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**ROBERT MICKENS  
INSIDE THE VATICAN:  
POPE FRANCIS' EFFORTS AT REFORM OUR  
MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH  
OAK PARK, MI  
MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2016**

## Introduction

It's nice to see all of you here today on this warm day. I thought I would begin by remarking that our speaker today is probably coming from as far as any speaker we have ever had or will have. Bob Mickens comes to us today from Rome. We've never had an international speaker come before; so we are very blessed. And talking about people who come from a long distance, we also have a member of our audience that I think we should acknowledge: Mark Harmon; he drove all the way from Cincinnati to be with us today. (Applause) So I am very happy that we have people who are so dedicated to our cause. And I am pleased to be able to introduce Robert Mickens. Currently, he is the editor-in-chief of an on-line magazine called Global Pulse; and it is a magazine that publishes articles, and commentary, and analysis on Catholic issues. And not only does he come from Rome, which is pretty far away, but periodically, because his magazine operates out of Thailand, he has to travel to Bangkok. So this coming weekend he will be in Bangkok to carry on his work over there.



## Bishop Tom Gumbleton

I came to know about him, and really became interested in having him speak to us, as I read over the years his column in the London Tablet. He published every week in that magazine for a period of years; and I always wondered how he got the inside story on things, the way he seemed to do it. And then I found out that, in fact, for more than half his life he lived in Rome; so he knows his way around Rome. He knows his way around the Vatican. He gets into all the inner circles and is able to dig out interesting news items we want to find out about. And he wrote in the Tablet for a number of years; but he began to live in Rome actually in 1986; and he was a student at the Pontifical Liguorian University in Rome, studied theology at that university. But then, after studying in Rome and living there as a student, he began to work for the Vatican Radio; and so, for ten years he was a correspondent on Vatican Radio, and then took the job on the Tablet. Recently, he left the Tablet Magazine, as I said, and is now the Editor in Chief of Global Pulse. But he also writes on a regular basis a column for the National Catholic Reporter and also for Commonweal Magazine.

So after you hear him today, if you will want to keep up with what's going on in Rome, you can refer to either one of those sources, and it will probably keep you right up to date on the happenings in Rome and inside the Vatican. And just to give you a flavor of some of what he writes, I thought I would just mention a couple of articles. He has recently written an article called "Mercy, Vatican II Comes Alive;" but then also, "Merciless Zealots in Defense of Life and Truth;" then, "The Fear of Real Roman Curia Reform," major changing coming for the Curia. He keeps us right up to date on everything that is going on the Vatican, inside Rome, and what's happening in our Church as we continue to try to bring Vatican II really to its fulfillment. And today, Bob is going to speak to us about Pope Francis and his efforts at reform. So I ask you to welcome Bob Mickens, all the way from Rome to Detroit and to Oak Park. (Applause)

## Pope Francis' Efforts at Reform

Thank you very much, Bishop Tom. And thank you all for inviting me to come and spend an hour or so with you. As the good bishop says, I come from Rome. I've lived there more than half my life now; so I guess I am really a Roman. But I really originate from a place called Toledo, Ohio; (laughter and applause) and I know this area, because I probably skated on almost every ice rink in the metro area. I played travel hockey when I was a kid; and we got in a playing routine called Michigan Stars when I was a midget - I'm still a midget - but when I was a midget classified in Melvindale; and then I went to Detroit Country Day School, not because my dad's a millionaire, but because I played hockey there. So I know the area. When I was driving here along 696, it brought back a lot of old memories. I was kind of odd, the first boarding student at a day school, but I do a lot of new things in my life so that should be nothing new.

## Robert Mickens

It's a wonderful time in the Catholic Church, I think. You people like Pope Francis? (applause) Isn't he a breath of fresh air? It was amazing! Recently there was some kind of confusion if I was going to speak here today because I was supposed to be here originally. I came in just on Friday. I had planned on being here for a week or so to commemorate some things in my family; but my grandmother's 95, in a nursing home just south of Toledo, has had some issues; and they wanted me to come back and coax her to go into the nursing home, part of the assisted living. So I came back at Christmas time and spent some time with my grandmother, who has really been like a mother to me. She is Hungarian; and today is St. Margaret of Hungary's feast day; so I think of my grandmother. One of the things I ask of my grandmother all the time is, "Pray the rosary; pray for the Pope."

So I say, "Grandma Annie, what did you do today?" And she said, "I prayed the rosary. I prayed two rosaries for my two favorite people, for you and Pope Francis." (laughter) And I would encourage all of you to do the same thing: pray two rosaries, one for me and one for Pope Francis. (laughter)



I just want to go back. It seems, you know, Pope Francis was elected in 2013 and we are coming up on three years. In some ways it doesn't seem that long, and in other ways, it seems like he's been Pope a lot longer, because I think he has given so much energy and enthusiasm to so many people in our Church that, I think, we are trying desperately hard just to hang in there. I think he added a lot of hope and a lot of joy back to us in being Catholic. I mean, people stop me; again, I mean, going to the nursing home, and they say, "Robert, we love your pope; and we're not even Catholic." (Laughter) Do you get that happening to you a lot? A lot of people do. But your priests don't usually say that, do they? (Laughter) That's a problem. We'll talk about that. Do you remember when he first came out on the balcony - and I was in the square - and when he came out, I wasn't sure what to make of him. We were delighted that it wasn't the guy in Milan who got elected, but came out onto the central balcony there in St. Peter's Basilica, this very stone faced man. And it lasted for about three minutes; and then, he has been doing nothing but smiling almost his entire pontificate. And he's brought back a joy that others talked about and a lot of things that others talked about,

he's brought back by example. Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* in 1967 or 1968, said, "We don't need more teachers; we need witnesses." And I think that Pope Francis is an exemplary witness to what it means to be someone striving to be a follower or disciple of Jesus, and embodying, I think, the heart of the gospel that we love God and love our neighbor.

