



SOUL,
MIND,
AND HEART

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON
SAINT JOHN PAUL, BENEDICT,
AND FRANCIS

CARDINAL TIMOTHY M.
DOLAN

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MIND,
AND HEART

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays it seems everyone is fascinated with the papacy. In recent years, the eyes of the world have been fixed on the Chair of Saint Peter.

That's thanks, in part, to Pope Francis. He's known as one of the most influential people in the world. Just nine months after his election as pope, he was named *Time* magazine's Person of the Year. He even made the cover of *Rolling Stone*! Who would ever have expected that? That's almost like me appearing on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*!

How has this all come about?

As Catholics, we believe Jesus is present to us in many different ways: through the Bible, the Church, the sacraments, the saints, family and friends, our faith, His life of grace in our souls, the beauty of nature, just to name a few. Another way we Catholics believe that Jesus uniquely and powerfully shares His teaching with us is through the gift of the pope. Our Holy Father is always a unique agent for bringing us closer to Christ.

I won't bore you with a theological treatise on the papacy, but I would like to look at our three most recent popes, who have been particularly compelling agents of Christ. These three popes have been genuine gifts to the Church in bringing Jesus to the world. This is hardly to suggest that there were not other popes throughout

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history who serve as sterling examples of how best to witness to Jesus Christ. Are there ever! And, to be sure, we've also sadly had a few "lemons" when it comes to popes, men who have failed to live up to the standard called for as a successor to Saint Peter (who himself had his obvious sins).

At the risk of an oversimplification, an easy way to think about these last three popes is this: the Soul, the Mind, and the Heart. The Church is meant to be the soul of the world, to put on the mind of Christ, and to reveal the heart of Jesus. I propose that we look at Pope John Paul II as emphasizing the *soul* of the Church, Pope Benedict XVI as highlighting the *mind* of the Church, and Pope Francis as giving priority to the *heart* of the Church.

The Church has been immensely blessed with these contemporary pontiffs. I certainly don't mean to imply that each only focused on one of these three aspects. On the contrary, each of these popes had these three characteristics in abundance! And yet, every human organism — and every institution — needs a *soul*, a *mind*, and a *heart*. So does the supernatural family we call the *Church*. Let's explore how each of these popes reminds us of, and encourages us to be renewed in, *soul*, *mind*, and *heart*.

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On October 16, 1978, when Karol Joseph Wojtyla was elected to the Chair of Peter, the Church seemed to be in the doldrums, maybe even in crisis. In fact, the world and the Church seemed somewhat exhausted. In his close to twenty-seven inspired years as pastor of the Church Universal, his mission was to restore the weary *soul* of the Church.

John Paul II believed that, if we could restore the *primacy of the spiritual* as a Church, everything else would fall into place. No surprise, since he truly believed the mandate of Jesus: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God!” (see Mt 6:33).

His emphasis on the *soul* was evident to others. On his first pastoral visit to the United States, in 1979, he was greeted at the White House by President Jimmy Carter, who called him “the *soul* of the world.” When he returned to the United States in 1987, Billy Graham called him “a providential prescription for *humanity’s exhausted soul*.” In 2004, Rabbi Gilbert Rosenthal, a leader in Jewish-Catholic relations, was taking a group of Jewish leaders to meet with the Holy Father, not long before John Paul II died. The pope was in fragile health at the time, and somebody asked Rabbi Rosenthal: “The Pope is ill. He is feeble and can hardly talk. Why are you go-

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ing to visit him?” To which the rabbi responded: “We’re not going to see his body. We’re going to see his *soul*.”

The primacy of the *soul*!

It was Saint John Paul II’s mission to *recover* the *priority of the spiritual*. He, himself, had an extraordinarily vibrant life of the soul. In fact, many people — myself included — believe he was a *mystic*. You know what a mystic is? A mystic is one who periodically enjoys here on earth the union with God that most of us can only hope for in heaven.

You and I may get moments of particular insight where we sense intimacy with the Lord, but all of us admit those moments are few and far between. This rare union to which we all aspire was something ordinary to him. Quite a few were privileged to see this mystic at prayer in person many times.

For most of his pontificate, John Paul II would offer a private Mass every morning at 7:00 a.m. in his small chapel in the papal apartments. About two dozen people would be present, ushered into the chapel around 6:50 a.m., and there he was: locked in prayer. He’d been there for at least an hour, kneeling in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. It was clear he was in conversation with the Lord. If you got to sit near him, as I often would, you could see that something deep and mystical was going on. You could hear him groan; you could hear him sigh. Periodically you would see a tear. Sometimes you’d see a smile or hear a chuckle.

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Another example of how prayer came first in John Paul II's life was told to me by Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who in the mid-1990s was the archbishop of Newark, New Jersey. The Holy Father visited New York City in 1995, and then helicoptered across the Hudson River to Newark, where there were 100,000 people waiting at Giants Stadium. The helicopter landed, the pope's attendants came out, and security officials took their places. The lights on the police vehicles were turned on for the motorcade. But there was no John Paul II.

