

# LIST OF PRESENTERS

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

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### **Massimo Faggioli**

Villanova University

#### ***Laudato Si' in a Time of Global Disruption: Francis and Politics***

The lecture will address Pope Francis' interpretation of the situation of global disruption in his magisterium. A special focus of the remarks will be *Laudato Si'*'s focus on the relationship between the Church and politics in the context of the rapidly changing patterns of influence on both the Church and politics of the sciences, economics and information systems.

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### **Emilce Cuda**

Secretary, Pontifical Commission for Latin America/Loyola University, Chicago

#### ***The Reform of the Church is Not a Change but a Commitment***

As this conference is part of the 10th anniversary commemoration of Pope Francis' pontificate, I propose to address the reform of the Church from the arguments of two documents from his Pontifical Magisterium: the 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* and the 2022 Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*. Just as Francis presents "guidelines which can encourage and guide the whole Church in a new phase of evangelization, one marked by enthusiasm and vitality" (*EG* 17 et seq.), he also indicates that "An evangelizing community thus gets involved by word and deed in people's daily lives, it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others" (*PE*, Preamble 1), while it also embraces "an interior reform whereby we appropriate 'the paradigm of the spirituality of the Council' as expressed in 'the ancient story of the good Samaritan'" (*PE*, Preamble 11; Cf. *Fratelli Tutti* Chapter 2).

Along with the above aspects in this process of 'reform in continuity and continuity in reform', synodality stands out as a commitment to community participation and conversion. To convey a thorough understanding of this reform in a missionary, service and synodal key, rather than provide a How-To list of tips, I shall appeal to an aesthetic theological perspective: the notion of "ablatio", understood as bringing to light, setting free (as the sculptor "frees" the work of art that is inside the block of marble).. With the "ablatio", whose author is God himself, the *nobilis forma* comes to light, that is, the precious figure, the authentic face of the Church, Spouse of Jesus Christ.

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**Catherine Clifford**

Saint Paul University

***Leaning Into the Distant Goal of Vatican II: Pope Francis and Christian Unity***

Catholics would not be embarking on the path towards a more synodal church today were it not for sixty years of sustained ecumenical dialogue with other Christians who have helped us to rediscover how such practices are “constitutive” of the church. Learning to embrace the synodal way in the life and practice of the Catholic Church will have profound consequences for the realization of Vatican II's distant goal of Christian unity and for the future shape of Christianity. Francis models a practice of leaning into reconciliation, walking together with fellow Christians in common witness as we grow together in unity.

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**Michael W. Higgins**

University of St. Michael's College

**John XXIII Redux: Francis as the Pope of Continuity and Disruption**

Private Reception Address

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**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

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**Paul L. Allen**

St. Mark's College

**The Two 'Green Popes': Integral Ecology and Christian Metaphysics**

This paper examines key principles and assumptions that guide the theological priorities of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. At the core of this encyclical's promise is the vision of economic and social life that is a response to the gift of God's creation. Human or 'Integral ecology' is a theme already developed by Pope Benedict XVI in dialogue between Christian metaphysics and contemporary science. This synthesis of faith and reason supplies a complementary perspective to the spiritual, economic, political and cultural tenets of *Laudato Si'*. This paper selects for analysis key elements of Pope Benedict's corpus, including his emphasis on natural law, his Logos Christology and eschatological reflections on the death of the body as coherent with Francis' integral ecology. Various points of *Laudato Si'* will be developed in the light of Benedict's theological program. I argue that in order for the encyclical's common good critique of technological visions of progress and economic growth to successfully address ecological collapse, the anthropological and philosophical scope of Benedict's contributions (or those like it) are necessary Christian foundations. By seeing these distinctive papal perspectives on ecology and creation, Christians propose the gospel of all life in a fully ethical and theological light.

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**Carolyn Chau**

King's University College at Western University

**Pope Francis and Ecclesial Renewal: A Conversion Program for an Authentic Church**

Pope Francis is without doubt a pope of reform and renewal. Yet the freshness of his pontificate comes from his approach to the task of ecclesial reform. Sidestepping the polemics that have ensued in the years since the convocation and close of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Francis is focused on the call of the Council, and, moreover, the call of Christ for a vibrant Church that transforms the world. His sympathy for the Council can be seen in his use of the language of the council, exhorting the Church to "read the signs of the times" (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*) as well as in how he follows the Council's tone and intent, which were deeply pastoral. In addition to showing how Francis' pontificate is consonant with the spirit of the Council, this paper will demonstrate the way in which his dual foci of mission and

synodality are of a piece. While some may find these priorities potentially contradictory– are we to be outwardly focused in mission or inwardly focused on self-transformation?– both are in fact consistent with Francis’ original program of renewing the zeal of the Church for joy in sharing the gospel. This paper will explore the coinherence of and necessity of synodality for mission and mission for synodality, as well as how these emphases fit within the larger goal of his pontificate, namely, the formation of an authentic Church, which he signaled from the outset.

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## **Monica Marcelli-Chu**

Regis College

### **Prayer, Priesthood of the Faithful, and the Moral Life in Pope Francis**

Pope Francis sketches “a portrait of the Master” following the Beatitudes, which depict the life of holiness (§63). This invites contemplation and creative imitation–rest in the encounter with Christ, and outward expression of gratitude through worship of God and service to others. In this way, Francis presents prayer as central to the moral life: prayer sustains and nourishes human flourishing. Further, he describes intercessory prayer as having “particular value, for it is an act of trust in God and, at the same time, an expression of love for our neighbour” (§154). Thus, intercessory prayer signifies the solidarity expressed in worship that Yves Congar presents as central to the priesthood of the faithful. Taking Catherine of Siena’s four petitions (for self, Church, world, and a particular case) in *The Dialogue* as a framework, I develop an understanding of the priesthood of the faithful in Francis’ writings, especially *Gaudete et Exsultate* and *Fratelli Tutti*, centered on the “mediating” nature of intercessory prayer. First, drawing on Congar, I consider resources in Francis for retrieving the *sensus fidei* of the priesthood of the faithful, focusing on solidarity and prayer. Turning to Catherine of Siena, second, I present the movement between the four petitions as beginning and ending in the concrete particular of self and neighbour, mediated by movement out of the self. Third, I apply this petitionary framework to ground the understanding of the priesthood of the faithful in Francis as solidarity in prayer and the moral life.