### Pacem in Terris: Peace on Earth

A few months ago, in one of the Italian newspapers, there was an article by an editor of *La Repubblica*, a left wing paper, the founder and editor of this paper, Eugenio Scalfari, is one of the best known kind of agnostics, anti-clericalists in the country; and he and Pope Francis have become friends. The Pope invites him over for a conversation and they kept up this conversation. This has really caused a lot of consternation for people in the Roman Curia and other Italians who like to be the guardians and, let's say, the owners of orthodoxy and Church teaching. Scalfari wrote about a conversation he had on the phone with the pope a few weeks earlier; and he said, "You know, I asked him, I said, 'Did you ever think about calling, all you're doing now, all the reforms you are bringing about, isn't it time now for a Vatican Council III, the Third Vatican Council?'" And the pope said, "No, he didn't think that that was what he needed to do." "He said what he was trying to do was to fulfill the goal and mandate of Vatican II; and he defined it as this: to bring about a true encounter between the Church and the modern world."

And what struck me about that is a couple of words in that definition or that program bringing about true encounter between Church and the modern world. Encounter, that word means an awful lot in this pontificate. You can see, Pope Francis is encountering, meeting lots and lots of people. He is going out to meet them, not waiting for them to come to him. Now, as pope, everyone of course wants to talk to him; but he is trying to get all of us, all of us, not just the priests, not just the deacons, not the religious, but all of us who are Christians, all of us who are Catholic, to go out and to meet people. So that encounter is very important. And the other word that is really important in understanding what this pope is trying to do in the Church: that word is dialogue. There are two concepts: dialogue and encounter. Ironically, or maybe pointedly, that word is much at the heart of renewal of the Church as foreseen by Vatican II. Pope John XXIII launched the project of encounter and dialogue in his famous encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), was to all people of good will. That is the first time a pope had written an encyclical to someone other than the cardinals and bishops, and then the priests, and then the lay people; but it was to all people of good will. So he sets a precedent there; and I think that Pope Francis has, in a sense, picked up a lot on that waning hope of encounter and dialogue that John XXIII had instilled in the Church.

The Council was still the major event of our lifetime, certainly as Catholics of the Church; but probably the biggest ecclesial event of the century, and maybe of the millennium, since the Reformation. Pope Francis is a pope of the poor, those in the peripheries, because of his simplicity of life - his book of Mercy.

And remember when he was asked in the first interview that he gave, "Who is Francis? Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?" And without thinking too much, he said, "I'm a sinner." And the Jesuit who interviewed him said, "That's a nice humble thing to say." And he said, "No, no, no, really, I am a sinner." And, I think, that is not a rhetorical device; this whole interplay between we as sinners and God as merciful, and we as channels of God's mercy, is very much at the heart of what Pope Francis is trying to bring about in the Church. He is the Pope of synodality, which is an intuition of the Council that has not yet really been realized.



He has great devotion to our Lady. As you know, every time before he leaves on a trip abroad he goes across town to this marvelous basilica, St. Mary Major - where Cardinal Law lives by the way - and prays for Cardinal Law, (Laughter) but he also prays for guidance and protection for the solus populi Romani, the health of the Roman people. There is a image of the Blessed Virgin there that was invoked during the plague; and there was a miraculous healing for a cease to the plague; and so it is revered by the Roman people, the pope, the Bishop of Rome, and his people. He has made this devotion to Our Lady of Solus Populi Romani, as one of his cornerstones of his devotion.

Some people say the rock star Pope but I would say, "No, he is a servant of the servants of God." And there is a kind of dichotomy that is going on in his pontificate that says he does have this rock star popularity to the extent that some would like to make him more than what he is. The dichotomy is that he does not want the focus on him. He still, every once in a while they start yelling, "Francesco, Francesco," and he says, "No, Jesu, Jesu," to the kids. "It's Jesus, not me." So this is kind of a profile of the pope.

There is a program - what is the program of his pontificate? - well, the first thing you have to look at - remember, before the conclave when all the cardinals gathered together, each cardinal was given the opportunity to speak; and Cardinal Bergoglio said in a very short, a very powerful talk, said, "We are too closed in on ourselves." And he used the image of the Book of Revelation, where Jesus is standing at the door knocking; and the future Pope said that, "We interpret that as he is at the door knocking to come in, but, I think, that most often Jesus is knocking at the door trying to get out. Get out of our locked up churches. Basically, get out of the sanctuary. Get out! Don't be closed in on yourself." And it seems that in the last 25 years or so before his election, we were very much looking inward towards all kinds of problems that happened around the sanctuary - who can serve and who can't; do we kneel or do we stand - I mean, nonsensical things like this; and the pope says, "Jesus is knocking at the door; get out!" And we need to go out with Him. That's important in understanding what this pontificate is about, and what Pope Francis is trying to achieve, what he is trying to bring about in the Church.

Remember this central notion that first night, March 13, 2013. He said, "We begin a journey, bishop and people ... bishop and people. He's not the first one to stand up there and call himself the Bishop of Rome - erroneously, as it was reported. John Paul II said in his speech pretty much the same thing. Remember Pope Francis said they had gone to almost the ends of the world to find the new bishop of Rome, my brother cardinals. If you go back to 1978, Pope Paul II said that they have gone to a far away country to get a new bishop of Rome. It's almost parallel; but there is very little else parallel in the pontificates, thankfully. (laughter) I think that the most moving thing that evening, for most of us in the square, the new pope said, "Bishop and people." The bishop gives his blessing; but before he gives his blessing, he asks the people to pray to God to bless him. Basically he asked the people - in my words - "Pray over me." And why do I interpret it that way? Because the pope bowed his head; and he asked the people to pray. There were tears in the eyes of many people in the square, so moved by this act of humility, the pope asking for the blessing of the people.

#### Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel

If you want to look at something written down as the program of the pontificate, the most important document so far to be penned, authored, by Pope Francis is *Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel*, which came out in November of 2013. It is an extraordinary document; and I was reading it - I don't know if you have ever been to Rome, but right here in the Vatican, there is a little street called Porto Pio, which has a lot of little restaurants, shops, and trendy places, where you can get rosaries and take them to the square on Sunday for the pope to bless, little coffee shops - and as a journalist I got an advance copy. We get advance copies of these documents. So I went down to the press office right away, got the document, went to a coffee bar and sat down, started reading this thing. Now I could not believe what I was reading. The phone rang. It was a friend of mine. And he said, "I can't believe this! Did you write this?" (laughter)

Now, I'm a critic. You know, there are art critics; there are music critics, film critics. I'm a Church critic. Now music critics love music. Art critics love art. I love the Church; but I didn't like what I was seeing going on for a long time, having worked inside at the Vatican, and then reporting on it; so I'm a pretty tough critic.

