

“*A Pope Francis Lexicon* is a helpful addition to the ever-expanding literature on Pope Francis. This collection will no doubt be greeted with gratitude by those desiring personal growth in their lives through reflection on the Pope’s words and actions, especially his determination to build bridges, foster receptive dialogue, and multiply opportunities for encounter.”

—Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State

“What an interesting idea: ask a wide range of writers and thinkers to reflect on Pope Francis’s words. The result: this collection of intelligent and accessible essays. This is a book to keep on the bedside table and delve into over and over again.”

—Cokie Roberts, author and political commentator for NPR and ABC

“This brilliant collection fizzles with the tension and tumult of this most provocative and enigmatic of papacies. Francis—the top-down decentralizer, the champion of the peripheries who draws the world’s attention to the personality at the center, the blunt speaker who leaves exasperated critics demanding tidiness and clarity—has triggered a creative commotion. No one writer has ever quite captured it; McElwee and Wooden’s kaleidoscope comes close.”

—Brendan Walsh, editor of *The Tablet*

“*A Pope Francis Lexicon* is a compact yet comprehensive anthology of the themes that have come to define the Francis papacy. The diverse array of contributors make *A Pope Francis Lexicon* essential reading for anyone wishing to better understand the program of this ‘pope of many firsts.’”

—Gretchen R. Crowe, editor of *Our Sunday Visitor* and author of *Why the Rosary, Why Now?*

“Joshua J. McElwee and Cindy Wooden have brought together an outstanding collection of writings on Pope Francis’ leadership from major figures in the Church and wider Catholic life. *A Pope Francis Lexicon* is a valuable guide to the words and ideas that form the foundation of Francis’ papacy. It rightly belongs on the shelf of anyone interested in the direction of the Catholic Church today.”

—E. J. Dionne Jr., co-author of *One Nation After Trump* and senior fellow at the Brookings Institution

A Pope Francis Lexicon

edited by Joshua J. McElwee and Cindy Wooden

foreword by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew



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Foreword

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

It is with great joy that we join this delightful “anthology,” a Greek word that denotes a charming selection of engaging reflections, a compilation of fragrant offerings to a prominent religious leader.

This volume is a collection of reflections on key words in the message and ministry of our beloved brother, Pope Francis. Words, however, are much more than conventional remarks; they are far more important than ordinary utterances. Words are the intrinsic expression of life, our most intimate reflection of divinity, the very identity of God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

Indeed, we are judged by every word that comes from our lips (Matt 12:36). Words can heal or crush (Prov 12:6), prove productive or destructive (Prov 8:21), generate benevolence and edification (Eph 4:29) or else bitterness and imprecation (Rom 3:14). Most of all, we should “be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1 Pet 3:15).

In our encounters and exchanges with our brother, the Bishop of Rome, we have experienced the profound sacredness of words. We remember and recognize that words either build bridges or build walls. Therefore, together, we have sought to promulgate a dialogue of love and a dialogue of truth, “living the truth in love” (Eph 4:15).

Of course, while words may express and describe human affections, they can never adequately exhaust or define the human heart. However, they reveal glimpses into the world of another human being; they present

insights into their interests and concerns. If we pay attention to the frequency with which we repeat and accentuate particular words, we will observe the patterns and passions that shape our life.

This is why we were not surprised to see the terms selected in this volume as characteristic and suggestive of the fundamental *principles* prioritized and personalized by Pope Francis:

- his ministry is devoted to Jesus and the church as the Body of Christ, while exposing clerical abuse and encouraging accountability;
- he strives to relate the sacraments of the church to the life of the world, such as baptism to tears;
- within the church as institution, he wishes to decrease clericalism and increase collegiality, while addressing indifference and advocating discernment;
- in his church's relations with others, he promotes dialogue and ecumenism, as well as encounter and embrace;
- in the global community, he discerns the intricate connection between capitalism and creation, persecution and refugees; and
- he cares about family, women, children, and grandparents.

Above all, we were struck by the specific *virtues* that form the contours of his message and witness:

- dignity and justice,
- mercy and hope, but above all
- love and joy.

This book transcends mere words. It is a splendid mosaic of colorful, engaging elements that unveil the sympathetic and compassionate man we have come to know as Pope Francis.