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## **Zane Chu**

St. Mark’s College

### **Pope Francis and Ecclesial Renewal: A Conversion Program for an Authentic Church**

In his encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis draws upon St. Thomas Aquinas to articulate the expanding movement of love that underlies his vision of social friendship. Francis writes, “Saint Thomas Aquinas sought to describe the love made possible by God’s grace as a movement outwards towards another, whereby we consider ‘the beloved as somehow united to

ourselves' [ST 2–2, 27.2c]. Our affection for others makes us freely desire to seek their good" (§93). Social friendship conceived on this basis, Francis cautions, is not an "abstract universalism" (§100), but must find "concrete embodiment" (§128). This paper performs a critical evaluation and appreciation of Pope Francis' engagement with Aquinas in three parts. First, it bolsters Francis' vision of concrete social friendship by considering how Aquinas' understanding of charity as friendship with God holds together *both* a universal orientation of love *and* a focus on the particular and concrete person before me. Second, this in turn invites attention to how Francis' vision challenges elements of Aquinas' account of charity, particularly the tendency to prioritize the needs of members of the Church. Third, this paper suggests how Aquinas helps to articulate the Trinitarian ground of Francis' vision of social friendship, bringing to light its robust theological basis. This paper concludes that *Fratelli Tutti* constitutes an authoritative frame for interpretation and development of Aquinas' account of charity by showing deep continuity with Aquinas' major theological insights while guiding an outward movement from the centre of the Church to the margins.

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## **Christopher Cimorelli**

National Institute for Newman Studies, Duquesne

### **Pope Francis and the Development of the Church's 'Theological Imaginary': The Principle of Authority**

Throughout his pontificate, Pope Francis has emphasized the need for church leaders to conceive of authority as stemming from the God who is love, and such power is realized in service to others. The Pope is challenging the predominant view of power that seems to have shaped the church despite the efforts of Jesus the Christ to warn his followers of its departure from power as manifest in God's Kingdom. This paper presentation will explore how Francis' leadership in this regard is aimed at developing, or renewing, the idea of the church (i.e., the "theological imaginary") that resides in the imaginations of most believers, thus having a significant impact on the ordering of the church and the realization of the gospel. Concretely, this paper will be structured as follows. Section 1 will define briefly concepts like the theological imaginary and how the imagination as a faculty relates to the manifestation of the gospel. Section 2 will delineate the consistent efforts of Pope Francis to help shift this imaginary—especially in the church's ministers—in view of the church's perpetual call to preach the gospel, but in the circumstances of the present, which problematize past conceptions of authority. Section 3 will critically analyze Francis's efforts using the framework of the development of doctrines and principles as outlined by John Henry Newman in his work *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. This final section will help in evaluating how Francis' efforts are, in fact, developing an underlying principle of the gospel (rather than more explicit doctrines) not in an anachronistic or idealistic sense, but in one

that emphasizes continuity amid significant change; the imaginary of the church develops in consequence.

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### **Justin Conway**

Boston College

#### **Expanding Substantialism in Catholic Thought**

My paper uses Pope Francis's *Fratelli Tutti* to develop traditional Catholic depictions of human dignity in both theory and practice. Black socio-political thought and social movement organizing are brought into conversation with theologies and philosophies that reflect on what gives life integrity. I posit that the substantialist (ontological) interpretation of human dignity logically extends from individuals to racial and cultural subgroups by naming God as the substance underlying racial and cultural expressions of life. Further, I suggest that religious leaders in the United States ought to emphasize this expanded and group-inclusive form of substantialism alongside the existing relational (Trinitarian) and functional (creative) interpretations of human dignity. Such an approach recognizes oppressed subgroups as collectively thematizing God's substance and defines human dignity beyond individual personhood.

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### **Lucila Crena**

Wesley School of Theology

#### **Encountering Teología del Pueblo: A Historical Perspective on Encounter-centered Renewal**

This paper contextualizes *teología del pueblo* (TdP) in its praxial and historical origins in 1960s-1970s Argentina to enable a deeper appreciation of Pope Francis' call for a culture of encuentro, and invite the Church to learn from the Argentine Church's vertiginous path to renewal in the 1960s-70s. The paper engages with primary and secondary sources that are not yet well-known in the Anglophone academy (including José Pablo Martín's *El Movimiento de Sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo*, Sebastián Politi's *Teología del Pueblo*, Jorge Vernazza's *Para Comprender una Vida con los Pobres*, and anthologies by Fr. Domingo Bresci), as well as with interviews conducted by the author in Buenos Aires in 2019 with leading voices in the Argentine Church (including the late Father Scannone, Bishop Gustavo Carrara, Father Domingo Bresci).

The paper traces the rise of *teología del pueblo* to a series of Encuentros catalyzed by the Second Vatican Council. It also describes what appeared to be (in the eyes of the first and second generation) the death of the movement after its ideological polarization and the end of the Encuentros. Finally, it argues that the seed of *TdP* remained dormant but powerfully at work in the daily *encuentros* of the curas vileros with their people—a seed which flowered in the work of Bishop Bergoglio and, then, Pope Francis. This paper complements theological and philosophical accounts of *TdP*, inviting an *encuentro*, not just with the fruit of *TdP*, but also with the pilgrim Church that birthed it.

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**Christopher E. De Bono**

Unity Health Toronto

**Why Pope Francis' Metaphor for the Church as a "Field Hospital" Advances Renewal in Catholic Healthcare and Social Services.**

By specifically speaking about healing wounds “after a battle” in his field hospital metaphor, Francis redirected the Church away from the kinds of minutiae that often end up separating people from the Church, and even the Church from the world it lives in. Instead, the image calls the faithful to what really matters, a Church engaging in critical healing in a suffering world. This paper suggests that Pope Francis' Church metaphor of the field hospital also applies to the broader health and social services ministries that have been one of the tangible signs of the Church in the world for over 2 millennia. It argues that Catholic healthcare and social services can learn three things from critically reflecting on its own identity as a literal “field” hospital in Canada's increasingly integrated as well as secular health and social services systems.