And reading this document, and some of the things I've written before, about what this new pope needs to do, I'm reading from the pope's own hand. So it's very exciting to read this blueprint of the pontificate, which is mostly about the Church ad interim - what's going on inside our Church, how we live this missionary Church. And the very first thing the Pope talks about is reform. The very first, and the most important reform, is the reform of attitude. And I'm kind of coining a phrase; this is the pope's attitude adjustment program. This is so very, very important.

And the first couple of years of his pontificate, rather than naming a new prefect for this congregation or making some dramatic appointment, the main thing that Pope Francis has tried to instill and bring about is a change of mentality - getting out from the inward looking mentality of the Church, looking out for service, service, service, not for the clergy; it's certainly the priests that have this smell like the sheep. You can buy the deodorant too; but they should have the smell of the sheep. This is the pope's point, that they need to be with their people.

Bishops, when you hear the pope talk about a bishop, usually bishops lead; but sometimes they follow behind. When did a pope ever say that, "Follow the people!" because the sheep have a natural sense for where the verdant pastures are. So sometimes the bishop has to follow and help some of the stragglers, but follow the people; but most of the time the priest or the bishop is in the midst of the people, walking with them. It's a beautiful image; and it is exactly what shepherds do; and this is one of the mentality changing concepts the pope is trying to bring about. He says he wants an accident prone church. He is not afraid to make mistakes. Try some! The worst thing in the world is to be afraid, and not do anything. He wants a Church that is willing to try to go out. And how many times has he put his foot in it? Now he gets it. He doesn't care. And that is so refreshing to have a pope that's normal. (Laughter) I see so many images. I love to watch him. He's not afraid. I say, he's the guy, you know, that picks his nose and scratches his behind I public; and he doesn't care; he's not formal and fussy about that.

As a matter of fact, one of the major gestures that has had the biggest impact on what is going on in the Vatican is his address, the choice of residence. He decided that he would live with the rest of the priests that work at the Vatican - there are some 50 or so that live at Casa Santa Domanta, which is a residence built under John Paul II large enough to house all the cardinals in the conclave - and that's where he was when he got elected; and that's where he is today. It's almost three years later. He has stayed right there, living with the community of people, normal, going down and getting his own breakfast, having mass every day with people there, and preaching a homily. That never happened before. And allowing us to know what he said, all off the cuff, all very simple; and it is some of the most moving and inspiring messages that come from these homilies from the daily mass. This is the pope with his people. He is open to change; and that is very refreshing. He wants a discussion about things. He is not afraid of change. If you read *Evangelii Gaudium*, he said even things that are of old tradition, even beautiful, if they are no longer useful, we need to change them - even rules. This is all bordering on revolution!

And one of the things that he has done is, he has restored the good name to the concept called pastoral. Have you ever heard of pastoral bishops? Remember, we longed for the day - give us pastoral bishops. That's what we used to have; and then, all of a sudden, we started getting doctrinaire bishops, doctors of the law, who were cultural warriors. The pope wants pastoral bishops. And in fact in a talk in the Roman Curia, right before Christmas, you may have heard last year, he talked about the ills in the Roman Curia, the ills that people working in the Vatican could be susceptible to. And he lists a whole bunch of them; and, boy, they didn't like it, 'cause it was seen as a criticism. This year he issued a series of remedies - what we can do to remedy the ills. And at the end of that speech he quoted Cardinal Dearden (applause). Now this was a huge surprise; but even more surprising than that, he read a prayer, he didn't mention his name, but he read the Romero prayer that was written by Bishop Ken Untener.<sup>1/</sup> (Audience member says: "It's the Dearden prayer.") And the Pope said this is a prayer that was attributed to Oscar Romero; but Cardinal Dearden wrote this prayer. As it turned out, Ken Untener had written it for him, right before Ken Untener became a bishop; and the pope read this. Now a lot of people probably didn't understand what that was about; but I tell you that to the people who thought that the Dearden era of reform of renewal was over, had a big shock when they heard those words. This was a major thing. I don't know how he included that in his speech. Some say that Father Tom Rosica had suggested it to somebody and Father Tom Rosica, a Basilian priest from Canada, Toronto. Whatever it is, pastoral is no longer a dirty word, because the connotation in the last 25 years or so was seen as being wishy washy, loosey goosey, you know, that whole stuff, quasi heretical, not serious about doctrine. Pope Francis said, "Doctrine means nothing, nothing, unless it has the pastoral component to it." So he's restored the good name of pastoral.

### Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home

The other document that is extremely important of course is the encyclical *Laudato Si: (On Care for Our Common Home)*; and that's more of an ad extra document on ecology; and if I would just sum it up and try to explain to people, the pope is not a tree hugger. That's not what this is about. It's a vision. It's a Christian vision of this whole world that we live in as a creation of a merciful God; and we are the crown of that creation, and are called to be good and responsible custodians of this creation. That means, from the child in the womb to, yes, the whales in the sea, the rain forest, the economy the whole ball of wax. And that's a challenging message. That's a challenging message, because those who are in favor of abortion - the pope's not - but those who are in favor of a strong prolife, for rabid, unbridled capitalism, the pope has a hit for them and a warning: this is not responsible stewardship for creation. So I would say that these are the two documents that are the pillars, if you want, documents of this pontificate the ad intra document,

or life within the Church, is Evangelii Gaudium; and the ad extra document is the encyclical Laudato Si.

### Corruption and Reform

We're waiting for another document, that's from the synod, that should probably be coming in the springtime; but we will get to that in a minute. When we talk about reform, people get very nervous, and anxious, and impatient. "What has he actually done? He hasn't done anything! So, big deal! He's not wearing fancy clothes, funny clothes, like his predecessor most recently. He's not living in the house. So, big deal!" Well, yes, it's starting to change the mentality. It is a big deal; but in concrete, people ask me all the time, "What has he really done? We have another Vatican scandal. We see that nothing has really been cleaned up. Well I would suggest this. First of all, when he was elected he received a mandate from the cardinals from their discussions.