Archbishop McCarrick was, understandably, eager to get the pope to the stadium. He began to get nervous when a minute passed — then two minutes and three minutes. Finally, John Paul II's secretary came out and said, "He's praying his Breviary [the daily prayer all priests say], so there's no rushing him."

Prayer came first in John Paul II's life. He was a man of intense prayer who knew the importance of his own soul as the key to his ministry. He understood that if he himself wasn't brimming over with God's grace and mercy, he was useless. If he didn't have a strong love for God, he couldn't share it with others. Because, as the expression goes, "You can't give what you don't have."

Here was a man whose own interior life gave him an immense sense of courage in the face of obstacles. Here was a man in whom the words "Be not afraid" were incarnated. Here was a man who touched the Divine. So where did this intense mystical spirituality come from? Why was his soul so alive?

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I believe a key insight into his deep interior life is that he came from the high-octane Catholicism of Poland. Historians have said that Catholicism is literally in the cobblestones of Poland. It's one of those rare places in the world where the faith of the people is in the soil.

In 1920, when Karol Wojtyła was born, Poland was a nation whose soul had been gravely tested. The country had been decimated by the ravages of the World War I and was far from recovery. He grew up, then, with Poland on its knees, both spiritually and materially.

His childhood was marked by tragedy and loss. His mother, whom he could barely remember, died when he was a child. His sister died soon after. The two most important people in his life, then, were his father, a Polish military officer, and his brother, who would become a physician. One day in his late teens, he came home and found his father dead on the floor. His brother, whom he loved and idolized, died not much later, after catching a contagious virus from the people whom he served.

On September 1, 1939, German forces invaded Poland and began six years of Nazi tyranny. Wojtyła was nineteen years old at the time. Members of the Jewish community, which included many of his dearest friends, were taken away. He'd never see them again. One morning he went to serve Mass for the archbishop of Kraków only to find the other altar server missing. The young man was arrested the night before. Wojtyła, himself, was walking home late one night from work-

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ing at a chemical factory when he was hit by a German army truck and left for dead on the side of the road.

In 1945, Germany was defeated. But, historians say, Poland was one of those unfortunate countries that lost the war twice. The Nazi troops were gone, only to be replaced by Joseph Stalin's communist Russia, ushering in four decades of harassment and oppression under a totalitarian regime. Thus, by his early twenties, most of what Karol Wojtyła held dear was lost — including family and friends.

It was in these circumstances of suffering and material poverty that his spiritual life was enriched. He would so often take solace in the words of Jesus: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Mt 10:28, NIV). Is it any wonder, then, that on that glorious day of October 22, 1978, at fifty-eight years of age, when Karol Wojtyła, now as John Paul II, celebrated the Inauguration Mass to begin his pontificate, he said to the Italian throng, "*Non abbiate paura*" ("Be not afraid!")

Here was a man who had every reason in the world to be scared to death. Yet instead of fear, he exuded courage and confidence, because Jesus was alive in his soul. This Divine Presence gave him the strength to restore the exhausted soul of the human person, of the world, and even of his beloved Church.

He started at the beginning — that is, the Book of Genesis — by reminding us that every human person is made in the image and likeness of God. This is a

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God who personally, passionately loves us. We are His children, and God wants nothing more than for us to be with Him for eternity. Pope John Paul II constantly reminded us that when God looks at the human person, He sees a reflection of himself. We are His work of art; we are the apple of His eye. Every time God looks at one of us, He sees the face of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

In this way, John Paul II also reminded all Christians that we must make Jesus the center of our lives. He wanted each member of the Church to meet Jesus on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, hear His words in the synagogue, and to witness His miracles, as if we were one of his disciples in A.D. 30. John Paul II emphasized, then, that truth was not a thing — but a *person*. Truth was incarnate in the one who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (see Jn 14:6). Jesus Christ alone is the answer to the questions posed by every human life.

This also explains, I believe, his emphasis on the Blessed Mother. He had a deep, tender devotion to the mother of Jesus, calling Mary “the first disciple.” This was based on the ancient saying of Saint Augustine and other Church Fathers: before she was mother, she was disciple. You see, it was a tremendous honor for Mary to be chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus, but Mary herself showed her fidelity by saying *yes* and doing God’s will. In her accepting *fiat* — “let it be” — of the Angel Gabriel’s greeting, and in her complete devotion to Jesus (the way only a mother can), Mary, our Blessed Mother, is the icon of *discipleship*. Pope John Paul II

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understood this profoundly and never tired of teaching it as a means of renewing the soul of the Church.

Another way that John Paul II restored the soul of the Church can be summed up best with one word: *solidarity*. The clearest way to understand solidarity is to go back to the first nine days of June 1979, when John Paul II returned to his beloved Poland as Bishop of Rome. They have been dubbed “nine days that changed the world.” Henry Kissinger says that in those nine days John Paul II did for Poland what Winston Churchill did for England amid the horrors of World War II. Mikhail Gorbachev, looking back twenty years later, said that those nine days marked the beginning of the end of communist hegemony.