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**Darren Dias**

University of St. Michael's College

**Pope Francis and Indigenous Peoples: Beyond the Papal Visit**

From July 24 to 30, 2022 Pope Francis made a “penitential pilgrimage” to Canada in order to honor the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 58. During the visit the Pope committed the Catholic Church in Canada to the path of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. This paper analyzes the papal visit, particular Pope Francis' discourses, drawing out key themes and questions that emerged during the visit.

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**Emmanuel Diaz**

Aquinas Institute of Theology

**An Interpretation of Social Justice through *Laudato Si's* Foundation in Theology of the People**

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Francis addresses the issues of ecological destruction of the earth and acknowledges that the ruin of the environment has a direct impact on human life that can weaken society's view of human dignity. The role of social justice is a significant component of Francis's work, and it is clear that the "theology of the people" inspires his understanding of justice. In analyzing Francis' approach to social justice in the twenty-first century, it seems evident that the best way to approach the issue is to reorient society's understanding of human dignity in order for the society to prioritize the concerns of human beings, which will then translate into a world that cares for creation rather than exploits its gifts.

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**Matt Eaton**

King's College

**Ecological Ethics Beyond Sustainability: Can Pope Francis' Food Ethic Move from Sustainability to Compassion?**

In his recent address to the EU Youth Conference, Pope Francis empowers young people to take initiatives aimed at reversing humanity's destruction of the world. He encourages youth to envision a future of reduced consumption, "a life of dignity and sobriety, without luxury and waste," to ensure the dignity of all. While this may be achieved in several ways, including reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, Francis specifically suggests that we reduce our consumption of animals to help "save the world." "In certain areas," Francis says, "it would be appropriate to consume less meat: this too can help save the environment." There is no question that reducing meat consumption is necessary for a sustainable ecological future—intensive animal agriculture is a major contributor to anthropogenic greenhouse-gasses. Is this, however, the entirety of Francis' animal ethic? Is his perspective on animal dignity bound exclusively to ecological utility? Or can Francis point us beyond sustainability toward compassion—an excess of sympathy that overflows into loving creatures for their own sake? In this paper, I explore the possibility of moving from sustainability to compassion through an examination of *Laudato Si'*. I argue that Pope Francis' animal ethic desires to exceed sustainability and embrace compassion, though the desire is not adequately developed and is at times problematic in its current expression. I compliment *Laudato Si'* with



the ethics of Emmanuel Levinas, whose emphasis on vulnerability as the origin of ethics and ending suffering as morality's goal can help develop the trajectory of Francis' thought.

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**Sr. Cynthia Emeka**

Catholic University of Eastern Africa

**Pastoral Accompaniment: A Way of Walking Together Toward Ecclesial Synodality**

Concern for pastoral accompaniment as a way of walking together toward ecclesial Synodality has commanded the attention of the Church, both at the local and global levels. Apparently, a situation of an unusual lifestyle seems to have crept into the family, bringing with it new pastoral concerns. Individualism, negative ethnicity, racism, and other forms of social stratification, are redefining the concept of accompaniment as it relates to the mission of the Church. The interaction between and among people, especially family, has radically changed and has a negative impact not just on human relationships and social life in general, but also on denying them a genuine commitment to building community. The author builds her argumentation on the affirmation of Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* that besides illustrating the orientation towards responding to the challenges of the families, reiterated the art of accompaniment in the spirit of solidarity and Synodality.

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**Joseph Evans**

Villanova University

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**Sr. Ngoc Nguyen**

Marquette University

**Interreligious Considerations for the Role of Women in the Church in Vietnam and Nepal**

Catholics are a small minority in Vietnam and Nepal, with only seven percent and less than one percent of the population, respectively. Women in both countries struggle with cultural discrimination and oppression from patriarchal norms that infect both the church and society. Pope Francis, in *Evangelii Gaudium*, "demands that the legitimate rights of women be respected" as men and women are of equal dignity (EG, 104). There are similarities and differences in the challenges for fulfilling this demand in

Vietnam and Nepal. While Vietnamese culture is dominated by a Confucian tradition, Nepal has a Hindu majority, yet both countries have a significant Buddhist population. The church has existed for centuries in Vietnam, but only a few decades in Nepal. For both, the role of women in the church seems to be invisible. This paper attempts to raise the voice of women in these small Asian countries so that their rightful position in the church and society can be achieved. Recognizing that steps taken by the Catholic church must be considered in an interreligious context where Catholicism is a minority, this paper will compare the efforts of the Church to fulfill Francis's direction of equal treatment for women. Considering the status and role of women in society and the church in Vietnam and Nepal, this essay considers societal implications of interreligious dialogue, empowerment of the laity in the Church, and how the Virgin Mary can be an inspiration and model for fulfilling *Evangelii Gaudium's* dictate for equal rights of women.

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**Deogratias K. Fikiri SJ**

Marquette University

**Theology of Pope Francis: Four Theological Concepts for Future Generations**

The paper is an attempt to summarize the theological perspective of Pope Francis on four concepts emerging from his writings and speeches and how those concepts are related to the burning crisis of the current and future generations. The four concepts come from his encyclicals but also cover the main areas of theology as an academic subject. The first, Faith, emerges from his encyclicals *Lumen Fidei: The Light of Faith* and *Evangelii Gaudium*. The encyclicals are about faith, thus a call for more profound faith in the modern world by a true evangelization (*Evangelii Gaudium*). In a world of superficiality, technological boom, and relativism, Pope Francis' call is to deepen our faith and find new ways to express it. The second concept comes from his call for a synodal church, synodality, which goes back to the church's history. It deepens the ecclesiology and life of the early church, as understood by the disciples, and reshapes the call of the Vatican II. This concept addresses clericalism and ordination of women. From a pastoral perspective, the third concept argues for "the preferential option for the poor and peripheries." It is covered in his encyclicals *The Joy of the Gospel* and *The Joy of Love*. These concepts tackle the "theology of people" and a church for the poor. The fourth concept is "mercy and care," as it is expressed in his encyclical letters *Laudato Si'*, *Querida Amazonia*, and *Misericordia et Misera (Mercy and Peace)*. Mercy and care have a moral and ethical connotation. These concepts address the abuses of minors and vulnerable people in the church as well as the ecological crisis.