You have to remember: think back what the situation was after Benedict XVI resigned? The Church was embroiled in scandal at the Vatican. There was leaking of documents that showed that there was corruption, financial impropriety, careerism, a lot of ugly things going on at the Vatican. And the Cardinal said, Pope we need to clean this up this is a real black eye for the Church. So he had a mandate for that. And what did he do, the first thing? He called together in one month, he announced that he was setting up a commission, a council, almost like a kitchen cabinet at the time, a commission of cardinals. And people say, "Well, they always point us to this C9?? as we call it now, as the body that the pope set up to reform the Roman Curia. But that's only half of it. He actually said to help him govern the universal Church and to reform the Roman Curia. This is the very beginning, a very small step toward the reform of the papacy. And I would suggest that what the pope is doing, the cardinals who selected him thought they were getting a man who would reform the Roman Curia. What they got is a man who is reforming the papacy. And that will be huge; and already he has taken other steps since then that suggested we could have the biggest reform in a thousand years of the papacy, of governance.

Decentralization. He talks about it; then hints at it in Evangelii Gaudium, talking about decentralization; talking about recognizing the legitimate, the theological, the doctrinal authority of the bishops' conferences. Now in 1998, I think it was, there was a document that the Roman Curia wrote, Cardinal Ratzinger's office, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. It was on the role of episcopal conferences; and in there it said very clearly that episcopal conferences have no doctrinal authority. Evidently the mail never reached Buenos Aires; (Laughter) because, in Evangelii Gaudium the Pope says this is still an open question. Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Bertone and Pope John Paul II, in the Apostolos Suos document, thought they had closed the question. Evidently not! So the pope, in the first act, hints at by setting up the C9, already hints that he is going to share authority with bishops from all the parts of the world because on that conference they are representatives.

### The Vatican Bank

One of the things that was most pressing, and of greatest concern to the cardinals, was the scandal of money in the Vatican. It seems the poor Vatican Bank, which is really the Institute for the Works of Religious, is always got problems with handling money. It's a perpetual scandal, it doesn't stop that kind of thing - the kind of bad gift that keeps on giving - it comes back all the time. So they wanted the pope to reform the bank. The pope gave every hint that he wanted to close the bank down and I believe, and I got it from a pretty good authority that that was his intention, which is, "We don't need a bank; we'll just close it down." But there were too many pressures upon him. So, okay, fine, "So you don't want to close this down, we will reform it; but I will let you reform it." And he called George Pell, Cardinal George Pell, from Australia, to do the heavy lifting of the reform.

Why Cardinal George Pell? Cardinal George Pell is the probably furthest away from Pope Francis' vision of what kind of Church he wants, of anybody in the College of Cardinals. It's pretty well known that Cardinal Pell was supposed to be the kingmaker for Cardinal Scola, the Archbishop of Milan, to be the new pope. It was almost a certainty that Cardinal Scola would be elected. They campaigned for this. So certain was it, that just after the conclave was over, the Italian Bishops' Conference put out a congratulatory letter to Cardinal Angelo Scola on his election to the sea of Rome. They withdrew it very quickly. (Laughter) Somebody hit the send button when they shouldn't have, before they even saw who would come out in the balloting. It was Bergoglio of Argentina. They were really embarrassed.

And to this day, there is not very good blood between the pope and the Archbishop of Milan. They are cordial; but twice now, Pope Francis has cancelled major appointments with the archbishop and his diocese. One was an appointment with the organizers of the world expo, which was held in Milan last year. Cardinal Scola came and had set up this whole thing with Pope Francis' people and those who make his schedule at the Vatican. And the Pope found out about it; he was not consulted about it; and, lo and behold, he got sick just before the meeting and couldn't make it. That happened a couple of times when they scheduled another time, where the Cardinal Scola was suppose to be presiding at some ceremony, and the pope was going to it; but when he found out, he had not been informed of this beforehand, he came down with a cold. Then that kind of monkey business stopped really quickly.

Nothing is scheduled without the pope's knowledge, because Francis showed the people inside the Vatican, they were not going to control him. He didn't scold people, but just made it very, very clear. The second thing was he was supposed to go to Milan this year; and he cancelled this. No one knows why. The reason he's given is because of his holy year of mercy. He's going to cancel those other appointments, because he has other things to do.

So George Pell, who was the kingpin of Cardinal Scola, comes in, and my theory is that the pope just wanted to close this whole thing down, has been forced to somehow keep it open. "Okay, we'll keep it open, but you fix it; and if it is not fixed, it is your fault, not mine." So the Vatican bank in any case is not in real reform now. Yes, they've changed the managers. They've come up to code with international relations. They've got more transparency. But that's not a reform; that's only good sense. The real reform is, asking the question, "Do we need a bank? And for what purpose do we have this bank?" These questions have not been asked. The historian, Alberto Belloni, who is from Bologna school - I don't know if you know. There was a five volume history, and Joseph Komanchek is the editor in English. That was done in Bologna, that is in northern Italy and Alberto Belloni is one of the leaders of that project, John Paul XXIII Center for Religious Studies. And Alberto Belloni, in a recent article said, "There has been no real reform yet, except the slow changing of attitude and redirecting." You know, this is a really big ship; and just to get it to start turning around is a big thing, but not much else is happening. The Vatican Bank reform, as I said, is not a real reform; it's just changing some things, some people, personnel; but the real reform would be to look at the purpose and ask the questions if there is really a need for such a thing. That is not happening.

He's started similar things in the communication department. He's put together some offices. So he's kind of consolidated some offices; or at least they are going to. They have decided they are going to take a number of offices for the laity, family, and human life and make them one big office. They are going to do the same thing with justice and peace, charity, migration, and take all those and make one big office. This is not real reform and Alberto Belloni's thesis is there cannot be reform of the Roman Curia without reform of the banks, because the Roman Curia is dependent on the pope; it only works at his discretion, or it should. What has become apparent is that over the centuries the Roman Curia tends to be a body that controls the pope. Pope Francis seems intent on changing that; and how will he change that? No one has been able to do this before. John XXIII tried by calling the Second Vatican Council. He brought all the issues from the world to Rome to help it reform. And we saw what happened. There was this great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, great promise, and John died. Paul VI kept it going, and brought it to a close; and after all the bishops went home the Roman Curia clawed back its power and control to the point that when John Paul II became pope, he said, "I am not doing anything to this; it's useless; and he takes the show on the road and starts traveling, wouldn't even try to touch the Roman Curia.