In those nine days, nearly one-half of the population of Poland came out to see *their* pope. And yet, never did John Paul II say the word “communism.” Nor did he say the word “Russia” or, indeed, anything overtly political. Instead, he spoke about the *soul*. He spoke about the noble truths of our faith and how, ultimately, we are focused on God.

For the first time in many years the people of Poland were able to raise their heads in pride, reminded of their culture, their faith, and their history. They began to recognize that they were not just numbers or cogs in a machine. Rather, people realized that they were individuals made by God, who possessed dignity and value. It was as if each member of these enormous crowds began to think: “I have a proud heritage and rich cul-

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ture. I've got people that share my values. I have a faith, a religion, and a *soul*. I'm not alone, and I'm not afraid."

This spiritual awakening was seen in a particularly dramatic way from the start, when over one million people gathered in Victory Square in Warsaw for the opening Mass. As he began his homily, a few hundred people in a section of the crowd began to chant three simple words. Then others started to pick it up, the chant building to a crescendo. It reached such a high volume that John Paul II was unable to continue speaking. Three simple words. They weren't "Russia go home" or "Down with communism." No, what the crowd chanted was even more powerful: "*We want God*."

It went on for thirty seconds, then a minute, two minutes, with no sign of letting up from the crowd. The nervous master of ceremonies walked over to John Paul II to encourage him to quiet the crowd and said, "Holy Father, perhaps you had better tell them to be quiet, so you can go on." John Paul II smiled, turned to him as if to whisper: "Are you kidding? This is what I came for." The chant continued for several more minutes. "*We want God*." That's what Poland was saying. The country rose up and reclaimed its spiritual heritage. The Polish people had recovered their *soul*!

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the archives of the KGB were released and it was discovered that the head of the KGB in Warsaw had sent a telegram to the Kremlin immediately after the Mass. The telegram simply read: "It's all over." They had lost. A million people had shouted, "We want God." The *soul* of the people of Poland had

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been refreshed as a result of the pope's visit. The man with his own vibrant spiritual life returned home to reawaken the spirit of his people.

Years later, John Paul II's final effort to restore the soul of the Church would be seen in the example of his own suffering. He made a conscious decision to allow us to watch him die. When he became pope, he was a vigorous, strong man, and we often saw images of the pope skiing or otherwise enjoying nature. In 1981, he was gravely wounded in an assassination attempt, and then, beginning in the mid-1990s, a rampant and particularly paralyzing form of Parkinson's disease ravaged his body. Yet he continued to go on. The world watched him weaken, and he taught us the power of the soul — even when the body is failing.

When I was the archbishop of Milwaukee, there was a wonderful young couple who came to me after Mass at the cathedral one Sunday. They introduced themselves as having recently been married and were on their way to Rome for their honeymoon. "Will you be there on a Wednesday?" I asked. They said yes. On Wednesdays, after his usual public audience, the pope had a custom of greeting newly married couples in Saint Peter's Square. When I told them about the opportunity, the bride was very excited. The groom, on the other hand, didn't seem quite as enthusiastic. "Well," he said, "I was kind of hoping you could give us the names of some

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good restaurants in Rome.” I assured him I’d do that, too.

Two weeks later, I saw them back at Mass, and they were both beaming. This time he was even more ecstatic than she was, and I was intrigued by what may have happened to impress him. The young man told me he was so inspired because the pope began to speak and, after about thirty seconds, the Holy Father reached into his pocket, took out a handkerchief, and wiped his mouth, because he was drooling. “I was so moved to see the pope drooling,” he told me. This powerful, formerly vigorous man was drooling for the world to see. And yet, John Paul II had the courage to keep on going, even amid his frailty and suffering.

One image of Saint John Paul that I will never forget was from Easter 2005. There were several hundred thousand people in Saint Peter’s Square, but, as much as he wanted to, John Paul II couldn’t offer the traditional Easter public Mass. The crowds were hoping that at least he could come to the window of his apartment — and sure enough, he did. His attendants wheeled him to the window to give his Easter Address, but he couldn’t speak. His face was contorted, and you could see the frustration, you could feel the agony. Finally, in exasperation, he gave his blessing without speaking. I thought to myself: “It’s over. The role of Peter is to proclaim the Resurrection, and he is unable to do it.”

Then I caught myself, and I realized how wrong my first impression had been. John Paul II, in fact, had just proclaimed the wisdom of the Cross and the power of the

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Resurrection more powerfully than ever. He taught us the victory of the *soul*. This is the message that restores the Church. He died the following Saturday.

It reminds me of the Broadway musical *Les Misérables*. Granted, I don't get to many musicals, but this is one I like. (One of the reasons I like it might be because it's about the only musical I've ever seen where a bishop comes off looking halfway decent!) The story, by Victor Hugo, is well-known. In a pivotal scene, the bishop goes to the hero, Jean Valjean, and says, "I have bought your soul for God." That recognition, the recognition that he has a *soul*, changes Jean's life. It introduces him to a life of conversion and transformation. Saint John Paul II did the same — for the world, for the Church, for all of us.

