

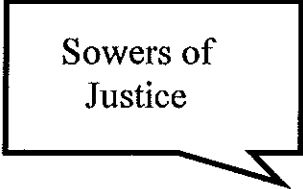


# Sowers of Justice Newsletter

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St. Mary of the Lake, 105 Forestview Lane N., Plymouth MN 55441

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Sowers of  
Justice



## Fresh Air from Pope Francis

Like his predecessor Pope John XXIII, Pope Francis stuns the secular world with his engagement. In August he gave an extraordinary interview to Antonio Spadaro, S. J., editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, an Italian Jesuit publication. Subsequently it was translated, edited, and printed in the Jesuit magazine *America*, entitled "A Big Heart Open to God." Pope Francis muses on issues from a very human point of view. Read the full text online: <http://www.americamagazine.org/pope-interview>.

### Pope Francis' words

Discernment is always done in the presence of the Lord, looking at the signs, listening to the things that happen, the feeling of the people, especially the poor.

No one is saved alone, as an isolated individual, but God attracts us looking at the complex web of relationships that take place in the human community. God enters into this dynamic, this participation in the web of human relationships.... And the church is the people of God on the journey through history, with joys and sorrows. Thinking with the church, therefore, is my way of being a part of this people. And all the faithful, considered as a whole, are infallible in matters of belief, and the people display this *infallibilitas in credendo*, this infallibility in believing, through a supernatural sense of the faith of all the people walking together. This is what I understand today as the 'thinking with the church' of which St. Ignatius speaks.... [W]e must be very careful not to think that this *infallibilitas* of all the faithful I am talking about in the light of Vatican II is a form of populism. No; it is the experience of 'holy mother the hierarchical church,' as St. Ignatius called it, the church as the people of God, pastors and people together. The church is the totality of God's people.

But the proclamation of the saving love of God comes before moral and religious imperatives. Today sometimes it seems that the opposite order is prevailing.

God is certainly in the past because we can see the footprints. And God is also in the future as a promise. But the 'concrete' God, so to speak, is today. For this reason, complaining never helps us find God... We must enter into the adventure of the quest for meeting God; we must let God search and encounter us. Because God is first; God is always first and makes the first move.... Although the life of a person is a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God....God does not mislead hope; God cannot deny himself. God is all promise.

[O]ne cannot speak of poverty if one does not experience poverty, with a direct connection to the places in which there is poverty.

When does a formulation of thought cease to be valid? When it loses sight of the human or even when it is afraid of the human or deluded about itself.... The thinking of the church must recover genius and better understand how human beings understand themselves today, in order to develop and deepen the church's teaching.

**CBS Radio News** quoted **John Allen**, a senior correspondent with the *National Catholic Reporter*:

I think he is conscious that he's at a sort of make-or-break moment where the kind of pope he wants to be - if he wants to affect real change - he's got to be explicit about it," ... "I think there are going to be many Catholics who find this kind of language from a pope refreshing and encouraging, what they've been waiting for for a long time," said Allen. "Others probably will be upset by it.... Nothing Francis said indicates any change in church teaching. But he has set a different tone and signaled new priorities compared to Benedict and John Paul — priorities that have already been visible in his simple style, his outreach to the most marginalized and his insistence that priests be pastors, not bureaucrats.

**USA Today**:

Now, this most unorthodox of popes is making waves again with his most comprehensive interview since he was elected to the Holy See in March, displaying the blunt language and straightforward style that has garnered him legions of fans and critics alike. ... The pope breaks no new ground on doctrine, but the remarks underscore his progressive attitude six months into his papacy, showing a desire to cement the perception of the Catholic Church as a place of healing and mercy, not judgment and finger-pointing, theologians say. "He wants to change people's perception of the church's moral teaching," says Chad Pecknold, a theology professor at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. He says it was striking that Francis compared the church to a field hospital, a spiritual place for healing in the face of today's moral and social dilemmas....Although Francis has not broken with previous teachings on many key issues, his humble manner and ease of explaining difficult theological issues in laymen's terms have met with strong responses among Catholics, even lapsed Catholics, and other Christians.

**National Catholic Reporter's Phyllis Zagano** on the omission of comments on women in the English version of the interview:

What was lost in the English translation has been found. The Italian editor wrote about Francis: "In an interview he had affirmed that the feminine presence in the Church has not fully emerged, because the temptation of machismo has not left space to make visible the role women are entitled to within the community." After speaking of his idea for a "theology of women," Francis said: "It is necessary to widen the space for more incisive feminine presence in the church." Interpret the meaning of his words as you will. That is what the pope really said. I cannot understand how it got past all those smart folks *at Americc* and their small tribe of translators. I think it is important.