Why does Pope Francis think he can do this? It's a good question. I think he believes he can do it because, for one, he is a man who totally takes Vatican II for granted. This is no longer an issue of debate; this is no longer a bone of contention. This is a man who was ordained a priest after the Council. He was never a priest in the pre-Vatican Church, so the liturgical reform is all normal for him. This is just the way life is. And he's not too fussy about what goes on in Gilgrany; he is a Jesuit after all. (Laughter) There are lots of Jesuit liturgy jokes, you know. What do you call a Jesuit during Holy Week? Confused! What is the definition of a good Jesuit liturgy? No one gets hurt. (Laughter)

### Papal Appointments

Some people think, "What about the appointments? Right? The appointments! This is where a pope can make a difference. Well, I would say that inside the Vatican, he's been very light on making appointments because, and what that suggests to me is, that he doesn't need to make a lot of appointments in places that might not exist anymore. But he has a Secretary of State, and a pretty darn good one, Pietro Parolin, who could be a future pope, from the Veneto region from upper northern Italy, from Vicenza. He's a real priest more than he's a diplomat; but he's a good priest; he's a good man. And he is probably one of the top diplomats in the diplomatic service at present, Parolin, Secretary of State. He's young; 62 is pretty young in the Vatican.

He brought back Michael Paul Gallagher, who is the foreign minister; former Archbishop, from Liverpool, England. He was the Apostolic Nuncio in Australia. And it is interesting that he brings him to Rome, because - a little back story here - Cardinal Pell was brought to Rome; and there was this whole question of who was going to be the new Archbishop of Sydney in Australia - use becomes cardinal. Cardinal Pell wanted a Dominican, named Anthony Fisher, to be his successor, he was his auxiliary bishop and then bishop of another diocese, a young man. And nuncio said, "No, there are three other candidates." And they thought they worked with Cardinal Pell and got his agreement that it would not be Anthony Fisher; it would be another one of these three names on the table. Gallagher went to Rome from Australia. That's a long trip. He went at least twice to argue for the candidates. And at the end of the day, who became Archbishop of Sydney? Low and behold it was Anthony Fisher. How did that happen?

He went behind the back of the nuncio. And, I think, Francis brought Gallagher back to Rome, because he knows George Pell. So there is one more person to keep an eye on, to keep Cardinal Pell in check.

Pell was there to take care of the financial stuff and that's his brief. He'll be 75 in June. Let's see if he will still be

there, because Pell is one of the cardinals, during the last gathering of the synod, that wrote the letter to the pope, warning the pope - warning the pope - not to go down certain paths; otherwise he would be breaking with tradition; he would be causing problems in the Church. Now this was not a secret letter. They signed the letter. The pope knew who these people were; but the idea that they did this, they wanted this to be secret. It was like little kids in school who go tattle to the teacher. They don't want their classmates to find out; but the classmates did find out in this case. So Pope Francis has a very canny way of working through this miasma and through this kind of trickery and resistance to his reforms. And we'll talk about that in just a minute, because that is really important. There is resistance to what he is trying to do.

But again, on the appointments of the Curia, there have not been very many; but he tends to take people from the diplomatic world. Why is that? Well, I would say, that the diplomats in the Church tend to be the least ideological among the bishops. They are at the service of the Holy See. They are pragmatic. They will work for the pope who is sitting on Peter's chair. And the ones that he has found, I think, have been very good. Cardinal Baldisseri is the head of the Office of the Synod of Bishops; he is Secretary General. He is from the diplomatic core; and he served a long time in Latin America. That's also important to the pope that they have a sensitivity and an experience with the people in what he calls the peripheries.

And there have been several other key appointments; and they are men from the diplomatic service of the Holy See. These are safe people but they're also guarantees they're not going to be a palace coup, because these people are usually pretty supportive of the pope. The cardinals he's made are in strange places you know. Panama got a cardinal, not Panama City, David. Never heard of it before, David, on the map where is David in Panama? He's made the man a cardinal. In two dioceses, Regento, Sicily, it's not a major diocese, and Antona, which used to have a cardinal back in the year fifteen or sixteen hundred. He made them cardinals rather than a guy in Venice, which has given us three popes. They didn't give the guy in Turin the red hat either. They usually get one. He is showing that there is no automatic privilege because of your placement, especially if he didn't place you there. Will we get a red hat in the United States? We haven't gotten one yet, two consistories now. And who will get it? Will the guy in Chicago get it; or what about the guy in Los Angeles? He's got precedence. He's from Opus Dei; and people are worried that we might get an Opus Dei cardinal. You don't know. It may be a dark horse. It may be somebody in Atlanta who gets it. Never had one from there before; but it's possible. Or maybe somebody down in Tucson, Arizona will get one. He got jumped over as president of the conference (USCCB), Pope Francis seems to like what bishops' conferences are about; and it looks like he kind of got sidelined with some kind of maneuvering with the last president of the council conference. So we don't know. He is, in this sense, a pope of surprises.

### The Pope of Mercy

The one area where I think he's given his greatest attention, besides on this attitude adjustment program that I am talking about, and there's all kinds of things you could get into: the pope of the poor, the pope of mercy. This Year of Mercy is extremely important; this is not just window dressing. Unfortunately people in the Vatican who have worked there for a very long time will find all kinds of conferences and things to do; and they'll make all kinds of hay while this merciful sun is shining; but that is not what the pope is all about. There are folks who are lamenting that this is already a flop, because we are not getting the crowds that we expect for the jubilee. Well, the pope never wanted it to be a jubilee, focused on wrong. That is why he opened the first holy door in Bangui, in the Central African Republic. And you know how many holy doors there are, about 10,000. Yeah, there are about 10,000 doors. I think the door to my bathroom is a holy door, (laughter) one of the few in Rome you don't somehow get a plenary indulgence. (Laughter) And there's so many holy doors. Why? I think for two reasons. While respecting tradition, he is also deflating what's not essential. It's not that you walk into this particular door at St. Peter's Basilica, and you spend the money to go there. That's not the point. It's the point of making a journey symbolically; and if you can do that, walking through the door of any chapel in any prison in the world, because the pope has designated it that the doors of chapels in all prisons shall be holy doors.

The whole concept of mercy, and I think this is a great intuition that the pope has had. First of all, I think it is clear that this man has had a sense of forgiveness for something in his life that he keeps repeating that God has forgiven him. He keeps repeating that, "I am a sinner; but I am a sinner redeemed. God has looked with mercy on me."