We have souls. We are not animals controlled by passion, and urges and appetites, but instead we are temples of the Spirit made in the image and likeness of God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus. We have the life of the Blessed Trinity within us. *And we want God.*

Thank you, Pope Saint John Paul II!

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What John Paul II did for the *soul*, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI did for the *mind*. In his almost eight years in the Chair of Peter, he strengthened the intellectual wattage of the Church. With his distinguished academic background, he was particularly well-suited for this task. Benedict was a wonderful teacher and professor. A first-class theologian and philosopher, he was esteemed in Germany — which has a very rigorous academic climate — and thus arrived at the papacy with the ability to tend to the cerebral in a unique way.

He reminded us of the ancient principle that reason and faith are friends, fighting against the misguided idea, unfortunately so common today, that faith and reason are in conflict. Far from it! They're allies. Quoting Saint Anselm, he was fond of saying that we would have a strange God indeed if His most precious earthly gift to us — our mind — and His most priceless supernatural gift to us — our faith — were opposed to each other. Instead, Benedict XVI encouraged the world to consider that God intends both of these gifts, faith and reason, to be in concert.

This ancient insight is even more timely in a world of increasing secularism and atheism. It's an extraordinarily important lesson amid a secular culture that attempts to reduce faith and the practice of religion to a private

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hobby, at best, or an obnoxious, vicious, and oppressive superstition, at worst. Benedict, however, tells us that contrary to what we read every day or hear on the news the Church has been, and remains, the engine of genuine human progress.

The Church's rich intellectual tradition, so beautifully protected and handed down for centuries, is hardly a museum piece, but rather is a living force in the world today. This is because, as Benedict pointed out numerous times, our reason allows us to discover the truth, and truth ultimately points us to God. When reason is enriched by faith and Revelation, we have sparks. We have freedom. We have the ability to know what is true, good, and beautiful in the human person.

The approach Benedict XVI used to teach the Church and the world was what the journalist John Allen termed "affirmative orthodoxy," and I think it is an important key to understanding Benedict's approach.

Orthodoxy means "right teaching" and generally refers to whether the beliefs we hold align with the teachings given to us by Jesus, His apostles, and the Church throughout its history. What Benedict insightfully grasped was that orthodoxy was typically caricatured in a way that made it seem like these liberating teachings were handcuffs or a straitjacket in people's lives. Orthodoxy, it seemed, was always saying *no* to anything that was new, daring, or creative when it came to humanity.

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He knew the Church was being stereotyped as a crabby, whining, naysaying parent, as being *against* everything.

Benedict XVI sought to reframe the issue in a much different way. He asked people to set aside these caricatures and negative impressions of the Church. It's a mistake to see the Church as only saying *no* to people. On the contrary, the Church is really all about one big *yes!* The Church says *yes* to everything that is good, true, and noble in the human project. The Church says *yes* because God said *yes* when He lovingly created us, and Jesus said *yes* when He sacrificed himself for our redemption.

Sometimes, however, it's true that the Church has to say *no to certain types of actions or attitudes*. But it's important to understand that we only say *no* to another *no*. In other words, whenever there's a '*no*' in the human project — something that negates what is authentically enlightening or liberating, or something that violates the sacredness of the human person — we have to say *no*. I learned in logic that two *no*'s make a *yes* — two negatives make a positive. Thus, for example, the Church says *no* to an employer who exploits his workers in any way because doing so negates their human dignity. So, you see, the Church is fundamentally saying *yes* to the goodness and dignity that people possess as beloved children of God. The Church is in the business of *yes*. That's *affirmative orthodoxy*.

One challenge to the Church's *yes* to the world is what Benedict called the "dictatorship of relativism." Recalling Saint Augustine, Benedict XVI said there are some

things that are true even if the world says they're false. Similarly, there are some things that are always false, even if the world thinks they're true. Relativism denies the existence of these moral absolutes or objective truths. Rather, relativism says that the only thing that matters is what *I* think or believe is true — whatever meets my needs, desires, or read on things. The problem with this is that instead of giving us freedom, as it claims, relativism actually makes us slaves. What we see is that the lower, baser elements of the human person begin to dominate as we lose sight of what is true and good in God's plan for us. This negates the human person and derails our fulfillment in Jesus, so the Church says *yes* to authentic freedom by saying *no* to relativism.

This message is certainly not very popular in today's world. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of England, in a talk in New York City, spoke of his respect for Benedict's intellectual leadership. He believes Benedict XVI was calling for believing Catholics and Jews to be a *creative minority*. The task of this creative minority is to challenge the idols of the age, whatever the idols may be: materialism, individualism, consumerism, or relativism. These idols also blind us to things that are truly good, so we observe a loss of the sanctity of marriage, and the nonnegotiable dignity of the human person. Every age has its idols, and it needs prophetic

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voices to show the way to a deeper faith. According to Rabbi Sacks, Benedict XVI was that prophetic voice.