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**Jean-Pierre Fortin**

University of St. Michael's College

## **Indigenous Witness, Christian Confession: Decolonization as Integral Component of Pope Francis' Theology of Mercy**

*Laudato Si's* integral ecology requires that humans undergo spiritual conversion enabling them to suffer with creation and receive healing as they take care of their human and non-human others. Embracing their radical dependence, they find in the poor, deprived and wounded other the incarnation of God to whom they are called to bring assistance. Ecology is a form of spirituality finding expression in mercy received as a gift from God, for the healing of creation. In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis further argues that transformative encounter with Christ occurs in human communion respectful of difference (cultural, religious or other). The Pope understands dialogue as mutually formative encounter, where all participants stand equal in their need to learn from one another, making themselves vulnerable and open to receiving fundamental insights about being human and faithful to God. The proposed presentation will argue that Pope Francis' recent apology and pilgrimage of penance to Canada in response to the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in the operation of the residential school system for Indigenous children extend his theology of mercy by conceiving the church and Christians not only as providers of mercy to others (*Laudato Si'*) or equal partners in dialogical formation (*Fratelli Tutti*), but also as recipients of mercy from those they have victimized. The Church and Christians can give a powerful witness to the infinite mercy of God by confessing their failure to be faithful to the Gospel and learning from their Indigenous victims how to decolonize Christian teaching and ministry.

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### **Hansol Goo**

University of Notre Dame

## **Sacramental Dimensions in Pope Francis' Vision for Migration**

Since the trip to Lampedusa, Italy that marked the beginning of his papacy in 2013, migration has been an issue close to the heart of Pope Francis. Indeed, as Austen Ivereigh remarked in a recent article, "what St. John Paul II did for the unborn and the ethic of life, Francis has done for migrants and the ethic of fraternity." Francis' concerns for migrants and refugees are rooted in the Gospel message of mercy, which is upheld by the Catholic social teachings on respect for human dignity and solidarity with the marginalized.

An overlooked aspect of Francis' concerns for migrants, however, is the pope's spiritual and intellectual formation as a Jesuit. In particular, as I argue, understanding Francis' discourse on migration from the perspective of Ignatian spirituality reveals that migration is not a mere social, ethical issue for Francis; the pope's vision for migration is grounded in rediscovery of a sacramental encounter with the created world.

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**David Henderson**

Catholic Pacific College

**Divine Accompaniment and the Journey of Faith: Pastoral Reflections of Francis, John Paul II, and the Second Vatican Council**

The world needs a Church “capable of walking at people’s side . . . a Church which accompanies them on their journey.” With these words, Pope Francis hopes to inspire a model of pastoral “accompaniment” based on the recognition of the innate dignity of human persons; the truth that, as finite creatures, we only encounter Christ “in via,” in a state of temporal “journeying.” This anthropological insight is both provocative and prescient with respect to responding to present challenges faced by the Church, but it is not altogether new. John Paul II, building upon themes developed at the Second Vatican Council, spoke frequently of our not being “saved by a formula, but by a Person,” one perfectly united to our limited, temporal mode of living. Even so, Pope Francis’ exhortation towards pastoral accompaniment has drawn concern from those who fear that such language only gives license to a new moral permissiveness and obscures the pastoral import of objective moral norms. This paper will examine the lines of continuity and discontinuity between Francis’ exhortation to pastoral accompaniment and the theological heritage of the Second Vatican Council and pontificate of John Paul II. Drawing upon the Christological principle that “only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light,” as well as John Paul II’s trinitarian encyclicals (RH, DM, DV), this paper will argue for the necessity of attending to the “kenotic” form of divine love for discerning how it is we, as Christians, genuinely accompany human persons in via.

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**Jay Irwin**

University of Nottingham

**Thinking on Our Feet: Bud Osborn, Pope Francis and the Personalism at the Roots of Harm Reduction**

Harm reduction (HR) has become the predominant model of approach to the global opioid crisis, but a policy Pope Francis has publicly impugned. I would like to challenge the Pope’s opposition to HR, but in doing so challenge, too, a particular germ in the HR model that I see at the source of his criticism: a permissive liberality that emphasizes a freedom of detached indifference over against true freedom cultivated in relationship. As a grassroots movement, HR emerged in the spirit of neighbour-helping-neighbour, and thus with an emphasis on relationality, or (to invoke Jacques Maritain) the primacy of the spiritual. However, this core aspect to the movement (never made explicit because largely taken for granted) has been

under threat as HR becomes increasingly institutionalized. In this paper, I argue that the Pope himself offers us methods in which to reframe and re-adjust HR, employing a dialectical personalism that may help in reestablishing this primacy of the spiritual. Using themes from Teología del Pueblo and Guardinian dialectics, I propose a Catholic personalist approach to HR to set it back upon its original telos: as a caregiver-to-user, or user-to-peer, relationship in which the horizon of engagement is never recovery as such, but the spiritual healing that unfolds in the caring relationship itself.

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### **Andrew TJ Kaethler**

Catholic Pacific College

#### **Ressourcement as Aggiornamento: Luigi Giussani on Tradition and the Risk of Education**

The Church that goes forth “is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility,” writes Pope Francis. She goes forth in mission and engages with the present. The Church is not in retreat: “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” She is not to entrench within the walls of the past—traditionalism. At the same time, the Church does not exist within the world’s future which is yet to be, nor is she to be a mirror to the *Zeitgeist*. Often seen as two opposing poles, *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* have become theological buzzwords that polarize. However, following the logic of Luigi Giussani and engaging with Pope Francis, this paper will argue that *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* are inseparable and must remain inseparable. Tradition is necessary to encounter reality, to touch upon the present, and to critique.

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### **Doris M. Kieser**

St. Joseph’s College, University of Alberta

#### **Pope Francis, Mary, and Women in the Church**

Like his papal predecessors, Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, Pope Francis has a particular relationship with Mary, the Mother of God. His well-known affinity for Mary, Untier of Knots, is one of the many images Francis invokes of Mary in prayer or pastoral advice. Also like previous Popes, Francis’ construction of and devotion to Mary provide insight into his understanding of women in the Church and beyond. In this paper, I attend to occasions of Pope Francis’ invocations of Mary and how they might contribute to his understanding of women. For instance, Francis’ commitment to Pope John Paul II’s outright dismissal of the ordination of women in the Church (Papal Plane, September 29, 2015) and his positioning of Mary as silent, listening, and motherly (Series of Prayers to Mary, May-June 2013), intimates a vision of women in the Church as equally retiring. Yet alongside Pope Francis’ modest Marian aspirations for women are his frequent appointments of women to Vatican offices, which might draw upon his more active and embodied perception of Mary, such as the Untier of

Knots. In a recent message to young people in advance of World Youth Day 2023 (August 15, 2022), for example, Francis remembers Mary rising and going with haste into the world following the Annunciation: a woman of action, she is a “model for young people on the move.” In the juxtaposition of Francis’ various Marys, I explore the evolution of perceptions of Mary and of women in the Catholic imagination.