Now in the tradition of the Order of Preachers, Dominicans, I don't know if any of you are third order or know the Dominicans at all, I think Jordan Saxony, which was one of the successors of St. Dominic, said, "The preacher is converted by what he preaches, or she preaches". So we preach what we most need to hear or remind ourselves of. And so I am convinced that Pope Francis, this issue of mercy is so very important to him. He had a tremendous experience of God's mercy at one point in his life; and he keeps reminding himself of that, also, so that he can be merciful to others. And that is really what is at the heart of this, I think, if I have read the Pope correctly.

We need mercy in our world today. We need forgiveness, because retribution only leads to further injustice. We don't think that way; we think in terms of human justice.

Yet, if you have stolen my cow, you have to give me your cow, or I'll steal two of your cows. But if you did, you never get even, because you always need a little bit more, or you should give me a little bit more, because you first started it. Only the logic of forgiveness, which is a really Christian thing, it's a revolutionary idea of Jesus: forgiving. What did we hear today in the reading, "Forgive your enemies. Pray for your enemies. If you pray for those who love you, what

good is that? You're no better than the Pharisees or pagans. They do that"

Pope Francis is an evangelical pope in an evangelical age. We see what our mega churches are in our country here. Some of the main line churches are filling up. And we can question what kind of religion this is, and what kind of depth that is; but there is something happening here, because there is a thirst for the Gospel, not Canon Law. Sorry bishop. (laughter) Canon lawyers, you know, there are some good ones, we have one here. (Applause) There is a trade school. What is the trade school that Bishop Gumbleton went to in Rome? Was it Bishop Untener who joked with you a little bit about that? He (Bishop Untener) went to the Gregorian and he (Bishop Gumbleton) went to the (Pontifical) Lateran Trade School. (Laughter)  
But Francis is really sine glossa, without any glossing over, putting lipstick on tape. It's the wrong gospel; and he has said it on a number of occasions, "Let's not try to dress this up; this is a hard teaching."

Isn't it interesting that the doctors of the law, as he likes to call them, are so insistent on this idea of divorce, "You can't change this! Jesus said it! Jesus said, 'No divorce.' We can't change it." What do you hear Jesus say today? "You turn the other cheek. We don't use that. You don't take that literally."

Cardinal Pell in a talk he gave just three days ago, I just read it, Cardinal Pell is a climate change skeptic; he's skeptical, (Laughter) very skeptical, if you ask me; and he's very much in favor of free market capitalism with few regulations. He does not like the pope's view on free distribution of wealth. It's a big one with this pope. It sounds like, I mean, Bernie Sanders is really conservative. (Laughter) Cardinal Pell gave this talk; he talks about money in the Gospel, he talks about Jesus and money, the powerful rich man, and he gives his money to this and that, and all that stuff. And then he gets to the talents, to the sermon of the talents. And this is great, because we have never heard of this kind of exegesis of the scripture; but Cardinal Pell said this was all about making good use of money. "Jesus really values money."

I never heard anybody, anybody - no, he was for the free market - this is a sign - I could not believe it - this is par for the Church. So the pope is shaking people up with strangely enough, preaching the Gospel.

#### The Synod of Bishops

The synod of bishops though, I think there are two things that are happening. I was talking to Gerry Bechard before; and I think there are two things that the pope is focusing on: attitude, an overreaching thing, but the reform of the papacy or the structural form; and the synod of bishops is key to that. Decentralization, it's a revival of an ancient structure of the Church in a sense it keeps alive the promise, rekindles the promise, of the Second Vatican Council on collegiality; and that is important to the pope. But synodality is even more than this pope, to reach out. It is about making the entire Church welcome together, not just the bishops. The synod is, I think, when the pope finally reforms and reuses synod, it will of necessity take the place of the Roman Curia or traditional curia. It will be normal that the pope and his synod, think of it in the way of the Eastern Church synod, because the pope is the president of the synod and with that group he will make major decisions for the universal Church while leaving some decisions to regional or local churches, because there is no one size fits all solutions for all the issues, all the challenges we face. The challenges you face here in the Detroit area, or in the Midwest, or in the United States are different from those that Catholics in Asia, or Bangkok, for instance, or Thailand. They are very, very different, they're different history. And local challenges, problems, demand local solutions. That's not changing the doctrine; but it's the pastoral implementation of the Church's belief and teaching.

I think our experience with the synod has shown - the synod, as you know, is a permanent body; unfortunately, there was not a synod last year, or the year before that. The synod always exists. These were general assemblies of the synod. And Pope Francis chose one theme: family - family life and marriage - and had two different sessions over two different years to look at that issue. Actually, it was over three years, because of a year to prepare. And what happened? What did we see? Was it dynamic, somewhat like what happened at Vatican II, because a lot of the work took place between the two sessions of this synod, these two sessions of the synod? People came out with their proposals. The enemies of the Kasper proposal - looking for finding a way to reconcile divorced and remarried Catholics to the sacraments of the Church - Pope Francis had asked them to make this proposal, to look for ways. The Pope clearly wants to find ways to bring people back into the Church.

Cardinals and some bishops and theologians, and even some lay people, are opposed to this. The pope wants to see if we can't be more lavish with God's mercy. And then two points. One is they are furious; there are people who are furious that the pope wants to be so merciful. They're angry! They are really upset about this! And they have accused him, or not him - you never accuse the pope; you go after somebody else to get to get to the pope: it was the pope's dog, or his horse, or his secretary, his mother, you know, some people point to the mother; it's usually the mother-in-law, but he doesn't have one - (Laughter) they accuse the pope indirectly of peddling cheap grace. Now there is no more sillier concept than cheap grace. Grace is not cheap; it's free. There is nothing we can do to earn it. Just accept it and, in turn, be merciful, graceful toward others. That's the revolution, I think, that the Pope is trying to bring about.

And that is why the Year of Mercy is so very important, if we allow ourselves to be challenged. How do we forgive first, and begin to find ways to heal. I think we need to find some very special ways, especially in the very ugly, embarrassing, humiliating, despicable situation of sex abuse of our children. How do we heal that? I think one of the

things that Pope Francis has been accused of is that he has not been dealing with the sexual abuse crises. He's been dragging his feet. I have been accused of that myself. But as I have pondered, I think the pope understands, quite well, that unless we are imbued with mercy, and are able to share mercy and forgiveness, we are not going to heal this. We've made lots of mistakes; but none of us can be self righteous enough to just be so angry that we want to break the back of everyone. We're a family; and we need to act like a family; and we need to find a way for forgiveness. It's the only way. It's the only way that the Palestinians and the Israelis are going to ever find a relationship, a doable, working relationship. It has to be based on forgiveness and mercy and reconciliation. How do we do that? I think this year offers great possibilities if we're are vulnerable to find ways to be challenged, and open ourselves up. And that is the great intuition of this pope.