It was a voice that was prophetic not only in the role of successor of Saint Peter, but throughout the remarkable life of Joseph Ratzinger.

Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger was born on April 16, 1927, in Marktl am Inn, Germany. He was born on Holy Saturday and, in fact, was baptized that same day. His father was a police officer; his mother worked as a cook before getting married; and their family lived simply. His brother, Georg, entered the seminary with him, and they were both ordained to the priesthood on June 29, 1951, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. A fitting ordination day for the man who would one day become the successor of Saint Peter and live in the city of Peter and Paul!

After his ordination he devoted himself to further study of philosophy and theology at the University of Munich, and in 1953 he finished his doctorate in theology before becoming a professor. Father Ratzinger was a man who loved philosophy, theology, and the intersection of faith and reason, yet he was a man who spent time not only studying these issues, but also finding their practical application in pastoral ministry.

In 1962, as the Second Vatican Council began, he became a consultor — that is, an expert adviser — for the archbishop of Cologne. He was only thirty-five years old; that he received such an important appointment at this young age was a testament to his intellect and

knowledge. After the council, Father Ratzinger continued teaching and working to see the vision of Vatican II implemented throughout the Church.

Father Ratzinger was named archbishop of Munich and Friesing in March 1977. Three months later, he was elevated to the College of Cardinals. Every bishop chooses a motto for his episcopacy. Whereas John Paul II chose "*Totus Tuus*" — that is, "All yours" — as he devoted his episcopacy to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Archbishop Ratzinger chose, "Cooperators of the truth." Thus we see the emphasis that Joseph Ratzinger placed on knowing and following the truth. It was the most important thing to him, not because truth is a set of propositions that we accept, but rather because Truth is a person: Jesus Christ, who told us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

As a cardinal, he participated in the conclave of August 25-26, 1978, which elected Pope John Paul I. After that short pontificate of only 33 days, Cardinal Ratzinger returned to the Sistine Chapel for the conclave that elected Pope Saint John Paul II on October 16, 1978. On November 25, 1981, Pope John Paul II selected Cardinal Ratzinger to be the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. His responsibility in that role was to "safeguard" Church doctrine, a task that earned him titles — unfair if you ask me — such as "God's Rottweiler" and "Panzerkardinal." However, Cardinal Ratzinger

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always protected the teachings of Jesus and the Church against any deviations from the truth, as was his duty.

After the death of John Paul II, Cardinal Ratzinger, as dean of the College of Cardinals, presided at the funeral of the future saint. On April 8, 2005, he delivered the funeral homily not only from the head but, more importantly on this occasion, from the heart. He spoke beautifully about the last time we saw John Paul II: in the window of the Apostolic Palace to give his blessing *Urbi et Orbi*. Cardinal Ratzinger said: “We can be sure that our beloved pope is standing today at the window of the Father’s house, that he sees us and blesses us. Yes, bless us, Holy Father.”

Only ten days later, on April 19, 2005, he became our next Holy Father, when Joseph Ratzinger was elected the 265th pope. He chose the name Benedict, which in Latin means “blessed.” And what a blessing he was for us!

As pope, Benedict XVI continued to revitalize the *mind* of the Church, often addressing pertinent cultural issues. For example, in September 2011, Benedict visited his native Germany and addressed the Bundestag (German parliament). He said that one of the most noble, uplifting movements in the world today is environmentalism. He pointed out that there is a basic choreography that guides nature and laws that govern ecology. If, however, we start introducing toxic elements to the

environment and tamper with ecology, bad things happen.

He then moved from this natural, or “external,” ecology to “interior” ecology, where he made the same point: God has implanted within the human person an ecology, an environment, a natural balance. It’s a coherent creation, but, if we tamper with it, if we introduce toxic things into it, if we contradict the nature that God has given us, poisonous and disastrous things begin to happen inside as much as they do on the outside.

Thus, in a clear and understandable way, Benedict XVI addressed environmentalism but also taught us about the environment within the human person. This environment contains a sense of right and wrong, a natural law that needs to be obeyed, just like we see in the world around us. Any actions that pollute or defile these laws place the human person at great risk, and in the same way we can see the damaging effects of similar actions on nature. This sense of the interior, *human ecology*, guides the way we act, providing our morality and ethics.

Benedict’s teaching on human ecology gives us profound insight into the human person and morality. It is essential for us to actually understand this internal environment, these interior laws, because they tell us who the human person *is*, from which we can conclude

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things that we *ought* to do. God has given us the *is* of our humanity, and from that *is* comes an *ought*.

Let me give you an example of an *is*: The baby in the womb of its mother *is* alive. The baby in the womb of its mother *is* a human person. That's not from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or some other Catholic teaching; that's Biology 101. From that *is* flows an *ought*: we *ought* to protect that life because life is sacred.