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### **Keith E. Lemna**

Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology

#### **Pope Francis’ Polarity and Teilhard’s Analogy of Duration**

I propose to present on the creational rooting of the concept of “integral ecology” by linking Pope Francis’ dialectical understanding of humanity in relation to nature in *Laudato Si’* with Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s concept of the “analogy of duration” in the *genèse* of creation. I shall, first, attend to the manner in which the Pope, in *Laudato Si’*, opens a path for thinking in a new way the interrelatedness by polarity of all things, particularly with respect to the connection between Christ, humanity, and cosmos. He promotes polarity beyond polarization in order to promote a new synthesis outstripping the “false *dialecticas* of recent centuries” (LS, 121) that radically sundered humanity and nature. The cast of his thought is dynamic and evolutionary, and I shall, second, link the Pope’s dialectic with the analogy of duration in Teilhard. There is, of course, warrant for doing so in the text of *Laudato Si’*, in that Teilhard is noted approvingly in relevant manner. Pope Francis promotes a version of dialectical thought that can be explicated by stressing the analogy of *genèse* with respect to the interlinked historicities of *cosmogogenesis*, *anthropogenesis*, and *Christogenesis*. The Pope’s teaching on polarity is congruent with the notion of a universe that is coming into dynamic fullness in the Risen Christ precisely in the manner of Teilhard’s vision. “Integral ecology” can be rooted in the polar connectedness of all things in terms of their common genesis and final aim in Christ.

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### **Ramon Luzarraga**

Saint Martin’s University

#### **Pope Francis and the Death Penalty, an Encuentro Between Latin American Catholic Moral Realism and a U.S. Catholic Illusion**

Several U.S. Catholics have protested Pope Francis’ ban on the death penalty as an option for Roman Catholics to use in the exercise of meting justice to prisoners convicted of capital crimes. They argued that Pope Francis changed a fundamental moral teaching of the Church. This paper argues that Pope Francis’ argument is grounded in the history of the use of the death penalty in Latin America, which was used as an instrument of state terror and civil control. He lived through the Dirty War, where the Argentine state engaged in the judicial murder of its citizens. This historical frame of reference is unknown to most Americans. I proceed to argue that Pope Francis exercised what John Henry Newman would have argued was a

development of doctrine, whereby a change in Church teaching must demonstrate fidelity to the foundational principle from which it developed. Catholics have consistently held that justice be meted out by a legitimate authority to criminals for endangering the common good and innocent life. What changed is something which has been developing since the pontificate of John Paul II. The Catholic Church once held that there existed circumstances where the death penalty may be given justly and ethically, provided certain principles of justice were consistently met. The Church has learned through its experience in Latin America, the United States, and elsewhere that the death penalty can never be administered consistently to satisfy the principle of justice to defend the common good.

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### **Martin Madar**

Xavier University

#### **How Pope Francis Has Rehabilitated the “Spirit of Vatican II”**

Pope Francis has inaugurated a new stage in the reception of Vatican II. This paper will argue that he has revived the “spirit of Vatican II,” brought it back to the center of current discourses about the council and rehabilitated it. The paper will define the “spirit of the council” as an intellectual and spiritual impulse toward renewal that animated the work of the council and that emanates from it.

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### **James Magee**

Vancouver School of Theology

#### **Good Samaritans: Moving-Picture Clerics and the Inclusive Vision of Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti***

In his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (“all brothers”), Pope Francis offered his message not only to the Catholic faithful but to “all people of good will”. Taking up this “invitation to dialogue” as an agnostic committed to the peaceful coexistence of religious and non-religious people, I utilize a cultural studies lens to examine representations of Catholic clerics in the movies. While sinister images of child abuse and conspiracy theories may dominate in our contemporary context, the depictions themselves are more varied and I here focus on the more positive ones. Using Francis’ excursus on the Good Samaritan as a backdrop, I explore the narrative of the compassionate cleric who tends to the physical and psychological wounds of society’s outcasts in moving pictures from Hollywood’s Golden Era through Neorealism to contemporary world cinema. This image of the believer at work “rebuild[ing] our wounded world” is central to the current Pope’s understanding of Christian mission. In this paper I argue that cinema provides evidence for a

long-standing tradition of indiscriminate charitable work by members of the clergy with off-screen analogs, such that Francis' inclusive vision of fraternal love among all peoples is less a radical reform and more a timely renewal of an ideal Christian *praxis* in response to a growing climate of intolerance and alienation within our global community.

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## **John Martens**

St. Mark's College

### **Pope Francis, the Bible, and Mercy**

In the days following Pope Francis' interview with Antonio Spadaro, SJ, shortly after his election, I wrote that "in identifying with the sinners Pope Francis classifies his primary identity as a person who has been saved by God's mercy not as a religious expert. He also identifies the primary mission of the Church as reaching out to those who 'are sick,' to offer healing to all those in need, modern day 'tax collectors and sinners' who might not previously have found a place at the table. This is the act of extending mercy to all." After ten years in office, and with significant papal documents promulgated since that interview (*Fratelli Tutti*, *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si'*, *Amoris Laetitia*), we are able to see more fully his vision of mercy and how it relates to Jesus' vision of mercy in the Bible. Why has his vision of mercy been received with openness by some and rejection by others?