### Elephants in the Living Room

I want to look now at the Elephants in the Living Room in the Pontificate. What issues are being dealt with?

I think one of the big issues is the issue of women in the Church. (Applause) What do you do with this? , It seems clear to all of us, you know; but Francis is what he is.

We like him for a lot of things; we love him for a lot of things; but he also comes with a cultural, personal history and background. He is a Latin American man; and he is going to be 80 years old next December; and he has that mentality. He has at machoism that comes from the Italian immigrant in Latin America. Thank God, it's not ugly, as some people of this generation and circumstances would display; but, you know he makes these comments, like mother-in-law jokes, all the time, like he has to put up with a mother-in-law. But, you know, some people like their mother-in-law; but how would he know that? He's not married. He makes jokes that women are like cherries on a cake, you know. "I'm putting more women on his commission; but they are like more cherries on a cake." He then does say, as he did in this case, there should be more. But how does he move with this issue? He's talked, as his predecessors have talked, about making space for women in the Church, but no to women's ordination.

Pope Francis interestingly said John Paul II closed the door on that. Well it's a good image because doors open as well. He didn't say wall; he buried that. He said, "Closed the door." He is very clever; the pope is very clever in that; he is a Jesuit, after all. Don't forget that! (Laughter) That's essential to his makeup, I think. So, I think, women in the Church is one of the elephants in the living room. He has not sat down, as he has with other groups, and just hatched it out. Maybe get Beth Johnson and - what's her name - Joan Chittister, who should be a cardinal, in my mind, who's been a main part of my life, (applause) and talk. Listen to them! It's no good to say, "We need a theology of women." There is one. Read it! This is one of my beefs with Pope Francis is the blind spot. The encouragement that I find though is that this is a man who has shown he can change and is willing to change. How does he create an opportunity, or an occasion, that will maybe open him up to a possibility of change on this issue? That's a question that I ask.

The pope has said, "I don't want to put women in these positions ministry, etc. etc. that would only clericalize women." There has been a question, "Why don't you make women cardinals because that's not a sacrament?" He could, he decides. "But, he says, "that would be like clericalizing women." Well, if he believes that cardinals clericalize people, then just get rid of them. (laughter) Really. I didn't get the chance to ask that question at the press conference; but really, if the College of Cardinals is a clericalizing institution, then disband it; because it didn't always exist. He could do that. He could also change the number; that would be interesting. He is going to have to do something, if he wants to ensure a legacy, especially among the people that elect his successor. So the issue of women certainly is one of the elephants in the room.

Dealing with sexual abuse, I think, is another one. As I said, I can't understand why he's not done more; but, I think, it has to do with looking for a deeper, fuller solution, rather than just trying to put a band aid on this. Having a person say, "I'm sorry: I did wrong; I didn't listen;" that would be helpful; but it's not enough at this point. It's not healing. Throwing more money at it, that's not going to change the issue. And he is probably praying and consulting for a real comprehensive solution to this issue. But it is an elephant in the room at this point, I think, at this time, for a lot of people who are not dealing with it. Perhaps we are not just dealing with it in the way we want him to deal with it; but it seems, for me, that for many people, that's an elephant in the room.

And there is another one - I'm not even sure we should even talk about it; that's how sensitive it is - it's the presence of his predecessor in the government. I think a lesser man would have a very, very difficult time to be bishop of Rome today under these circumstances, because he's not just a predecessor; he's Joseph Ratzinger, who more than any other figure in the post-conciliar Church, has had the biggest impact on our theology and a lot of our Church practice by the very fact of his position at the Vatican as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and theological spine cord of the papacy of John Paul II.

This is a real problem; because, while people at the Vatican go out of their way to say how much there is in common, even though they are different in style, there is perfect continuity; there isn't! And we can see that. Anybody can see it; but we are ignoring it. And that in itself is an elephant in the living room.

But the presence of Benedict XVI and his secretary, who is living there, is a real challenge. It's a revolving door. Many bishops who were not happy and theologians who were not happy, or were uncomfortable with this pontificate, beat a path to that door. And he very graciously welcomes them, listens, but he has never dirtied his hands; he has never done that. So, God knows, what is being said. I want to believe that Benedict the XVI is not trying to bring any division in the Church; but the very fact that people are going there; and with a raised eyebrow or a sigh, what kind of encouragement or discouragement can that be?

Pope Francis has been very polite, and has asked him to attend the opening of the holy door, the canonization of this one and that one, to make it normal.

But it is not normal; because of the division that the predecessor sowed in the Church, I believe, with the bringing back of the old mass, and a number of other things; it's a real challenge for Pope Francis. And again, I think, if you have any prayer or intention, you have to add that to the list. I think he does a marvelous job, and handles it very graciously but it is a center of opposition surrounding him. Just the very fact of the way it all happened is kind of unfortunate, I think, because Benedict XVI really bound the hands of his successor by deciding what he would wear and where he would live after he resigned.

Where he would live, and what he would be called, and not only that, but appointing several people in key positions that he knew would be very, very difficult to overturn without looking like a personal attack on him. First of all, his personal secretary, whom he made the Prefect of the Pontifical Household, he lives with the old pope, and he goes back and forth. And the idea was, I believe, that they thought Scola or Marc Quellet from Quebec, or Scherer from Brazil, people close to the thinking of Cardinal Ratzinger, Benedict XVI, would be the new pope; and it would be a seamless transition and a perfect continuity that would be ensured by the go between secretary. Pope Francis pulled the rug out from underneath them when he said, "I don't want to live here." And I think that might have been some of his rationale for not living there in the Papal Palace, and in the apartment where Benedicts XVI entrusted housemate/personal secretary was in charge of.

The other appointment was the appointment of Cardinal Muller. He was not a cardinal at the time, but he was made the successor of Cardinal Levada at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Again, very conservative, and someone who has questioned the theological acumen, at times, of Pope Francis - he doesn't have a doctorate. (Laughter) So those are briefly the elephants in the living room.