Or another example: We see immigrants at the border, many of which are suffering and even dying. When speaking about the rights of immigrants, we start with the given that the immigrant *is* a human being. He might not have a green card, or she might not have money. But they *ought* to be loved, cherished, and respected. The *ought* flows from the *is*. This understanding of human ecology is an antidote to the dictatorship of relativism because the very *is*-ness that you and I are able to detect within ourselves gives us a sense of right and wrong.

Another bracing teaching from Benedict XVI concerned the relationship between faith and reason. How are they balanced out against each other? Which one is more important? Benedict always focused on the *via media*, or “middle way,” as the answer to this.

The key, Benedict said, is to avoid extremes. One extreme is reason without faith, what we call *rationalism*. It's a thinking that says: “All I need is my brain. All I need is my reason. If I can't see it or prove it in a laboratory, it's not true.” The other extreme is a faith without

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reason. We call that *fideism*. It's a thinking that says: "All I need is faith. I believe blindly, and I don't need my brain." That leads to a shallow, knee-jerk, simplistic mind control. Rationalism doesn't give any space for faith, and fideism won't hold up to contemporary, critical culture.

But the *via media*, the middle way, is that of Catholic wisdom. It's an alliance of checks and balances that says yes to using our intellect and reason without rejecting faith in God; it says yes to a firm belief in God's revelation, miracles, mystery, and grace without rejecting the faculty of human reason. This balance leads to genuine freedom, truth, and happiness, because the good, the true, and the beautiful are embraced as existing both naturally (what we can observe and understand through reason) as well as supernaturally (what we believe in faith).

What Benedict was claiming is that the Church is at her best when reason and faith are involved in a kind of choreography, almost a magnificent waltz. In this waltz we use all the power and all the beauty of human reason that God gave us, coupled with the light of faith in revelation that shines upon us. When these two come together in balance and harmony ... well ... to use a Catholic word: Bingo! We have a symphony! We have a dance.

Finally, Benedict XVI showed us something in his resignation from the Chair of Saint Peter. We aren't used to popes retiring, of course, and obviously he made a very different choice than John Paul II. Yet just as John Paul

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II taught us through his suffering, Benedict XVI taught us through his resignation. He was certainly in better health than his predecessor, but Benedict XVI admitted he was exhausted, he was fragile, and that his health was declining. Whereas John Paul II decided he'd go to the end, Benedict XVI said he could best serve the world, and the Church, by letting go.

After intense prayer, he decided that, ultimately, this wasn't about him. Benedict simply, humbly, recognized it was about Jesus and His Church. Benedict concluded that the best way for him to live up to the sacred mandate given to him as the successor of Saint Peter was to let go.

He knew someone else would take up the responsibility — and indeed now we can look back and see how the Holy Spirit was in charge. But at the time it was very daring and very humbling. And that, perhaps, is his final teaching: the example of humility. Knowing one's limits and knowing in the end it's not about my power, my prestige, or my title. It's about others, *especially the other!* That humility, and that use of his *mind* to arrive at a decision of faith, taught us immensely. Perhaps it was the best lecture he ever gave.

Thank God for the gift of Pope Benedict XVI!

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As John Paul II restored the *soul* of the Church, and Benedict XVI the *mind*, Francis is doing his best to restore the *heart* of the Church.

I was there for the conclave that elected our beloved Pope Francis. Of course, I can't talk much about what happened in the Sistine Chapel, but it was a remarkable experience. When Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio got the two-thirds majority, the first words the vice-dean asked him were, "Do you accept your canonical election as Supreme Pontiff?" After answering in the affirmative, the next question posed to him was, "By what name will you be known?" When he said "Francis," there was an audible murmur. Perhaps it's because when we think of Saint Francis of Assisi we think of creation, love, and compassion for the poor. In an era of the Church rightly celebrated for intellectual achievements in theology and philosophy, Francis reminded the people of tenderness, the imagination, God's warmth and embrace. The choice was so natural and so beautiful; from the beginning, we knew that Pope Francis would be leading with the *heart*.

After his election, he went to a small room known as the Room of Tears, which is off to the side of the Sistine Chapel. This is where a new pope goes to change into his white cassock. We cardinals had noticed the room when we went into the Sistine Chapel at the beginning of the conclave. (In fact, when we passed by it the first

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time I could see there were three cassocks ready: small, medium, and large. I knew I didn't have a chance when there was no XXL!)

Francis came back out, in his new white cassock, stood in front of us and ... *shrugged!* He was then to go to a chair on a podium, where each cardinal could approach to give him our love and allegiance, one by one. As we started to go up, he surprisingly walked down the steps, down the center aisle, and toward the back of the Sistine Chapel. We all wondered where he was headed. Personally speaking, I wondered: "Is he going to the bathroom? If he is, where's it at? I need one too." (We'd been in there for a while.)