*From the Phanar
July 2017*

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is the archbishop of Constantinople–New Rome and spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide.

Preface

Cardinal Seán O'Malley, OFM Cap

I have always liked the story about the Jesuit and the Franciscan who are walking down the street one day when suddenly they are accosted by a young man who says to them: “Fathers, can you tell me what novena I should make to acquire a BMW?” The Franciscan said: “What is a BMW?” And the Jesuit said: “What’s a novena?”

We have a pope who defies these categories as he melds the Jesuit and the Franciscan into one. But I believe that Pope Francis is the quintessential Ignatian Jesuit. We have a pope who has embraced the vocation of being a follower of “Ignatius who wants to be a saint like St. Francis.” Our pope is thoroughly Jesuit, thoroughly Ignatian, right down to the fascination with St. Francis. During the first year of his pontificate in an interview for *Civiltà Cattolica*, Jesuit Fr. Antonio Spadaro asked Pope Francis why he became a Jesuit. The pope said that three things about the Jesuits that attracted him were: the missionary spirit, community and discipline—including how they manage their time.

It is quite obvious that Pope Francis exhibits these characteristics in spades. He is truly living his Jesuit vocation with an intense missionary zeal, a love for community, a community for mission, and the disciplined life that does not waste anything, especially not time. Shortly before his ordination, the thirty-two-year-old Jorge Bergoglio wrote a short “credo,” and he has shared that even now he keeps that document close at hand, as a reminder of his core convictions. It is a clear indication of the habit of self-reflection so deeply ingrained by his Jesuit formation.

Pope Francis embraces the introspection that is so central to Jesuit spirituality. The practice of the *examen* undertaken individually wherever and whenever the circumstances permitted was Ignatius's plan to keep the Jesuits recollected in God, to keep them focused despite their activist lifestyles. Reflecting this spiritual focus in his address to the Brazilian bishops at World Youth Day in 2013, the Holy Father asked: "Unless we train ministers capable of warming peoples' hearts, of walking with them in the night, of dialoguing with their hopes and disappointments, of mending their brokenness, what joy can we have for our present and future?"

Pope Francis reminds us that God's heart has a special place for the poor. He is most eloquent in his advocacy on behalf of the poor, reminding all of us of our obligation to help them by programs of promotion and assistance, as well as by working to resolve the structural causes of poverty. In *Evangelii Gaudium* the Holy Father presents one of his most impassioned pleas on behalf of the poor by emphasizing the importance of providing them with pastoral care as he states: "I want to say with regret that the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them His friendship, His blessing, His Word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith. Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care" (EG 200).

Pope Francis has also shared that Catholicism is not a "catalogue of prohibitions." He urges us to be positive, to emphasize the things that unite us, not those which divide us, to prioritize the connection between people and the path we walk together, observing that after focusing on what brings us together then the work of addressing the differences becomes easier. The Holy Father also advises us that every form of catechesis should attend to the "way of beauty," showing others that to follow Christ is not only right and true but is also something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendor and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties.

Pope Francis understands that the words we use to speak about the people of God and the work of the church are of great importance and can often make the difference between a person being open to hearing more, to considering a life of faith; or turning away feeling rejected, dismissed or relegated as unworthy. Beginning with the spiritual reflection that all our gifts, talents and achievements are gifts from God, the Holy Father

has given us a vocabulary of care, concern, inclusion and service. With the help of God and one another may we take these teachings to heart and go forward as missionary disciples for Christ.

*From Boston
August 2017*

Cardinal Seán O'Malley, OFM Cap, is the archbishop of Boston and a member of the Council of Cardinals.

Baptism

Cardinal Donald Wuerl

“You will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). This charge reflects the great evangelizing mandate that Jesus gives to his apostles and disciples. Before he ascended to heavenly glory, the risen Jesus said to his followers—and by extension to the whole church—that we were to “go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:19-20). How would this take place, how would we be able to achieve such a mighty task? In telling us we would be his witnesses, Jesus also assured us, “You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you” (Acts 1:8).

It is precisely in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that we are members of Christ’s church and thus receive the mission to be witnesses and, at the same time, are given the power by which we will accomplish our task as evangelizing disciples. In the sacrament of baptism where all sin is washed away, the gift of the Holy Spirit is imparted and we become members of the church. “No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (John 3:5). This connection between baptism, mission, and discipleship is present first in Sacred Scripture as told in Jesus’ message but also is a cornerstone in the teaching and ministry of Pope Francis.