#### Future Tasks of the Pope

I would just take a look, very briefly, before closing, at the future tasks that lie before the pope. He had said at one point, and I think he really intended this, that he too would resign, so that resignation of the Bishop of Rome would become a precedent. You know, when things happen three times, then it is a custom. The pope was at this Jewish synagogue yesterday; and the chief rabbi said, "You are the third pope to come to the synagogue now; and in our tradition, three times makes it a custom. It's then a tradition." So, I think, Pope Francis wants this to become a precedent, make it normal that the Bishop of Rome, like any other bishop, resigns. And I suspect that if he has the opportunity to resign, and I don't think he will as long as Benedict XVI is still alive, because that makes it kind of strange to have an old pope's home then. (Loud Laughter) So if he were to resign, I am sure that he would go back to Buenos Aires; and I am sure that he would call himself Bishop Emeritus of Rome and not Pope Emeritus which is ridiculous and I'm sure he would go back to wearing trousers and a shirt like most retired bishops do. But we don't know if that is going to happen. I was told by someone who is pretty close to him, that he feels now that the resistance is too strong in the reforms, that he'll have to stay on, because he cannot achieve what he wanted to, and what he expected to do, in five years in the pontificate. So whether he resigns, it depends on his own physical and mental capabilities, but also, whether or not there is still another person occupying that former convent in the Vatican Gardens.

But, I think, the future task that he has is to consolidate this idea of synodality; and the part of that will be redefining the primacy of the Bishop of Rome. John Paul II in *Ut unum sint*, his document encyclical of 1994, I think it was, asked all the other churches and their theologians to help him redefine, or find a definition of, the primacy that could be acceptable to all the churches and yet not sacrifice the essentials of those prerogatives of primacy of the Bishop of Rome. There are responses. I know there have been, because in 2001 I asked Cardinal Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, "Whatever became of that request, that call to help the Bishop of Rome reform the papacy?" He said, "They're in a drawer." That's it!

Nothing's been done with it! I think Pope Francis wants to settle that.

If you want to look at another interesting speech go back to October of last year in the midst of the synod, the anniversary of the reestablishment of the synod, or modern form of the synod, and hear a magnificent speech or lecture/address on the papal primacy and synodality. It's pretty darn good. I think it is a good compliment to *Evangelii Gaudium*, and actually, maybe, goes a bit further; it fleshes it out a bit more. But the primacy of the Bishop of Rome has got to be something they work on because, Christian unity - it's essential that the Church is reunited in our age. We are weakened in our witness by our divisions. And there is a way forward; and Pope Francis has suggested the way forward - it's unity in diversity. He has this kind of model, this kind of hypo - I don't know what you call it - but it has all these little things on it. It's not a circle; it's not a square. Everybody keeps his or her own identity; but we are all united.

And we could envision a Church where, maybe, there will be no women priests in the Roman part of the Church; but we would recognize the ministry of women where that's already a tradition, e.g., the Anglican Church; but that kind of unity where we recognize there are different customs in every branch of our family. It's like, I go and stay with my aunt and uncle; but we do things differently. That's great in my family, flesh and blood. But they have different customs in their house than we do. I mean, when we grew up, they had a dishwasher. Well, we did too: Bobby, Billy and Beth. (laughter) As my dad would answer when he asked mom, "What do you want for Christmas?" And she would say, "A dishwasher." He would say, "I gave you three: Bobby, Billy and Beth." But there are different customs; and if we could recognize them, I think that that would be a way forward. I think this is very essential to Pope Francis: Christian unity.

What is left to be done? I think we all need to be thankful for the gift, the *kairos* moment that we are living in. I really believe that this is what it is. We need to use this Year of Mercy to help the pope, to heal the divisions within our own communities. There are some big problems with our own younger clergy. I know that! I do! I was in the seminary and I know that my generation, I'm 51, I know that my generation are about half this way and half that way, kind of ambivalent about everything, I guess. But I know a lot of our young clergy are very rigid and conservative. How do we help them? These are good people. They want to be priests, for there is something important that they love about the Church, as we do too. But I think they go about it in the wrong way unfortunately. How can we be vulnerable enough to help heal that? That's so essential. How do we help heal the wounds in our community because of the sexual abuse? Call it crisis, pandemic, I don't know what it is. It weighs us down. How do we heal that? It's essential. We love our Church. We don't want to be closing too many buildings already. We don't need to worry; we can't do anything about that, unfortunately. But how can we help make peace within this family of our Church? I think, if you love the pope, and what he is trying to do, I think this would be a great gift, a great kind of sacrifice or tribute that you could pay to him. Pray for Pope Francis; and pray for me. Thank you. (Applause)

Transcribed by

*Bea Parker*

## Prophets of a Future Not Our Own

It helps, now and then,  
to step back and take the long view.  
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,  
it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime  
only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise  
that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete,  
which is another way of saying  
that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

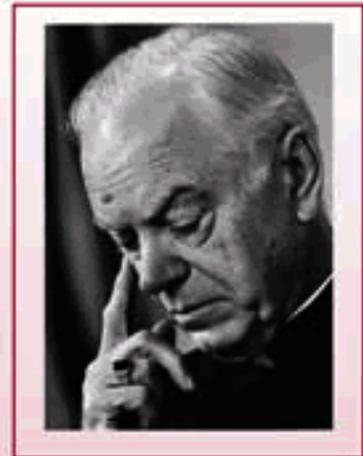
No statement says all that could be said.  
No prayer fully expresses our faith.  
No confession brings perfection.  
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.  
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.  
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted,  
knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything,  
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something,  
and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete,  
but it is a beginning,  
a step along the way,  
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,  
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen.



**John Francis Dearden**  
Oct. 15, 1907—Aug. 1, 1988  
Archbishop of Detroit,  
Council Father,  
Architect of "Call to Action"

Photo by Tony Spina—  
courtesy of  
*The Michigan Catholic*

*(Written for Cardinal Dearden by then-Father Ken Untener on the occasion of the Mass for Deceased Priests, October 25, 1979. It is mistakenly attributed to Oscar Romero.)*

\*Excerpts from the Cardinal Dearden Legacy Project directed by Judy M. Holmes. Its purpose is to record the cardinal's major speeches and writings as well as assessments of his leadership, accomplishments and legacy. Look for its publication in the near future. For more information on the project, visit: [www.johncardinaldearden.com](http://www.johncardinaldearden.com) or e-mail: [judymholmes@comcast.net](mailto:judymholmes@comcast.net)