All jokes aside, he was walking toward two cardinals in the back: one with a walker and one in a wheelchair. When Francis saw them from up front, he immediately went to greet them, realizing it would be uncomfortable for them to walk up front to him. Well, that is about as ordinary and down-to-earth as you can get. It's the type of common courtesy that, sadly, is most uncommon today. Yet here's a pope who did this spontaneously and naturally.

About this time, the Sistine Chapel doors had opened and all the attendants started coming in. Having been cooped up during the conclave, we had all sorts of questions. "Did the smoke work?" "What are the crowds like?" When someone asked what the weather was like, one of the Swiss Guards said it was raining, and at this the pope perked up immediately. He'd only greeted a few of us, but said: "My brothers, I hear it's raining

outside. I'm going to be with you for supper, and we can talk then, but I don't want to keep the people waiting. I should go out and greet them." It was again spontaneous, simple, and sincere. It also reaffirmed what we cardinals had known: this was a man with an innate sensitivity.

That evening, we cardinals went back to the *Domus Sanctae Marthae* for our final meal. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone proposed a toast. Francis got up to return the toast and looked at all of us with a twinkle in his eye and said, "May God forgive you for what you did!" Of course, we don't want forgiveness at all. We rejoice in his pontificate, and we thank God for the gift he is to the Church.

When I was at the Synod of Bishops in October 2014, we were still getting used to the style of his pontificate. One day, during a morning break, I was in line to get a cup of coffee. I turned around only to find him in line, as well. I said, "*Salve, Santo Padre*" — that is, "Hello, Holy Father."

He replied, "*Salve, santo figlio*," or "Hello, holy son." To which I said: "I hope I am! Would you make that an infallible statement?" A simple, normal conversation, just like the kind you might have with a good friend.

The first pope of the Americas, Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on December 17, 1936. The son of Italian immigrants, he grew up with a love of soccer (and the tango!). As a Church historian, I

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can assure you that tango isn't the type of thing seen on the résumé of many popes!

He graduated as a chemical technician, but then responded to God's call to the priesthood. In 1958, he chose to enter religious life and joined the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits. The Jesuits are a religious order, which means that each man takes vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. In fact, there is a fourth vow of the Jesuits, as well: a vow of obedience in regards to the mission of the pope. It is quite touching, when you think about it, to have a Jesuit pope for the first time.

Within the Society of Jesus, Jorge Bergoglio taught literature and psychology, while also studying theology and preparing for the priesthood. He was ordained on December 13, 1969. He continued his formation and ultimately made his final profession with the Jesuits in 1973. It also should be noted that though much is made about his heart, rarely is it mentioned that he received his doctorate in theology in Germany in the mid-1980s.

Throughout his priestly ministry, Father Bergoglio was a man of the people. Many of the qualities we associate with Pope Francis nowadays could be seen throughout his life. His focus on the poor? He was quoted many times as saying, "My people are poor, and I am one of them." He was popular with the people and preferred a very simple lifestyle, living in a small apartment, cooking for himself, and even taking the bus to work. In fact, some would say he lived an almost "ascetic" life.

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After rising to leadership positions within the Society of Jesus, Father Bergoglio was eventually named archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998. Three years later he became a cardinal. Even as cardinal-archbishop of Buenos Aires, he spent time in the slums. He spoke not in highly theological language, but instead used the vocabulary of the people. Many of the colloquialisms and easy-to-understand reflections on living the Christian life that he's known for as pope were common in his homilies then, too.

His inaugural Mass as Bishop of Rome was on March 19, 2013, the feast of Saint Joseph, and a pope's first homily is a kind of inaugural address. They're usually very diplomatic and very formal. So, naturally, we cardinals were all wondering what he would say. Well, first of all, the homily was only eleven minutes. I already applauded him for his brevity! Let me also add that this did not diminish in any way its beauty or power. It was simply about tenderness, pointing out it was the feast of Saint Joseph, and asking us to imagine how tenderly Joseph carried the Baby Jesus, how tenderly he cherished his virgin wife. And he invited each of us to let God be tender with ourselves, encouraging us to be tender with one another and with creation.

I was sitting next to the cardinal-archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, and after the homily was over Cardinal Schönborn turned to me with tears in his eyes. He said, "Tim, he speaks like Jesus." I said, "Chris, I think that's the job description." Pope Francis continues to show tenderness at the heart of

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the Church. He will even risk having his heart broken, encouraging the Church to dream and to dare.

In this way, Pope Francis reminds me of Bernini's masterful colonnades in Saint Peter's Square. Bernini said the columns are the arms of Holy Mother Church, reaching out to embrace the world and bring the world into the Church. Pope Francis reminds us that this embrace is especially necessary in the face of tragedy. We have seen his deep pain and heartbreak in many places: at Lampedusa, Italy, commemorating the hundreds of refugees who died when their boat from Africa sank; when talking about the crisis faced by refugees from Syria and elsewhere. He also seems to have radar for those on the side of the road: the sick, the homeless, the forgotten, and the struggling. How many times has he showed us a heart with a burning desire for the poor? His tender, loving heart reminds us of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Pope Francis's love of the poor echoes a great story about Saint Lawrence. Back in the third century, the prefect of Rome called him in and demanded: "Lawrence, I want all the riches of the Church. You've got three days to bring them here or I'm unleashing a persecution."