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## **Germain McKenzie**

St. Mark's College

### **Pope Francis and the Inculturation of the Church: Novelty, Continuities and Challenges**

Pope Francis' view on the inculturation of faith draws strongly from the *Puebla Document* and from John Paul II's teachings on the matter. It, however, develops some new topics and takes other ones further, such as those of social, spiritual, and ministry inculturation. This paper explores the above-mentioned aspects and proposes that it challenges both "extrinsic" and "progressive" takes on this issue into a synthesis that is still in the making, as it can be seen in apostolic exhortation *Querida Amazonia* and encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. I trace the roots of Francis' ideas on the faith-culture relationship to the work of Alberto Methol Ferré, a Uruguayan Catholic thinker. Some pending issues are also pointed out, such as the tension between cultures and universalism, and the limitations of turning universal perspectives that apply more closely to Latin American history, society, and culture.

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## **Nick Meisl**

St. Mark's College

### **Pharisees and Jonah Syndrome: Pope Francis, Biblical Interpretation, and Jewish-Catholic Dialogue**

From his encyclicals to his homilies preached at Casa Santa Marta, the magisterium of Pope Francis has been deeply informed by his Biblical interpretation. During his pontificate, aspects of his exegesis have been strongly challenged by Jewish leaders. Examining specific examples, including Francis' treatment of Jonah and the Pharisees, this paper explores how his biblical interpretation has both caused tensions for as well as strengthened Jewish-Catholic dialogue. This paper closes by offering suggestions for ways in which scholarly findings, particularly work arising from the recent conference "Jesus and the Pharisees" hosted by the Pontifical Biblical Institute in 2019, can be applied in Catholic preaching and teaching such that Jewish-Catholic relations can be enriched rather than harmed.

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## **Steven P. Millies**

Catholic Theological Union

### **"Full Citizenship": The Synodal Political Vision of Pope Francis**

The 2019 "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together," signed by Pope Francis and The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyab in a sense recalled the influence of Catholic social thought on the creation of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The church was finding a way after standoffish centuries to enter a conversation with the world and other faiths about "the community in which alone the free and full development [of the person] is possible." Asserting that "The concept of citizenship is based on the equality of rights and duties, under which all enjoy justice" so that, "It is therefore crucial to establish in our societies the concept of full citizenship," the Document which was re-affirmed in 2022 was a significant advance in that long conversation with the changed modern, social world around the church especially for engaging non-Christians.

This paper will bring the political vision articulated throughout the Francis papacy into dialogue with the church's advancing acceptance of the politics of the modern world and Francis's desire to challenge the politics of the modern world as we see find it articulated in Fratelli Tutti, a comprehensive social vision that has an analog in Francis's synodal ecclesiology. In all, one meaning of the Franciscan agenda is that the integral development of the full human person demands "full citizenship" for the same human person in the

political community as much as in the church. The human person in every case needs “a better kind of politics.”

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**Marissa Nichols**

Catholic Distance University

**Reparations: Its Theological Basis, Rooted in the Catholic Tradition, Exemplified by Pope Francis**

Through a symbolic reading of reparation, a term used to designate a devotional method that arose in the 16th and 17th centuries, we arrive at the full implications of Pope Francis’ advocacy for material reparations, now as a principle of action, which has surfaced at various points in his pontificate. Recovering the Church’s original understanding of spiritual reparation provides a framework for how the Church might approach the issue of material reparations: as a soteriological requirement, providing both the material means of global reconciliation, in all justice, for the sins of the past, as well as for the personal, salvific edification of the faithful.

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**Paul Niskanen**

University of St. Thomas

**Human Ecology: Pope Francis’ Contributions to the Theology of Christian Marriage**

One of the remarkable, but sometimes overlooked, contributions of *Laudato Si’* is the promotion of a truly human ecology within the broad and integral ecological framework of Pope Francis’ encyclical. Francis highlights and returns to this key concept in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*. As Francis points out, the family today is facing a number of new challenges, some of which are ideological in nature. The pope’s response to these challenges is not found in “simply decrying present day evils” (35) or “denouncing a decadent world” (38). Rather, Francis reminds us that “we are called to protect our humanity...accepting it and respecting it as it was created” (56). This paper examines this human ecology put forward by Pope Francis, particularly as it relates to the theology of Christian marriage in *Amoris Laetitia*.

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**Mark Neuhengen**

Catholic Theological Union/ St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Parish, Chicago

**This Synodal Way in Germany Needs to be Stopped: Understanding American Opposition to Pope Francis Through Criticisms of the German Synodal Path**

The Synodal Way in Germany has been a lightning rod for criticism from all sides of the Catholic Church. Some feel that the Synodal Way will threaten core Catholic teaching and lead to schism with the wider Church. Others, like Pope Francis, have criticized the process as “elitist” which does not include all the people of God. This paper will analyze in greater detail these criticisms of the Synodal way to discover what is “at stake” for opponents of the synodal way and what the church can learn from the process in order to become more synodal.

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**Colman Okechukwu Nwokoro**

Marquette University

**Migrants and Refugees: A Great Resource for Social and Economic Growth in light of Pope Francis’ Teaching.**

To believe that everyone created by God bears a spark of Divinity should be a criterion to believe that no one is deficient of Divine gifts to engender human flourishing, social transformation, and economic development and growth. This is the position of Pope Francis when he drew attention of the host communities and countries of migrants and refugees to their enormous potentials to help the society in his message of the 108th World Migrant and Refugee Day (Vatican, May 12, 2022). In light of this, Pope Francis believes that the situation and the condition that led people to be migrants and refugees did not deplete their God given talents, gifts, and potentials. To this end, he advises the host communities and countries to see them as a resource for building the economy and the future of their society. This is what this paper sets to advance, as I understand equally that anyone irrespective of his or her background, conditions, and status can drive, human flourishing, social transformation, and economic growth and development. Thus, migrants and refugees should be respected by their host communities, hence be given an opportunity to develop their potentials.

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**Joachim Ostermann, OFM**

Franciscans of Canada

## **Faith and Science to bring Anthropology into Ecology**

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis noted that “there can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology” (LS 118). In a scientific-technological culture, this asks us to connect two very different ways of thinking. Problem solving in environmental matters is a scientific-technological task. Anthropology, however, closely relates to the question of the good and properly lived human life, which cannot be ignored when evaluating the magnitude of a problem and the desirability of a particular solution. Therefore, by this encyclical, they are brought together as duties for Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. How to understand nature, human nature, and natural creatures in such a way that ethics and science can be spoken of together? I will show the meaning of fraternity as a bridge between human relationships and the human place in nature. This is then placed into the context of the person-centered ontology in the phenomenological tradition in the work of Edith Stein.