Three elements are at the core of our missionary discipleship: first receiving the Holy Spirit through baptism, next accepting to follow Christ, and finally being willing to share the Good News. Again and again in using the word “baptism,” the Holy Father says that, in addition to receiving this gift of new life personally and rather than keeping it

for ourselves, a priority in our lives is to go out and generously spread Christ's merciful love. "In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples," he affirmed in his first apostolic exhortation, which followed the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization convened by Pope Benedict XVI, adding that "the New Evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized" (*Evangelii Gaudium* 120).

In his encyclical letter *Lumen Fidei*, we learn how baptism "modifies all our relationships, our place in this world and in the universe, and opens them to God's own life of communion," as they point also to the importance of those preparing for baptism for the New Evangelization (42).

Our Holy Father encourages us, even if we do not remember being baptized, to remember the date when we received the sacrament. "To know the date of our Baptism is to know a blessed day. . . . We must reawaken the memory of our Baptism. We are called to live out our Baptism every day as the present reality of our lives. If we manage to follow Jesus and to remain in the church, despite our limitations and with our weaknesses and our sins, it is precisely in the Sacrament whereby we have become new creatures and have been clothed in Christ" (general audience, January 8, 2014).

In baptism, we learn the crucial lessons of relationship and gift, of how we are not isolated individuals living for ourselves but are all intertwined as a people who are meant to care for one another. Through baptism, we become a member of a community of evangelizing disciples—evangelizing missionaries. In his most recent apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis explains this connection, "Mutual self-giving in the sacrament of matrimony is grounded in the grace of baptism, which establishes the foundational covenant of every person with Christ in the church. In accepting each other, and with Christ's grace, the engaged couple promise each other total self-giving, faithfulness and openness to new life" (73).

Pope Francis goes on to say, "We are called to live out our baptism every day as the present reality of our lives. . . . By our baptism, we recognize in the least and in the poor the face of the Lord who visits us and makes himself close. Baptism helps us to recognize in the face of the needy, the suffering, and also of our neighbor, the face of Jesus" (general audience, January 8, 2014). Having received in the sacrament the life of Jesus and

moved by his example, he explains, “we want to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep; arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world” (EG 269).

This evangelizing task to which Pope Francis refers so insistently is the work of all of us. We are not simply bystanders watching events unfold around us. That is certainly true when we face the many challenges presented today by a secular culture, in which we are called to be the visible sign of a better and fuller way of living. Pope Francis tells us to go out, encounter, engage and accompany people as we try to share with them the story and Gospel of Jesus.

To go out is to be able to leave our comfort zone and actually reach out to those who perhaps should be with us and are not, and with whom we may have regular contact.

To encounter means to carry on our ordinary, daily life but this time aware that many of the people we meet, work and recreate with may really know very little of the values that we cherish—of the wonder of the Gospel message and of the joy that it brings.

Now comes the action of engagement. We have to be open to initiating a conversation or responding in the midst of conversations that challenge the values that we hold dear. Sometimes this can take on the form of a simple “I have another take on that” comment when you hear people talking about life, actions, values, or morality in a way that ignores Christ, his Gospel and our own appreciation of the Good News. Then it falls to us to be the witness and to have the courage to be able to say, “You know, I see things a bit differently than that.”

While we see things very differently than many of the people with whom we associate, our task is not to accept what is said and done as if we have nothing to bring to the discussion. It is not just that we go out, we encounter, but we actually engage.

The call of Pope Francis is to a New Evangelization in action, beginning with baptism. He offers a renewed experience of living the Gospel. He invites us, as he did in the Jubilee of Mercy, to experience personally God’s tender affection and saving love, and also to “regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others” (*Laudato Si’* 229).

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Amidst the human condition and all the modern struggles people may face, Pope Francis's engaging invitation to experience the closeness of the church, and for us disciples, baptized in the Spirit, to be caring and compassionate, strikes me as precisely the hope and grace we need today.

Cardinal Donald Wuerl is the archbishop of Washington, DC. He is a member of the Vatican's Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith, for Bishops, and for Clergy.