Three days later, Lawrence returned and the prefect went with anticipation to his balcony to see what Lawrence had brought. When he looked out on his courtyard, the prefect saw Lawrence with beggars, the blind, the homeless, the poor, and the sick. When the prefect asked, "Where are the treasures of the Church?" Law-

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rence replied, “*These* are the riches of the Church.” No wonder he ended up on a grill to be burned alive.

Pope Francis is always speaking about the Church. But he awakens our conscience to see that the Church is not a cold institution. Nor is it just an NGO or an agenda-driven ethical society. Instead, he reminds us that the Church is a family, a family *of* the heart and *with* a heart.

Communicating this truth about the Church is one of the more pointed pastoral challenges we face today. If you read the scientific research or the polls, they’ll tell you: Most people don’t have a problem with God, but they do have problems with the Church. Many people want to believe but don’t want to belong. They want Jesus as their Shepherd without being a member of the sheepfold. They want Christ as their King without being a member of the Kingdom. They want Jesus as their Commander, but they don’t want to belong to the army. They want God as their family, as long as they’re the only child. In other words, they want Jesus without the Church.

But Francis reminds us that you can’t have Jesus without His Church. That’s because Christ and His Church are one. Francis understands that by restoring the heart of the Church, people will remember that the heart of the Church is, itself, the heart of Jesus Christ.

The Church is, yes, the spotless bride of Christ. The Church is pure, noble, and good. But her *members* have a long way to go! Pope Francis has won a lot of ac-

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colades because he knows the Church can be a dysfunctional family. And he says so. Have you ever met a dysfunctional family? If you haven't, you're welcome to my house for Thanksgiving! Because, let's face it, all of our families have dysfunction. We're dysfunctional. So is the family of the Church.

Pope Francis isn't afraid to speak about the warts of the Church. He's not afraid to say that the people in the Church, including its leaders, sometimes mess up, and that we need reform, renewal, and correction. This isn't new, of course. There's an ancient Latin saying, *Ecclesia Semper Reformanda*: The Church is always in need of reform. I wonder if this is why he chose the name Francis.

Saint Francis, when he was trying to figure out what God wanted him to do with his life, was in the dilapidated church of San Damiano, on the slopes of the city of Assisi. He was praying in front of a crucifix when Jesus spoke to him: "Francis, rebuild my church." Francis, looking around at the run-down building, got to work restoring it physically. With hammer, nails, and brooms, he cleaned up the church building and restored it.

But the Lord spoke to him again, saying, "Francis, rebuild my Church." And Francis understood it was church with a capital C. He then began the renewal of the Church, for which he is renowned today.

Now we have Pope Francis, who's renewing and rebuilding the Church with authenticity, charity, and simplicity. He's doing so by leading with the *heart*, with

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no personal agenda other than to preach the Gospel of Jesus and to invite people into the embrace of Holy Mother Church. By accenting the heart of the Church, the Church can be animated once again. The Church can begin to recover its verve, its nerve, its dream, and its dare. The heart that was once clogged is beating vigorously again.

So many have asked me: “Who’s doing this man’s marketing? Who’s his PR agency? They are brilliant!” Of course, Pope Francis has no public relations firm or agent! He exudes simplicity and sincerity. His script is the Gospel, and he leads from the *heart*.

Thank you, Pope Francis!

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On March 13, 2013, as I stood with my brother cardinals overlooking Saint Peter's Square, with Pope Francis on the balcony, I was reminded of something the late Cardinal Francis George, former Archbishop of Chicago, had told me. He remembered how, on April 19, 2005, the day of the election of Benedict XVI, he looked out from the portico of Saint Peter's Basilica at the city of Rome. Cardinal George could see the ruins of the Colosseum, and the many ruins of Rome's pagan gods of the past. He could see the ruins of Nero's house. He could see Benito Mussolini's balcony and the remnants of the kingdoms and world powers of the past 2,000 years. Their rulers all thought their domains would endure forever, and yet they have all disappeared.

And there, on that balcony, was the successor to Saint Peter. Peter was a man who had come to the city of Rome, the great world power, to preach Jesus. He was arrested by Emperor Nero, and would be crucified right where the crowds were now cheering. When Peter was about to be crucified, he said he was not worthy to die in the same way as the Lord. So they crucified him upside down, and he died on the hill they call the Vatican.

Cardinal George wondered if our first pope, perhaps for the first time, finally got it, as he saw the world turned on its head. Maybe Peter thought back to that day when he met the Rabbi on the shores of the Sea of Galilee

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who said, “Come, follow me,” and literally turned his life upside down.

And now we have his successors: John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Francis. These are men in our time who have turned the world upside down, reminding us of the *soul*, the *mind*, and the *heart*.