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### **Chanelle Robinson**

Boston College

#### **“Intergenerational Solidarity is Not Optional”: Ecowomanism After *Laudato Si'***

In his groundbreaking encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis opens up theological possibilities for analyzing humanity’s relationship with the planet. In particular, Francis names “intergenerational solidarity” as fundamental to his vision of an integral ecology (paragraph 159). But one must wonder: whose lives are envisioned in this ecological future? Or, asked differently, what kind of intergenerational future for Black communities might emerge from contemporary Catholic eco-theology?

The same hierarchies of power that enable white supremacy simultaneously denigrate the environment. Catholic theologians must account for how communities of colour are disproportionately impacted by the environmental crisis. This paper develops an Ecowomanist response to Pope Francis’s vision of an integral ecology. An interdisciplinary approach, Ecowomanism takes seriously how the climate crisis interrupts Black women’s lived experiences and seeks to recover Africana, Indigenous ways of healing.

I begin by unpacking how Pope Francis crafts a theological approach that accounts for the interconnectedness of all creation. Secondly, I examine how Black and Womanist theologians have analyzed the ecological crisis. In particular, I will focus on how Ecowomanist methods, as articulated by theological ethicist Melanie Harris, might expand the scope of an integral ecology. Recognizing that the resources for thinking ecologically and

interreligiously are embedded within an Africana sensibility, this paper argues that an engagement with Africana religions offers liberative and intergenerational cosmologies that extend the vision of *Laudato Si'*.

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**Andrew Buechel-Rieger**

Mount Saint Joseph University

**Out at Mass: Pope Francis, Liturgical Formation, and LGBTQ People**

Pope Francis has moved to reaffirm the centrality of the Second Vatican Council's reform of the Roman liturgy in its entirety and integrity. This is especially evident in this June's exhortation *Desiderio desideravi*. Among other elements, Francis wants to reclaim the concept of mystery as integral to the very nature of all liturgy, and not only to be found in some expressions of it (as many traditionalists claim). Particularly, Francis wants to highlight the role that liturgy plays in forming its participants in the mystery of Christ.

As part of Francis' emphasis on encounter, this renewed focus on liturgical formation creates a site to explore identity. Liturgically, we are being formed together into the very Body of Christ. This "liturgical subjectivity" unites us deeper than any other identities may divide.

I will discuss how this renewed attention on liturgical formation allows us different terms on which to think through one of the more pressing concerns of modern, western Catholicism: the treatment of LGBTQ people. For many, LGBTQ is an identity that cannot cohere with Catholicism. For most of Catholic history, this group has been treated primarily through the lens of moral theology—are they engaged or "ordered" to immoral actions? What if, instead, we think about them as liturgically-incorporated aspects of the mystery of Christ? Applying insights from Rita Ferrone and Elizabeth Stuart, I suggest that Francis' renewed focus on liturgical formation invites us to address and understand LGBTQ people within the church anew.

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**Samuel D. Rocha**

University of British Columbia

**Realities, Ideas, and Magical Realism**

One of the most famous remarks of the pontificate of Pope Francis comes from section 231-233 of *Evangelii Gaudium* where he asserts that "[r]ealities are more

important than ideas.” In *Laudato Si’* and *Fratelli Tutti*, Francis has forcefully called attention to realities like climate change and the global rise of authoritarianism. In his recent visit to Canada, he addressed the realities of colonialism and the Residential Schools. In this talk, I will work from the basic but subtle difference between “realities” and “reality” and the axiological criterion of importance that orders the relative value of ideas (in relation to realities) but does not banish them. This should provide a sense of the meaning of realities and ideas in Francis’ pontifical imagination. I will then compare Francis’ sense of realities and ideas to Gabriel Garcia Marquez’ Nobel Prize acceptance speech of 1982, “The solitude of Latin America,” a defining text for the idea of magical realism. Marquez’ remarks align remarkably well with Francis’ sense of realities and ideas, and also supply clues into his Latin American imagination which lead from his prioritization of realities over ideas to his more recent exhortation to dream in *Let Us Dream*. In the end, this comparative commentary between Francis and Marquez is intended to show that there is more than a philosophical commitment to a hard realism in Francis: there is vision and hope.

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## **Elliot Rossiter**

Douglas College

### **Distributive Justice, Kenosis, and Reparation to Indigenous Peoples**

The theme of reconciliation between the Catholic Church and Indigenous peoples in Canada has recently been brought into sharper relief in public discussion through both confirmation of the graves of Indigenous children at former residential schools and Pope Francis’ pastoral visit in July 2022, which included an apology for the church’s role in profound injustices perpetrated against Indigenous peoples. A key part of this discussion has been the question of reparation toward Indigenous peoples from the institutional church, especially the conditions of the IRSS agreement. This paper first presents an argument from within a historically- and racially-informed view of social contract theory for the distributive justice of a full reparation demanded by Indigenous peoples, such as through the IRSS agreement. The paper then shows how the teaching of Pope Francis in relevant encyclicals, homilies, and addresses to Indigenous peoples should move the church to engage in not just the full satisfaction of the demands of distributive justice (outlined in the first section of the paper), but toward a kenotic posture that consists in ongoing self-emptying practice that prioritizes radical giving over institutional preservation. This second section of paper is informed by the principle that the church’s relationship to temporal power should not be the promotion of a godly state that purportedly secures the common good (contra theocratic integralism); instead, the church best promotes the common good, including

reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, through the kenotic practices of ongoing self-giving, respect, and compassionate accompaniment.

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**Gerard Ryan, SJ**

Regis College

**Accompaniment as Mutual Recognition: Advancing the Pastoral Dynamism of Synodality**

Pope Francis has prioritized the term accompaniment as a way of walking with one another. Indeed, he has signposted the 'art of accompaniment' as a pastoral dynamism that prioritizes care for God's people. This pastoral identification of praxis requires interpretation and delineation by theologians and pastoral carers to make a faith-filled program of cultural and spiritual encounters more fully available to God's people. With this challenge in mind, I propose accompaniment as praxis mutual recognition. I argue that such a pastoral dynamism advances further the initial objective of the synodal process of consultation with God's people.

