primary proclamation’ –

the experience of God’s merciful love – prior to (in the sense both of precedence and importance) the rest of Christian teaching.”

xlviii. Cf. Allen Vigneron, *Unleash the Gospel* (3 June 2017), 4, 2.2.

xlix. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 164.

l. Cf. Austen Ivereigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2014), 333.

li. Francis, Address to the Bishops of Brazil, Aparecida (28 July 2013).

lii. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 39.

liii. Cf. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 41.

liv. Antonio Spadaro, “A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis,” *America*, vol. 209:8 (30 September 2013).

lv. Cf. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 38-39.

lvi. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 34, 35; cf. 128; Antonio Spadaro, “A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis,” *America*, vol. 209:8 (30 September 2013).

lvii. Francesca Ambrogetti and Sergio Rubin, eds., *Pope Francis: Conversations with Jorge Bergoglio* (New York: New American Library, 2014), 104-105.

lviii. Cf. Allen Vigneron, *Unleash the Gospel* (3 June 2017), 3.4.

lix. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 33.

lx. Cf. Allen Vigneron, *Unleash the Gospel* (3 June 2017), 4.

lxi. Blessed Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 75.