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**Sister Damien Marie Savino, FSE**

Aquinas College

**The Franciscan Roots of Integral Ecology: Ecological Conversion and the Culture of Encounter**

This paper addresses the Franciscan roots of integral ecology in light of contemporary challenges to ecological conversion and the culture of encounter, two concepts at the core of Pope Francis' encyclicals *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*. Integral Ecology as defined in the fourth chapter of *Laudato Si'* is the marriage of natural and human ecology; it calls for ecological solutions, developed and enacted in a spirit of encounter and interdisciplinarity, by which both natural and human ecologies are benefitted through interconnected processes of conversion. In considering how to put integral ecology into practice by fostering concrete processes of ecological conversion and encounter, this paper returns, in a spirit of *ressourcement*, to the roots of integral ecology in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Special focus is placed on St. Francis' own lived experiences of conversion and encounter, especially his fraternal relationship with the natural world, his deep sense of the sacramentality of creation, and his ability to embrace others in a spirit of dialogue and reconciliation. Understanding the roots of integral ecology in the life of St. Francis can aid in the process of *aggiornamento* so necessary for engaging as Christians with the ecological challenges that afflict contemporary culture and for developing constructive solutions.

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**Warren Schmidt, CSB**

St. Joseph's College, University of Alberta

**Pope Francis and an Appreciation of Baptismal Charisms in the Context of Post-Vatican II Ecclesiology of Ministry**

Between January 2021 and June 2022, Pope Francis issued four documents that demonstrate the present papacy's vision for ministry in the Church: *Spiritus Domini*, *Traditionis Custodes*, *Prædicare Evangelium*, and *Desiderio Desideravi*. In these texts, Francis reveals a vision of ministry based on multiplicity, diversity, and collaboration among ministries founded not in the juridical or sacramental power of orders, but on charisms of the Holy Spirit. I will present my paper in two parts. First, I will analyze key relationships between Francis' theology of ministry and the texts of Vatican II that most essentially concern ministry in the Church. I will focus primarily on *Lumen Gentium's* definitions of the laity and relationships among ordained ministries (bishops, priests, and deacons) and between the ministries of ordained and lay faithful. I will discuss the shift in terminology since Vatican II in papal documents to admit not only an apostolate but an authentic ministry of the laity, based on charisms communicated through baptism. Second, I will trace the development of Francis' theology of ministry, lay and ordained, through his four recent documents themselves, from formal permission of lay women and men to serve as liturgically-instituted lectors and acolytes (*Spiritus Domini*) to emphasis on the liturgical formation toward charism-based ministry (*Desiderio Desideravi*). Francis has further concretized a movement, begun at Vatican II and supported by ecclesiologists like Gilles Routhier and Richard Gaillardetz, which encourages liturgical recognition and collaborative practice of a plurality of ministries, founded on a correspondingly plural and interrelated array of baptismal charisms.

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**Carla M. Thomas OP**

University of St. Michael's College

**Pope Francis' Pastoral Magisterium and the World Church: Renewing Ecclesial Approaches to the Family in a Postcolonial Caribbean**

Magisterial approaches to the institution of the family remain a site of critique and conflict. In the Caribbean this is complicated by the history of colonialism.



This paper examines Pope Francis's "pastorality" to identify how he is reinterpreting the exercise of ordinary papal teaching authority so that it could be more responsive to what the faithful actually need from the church. Drawing on *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Amoris Laetitia* and *Querida Amazonia* this paper will demonstrate that pastoral accompaniment as an ecclesiological model constitutes a resource for renewal that could begin to address the longstanding tension between doctrine and life for the church in the Caribbean.

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**Katie Ward**

Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

**Education for Truth and Healing: Culturally Sustaining/Revitalizing Pedagogy in Native American Catholic Schools**

In light of the abuses and genocide committed against Indigenous peoples in boarding schools and the ongoing historical trauma experienced by Indigenous communities, the Catholic Church must commit itself to supporting Indigenous-led truth and healing efforts. Culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy (McCarty and Lee, 2014) offers one vehicle through which Native American Catholic schools today work towards truth and healing and support the revitalization of Indigenous languages, cultures, and spiritualities which boarding schools sought to destroy. This paper discusses Pope Francis and the broader Catholic social tradition's responses to injustices such as those committed through the boarding school system, particularly the implications of the papal visit to Canada for the United States context. It then examines how approaches to Indigenous education which sustain and revitalize students' languages, cultures, spiritualities, and identities promote truth and healing in Native American Catholic schools today.

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**Geoffrey Woollard**

University of British Columbia

**Taking Francis' Lead: Catholic Theology's Unique Opportunity to Facilitate Dialogue between the Natural Sciences and Ancient Wisdom Traditions?**

Pope Francis has offered both a critique of and invitation to scientific rationality in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, his post-synodal apostolic exhortation

*Querida Amazonia*, and at other moments of his pontificate. Within the scientific community, we can observe a historical shift in the relation to other ways of knowing in various fora, from funding agencies to technical conferences. Here I focus on the unique opportunity for Catholic theology to be a way for scientists to understand themselves in relation to the cosmos and its loving Creator, and the depths of their professional vocation to dialogue with God and contribute to the common good. I provide examples of theological engagement of science, that is sufficiently rigorous and nuanced for science, propose a life-giving direction for the use of scientific creativity and the question of technology, and seek common ground with various natural spiritualities in understanding scientific activity as a spiritual practice.

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**Mark Yenson**

King's University College at Western University

**Pope Francis: Reflections from and for Christology**

Commentary on Pope Francis tends, justifiably, to focus on pressing questions of ecclesiology, missiology, social ethics, and politics. And while Christology was an explicit theological and pastoral priority in the thinking of his predecessor, Christological reflection appears muted in the thinking of Pope Francis—even neglected, according to some of his critics. In this brief presentation I will first highlight interstitial Christological themes in Pope Francis' pastoral, social, and ecological teaching, and suggest that such themes are not merely occasional but rather form significant patterns and dynamics in Francis's teaching. Secondly, beyond identifying Francis's themes, images, and sources, I will consider how the priorities of Francis's pontificate generate new orientations for systematic Christology. How can Christological thinking be challenged and renewed in light of Francis's theology of encounter, negotiation of the global and the local, and animation of ecclesial synodality?