

from the current pope—his chosen name, the self-reformation he requires of the Curia, and his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (*EG*). O’C. discerns areas where *EG*’s teaching builds on but goes beyond Vatican II, including that other Christians are no longer separated brethren, but pilgrims journeying alongside Catholics, and that Christians cannot consider Judaism a foreign religion.

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The Francis Effect: A Radical Pope’s Challenge to the American Catholic Church. By John Gehring. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. Pp. xvii + 267. \$32.

The strength of Gehring’s treatise is his juxtaposition of the fresh winds of mercy and reform that Francis has unleashed alongside the history of the transformation of the American bishops from the 1970s to the present.

G., who is Catholic director at the advocacy group Faith in Public Life, recounts how in the initial years after the Second Vatican Council, the American bishops were a powerful force for social justice, for economic reform, and for international disarmament. But after his election in 1978, John Paul II put a severe brake on the reforming energies of the council. And as the bishops of the 1970s retired, the new appointments in the American hierarchy became known for a narrow agenda more closely aligned with one political party. G. states that during the 35 years that John Paul II and Benedict XVI led the church, leading American Catholics “baptized the Iraq War, made an idol of unfettered markets, and narrowed Catholic identity to a checklist that aligned neatly with the Republican Party” (19).

Although the council had resurrected the earlier ecclesial understanding that a local bishop had near sovereignty on pastoral care in his own diocese, John Paul II not only reined in the bishops, but quashed innovative initiatives in religious orders and among leading theologians. In addition, the men selected as bishops were scrutinized for what passed for orthodoxy on birth control, married clergy, and the ordination of women. The result was that, with some notable exceptions, the American bishops became increasingly defensive and more at war with the culture than engaged with it. G.’s chapter explaining how the American Catholic Church became a “culture warrior church” (19) aptly captures the denouement of the hierarchy’s effective public leadership.

Even after Benedict published an encyclical in 2009 that denounced the “scandal of glaring inequalities” and included passages about the prudent oversight of global markets, George Weigel “knowingly assured us that the pope did not really believe what he said” but had to accommodate the curial officials in the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (20).

The battle for the identity of the church which ensued over three decades often paralyzed the church and muted its witness to Christ and the Gospel. In addition, the Supreme Court decision *Roe vs. Wade* in 1973 stirred up Catholics to address the

destructive effects of the court's decision. But the question of how to address abortion in the political, legal sphere became increasingly divisive, even among Catholics.

The other major event which led the church and especially its hierarchy to retreat from a vigorous public engagement with vital justice issues was the cataclysmic sexual abuse scandal. Bishops almost necessarily spent more than half their time addressing the scandal, putting vital procedures for the protection of children in place, trying to provide pastoral care for the victims, and simultaneously managing the multiple lawsuits.

The subtitle of G's book is misleading: *A Radical Pope's Challenge to the American Catholic Church*. A pope who preaches the gospel of mercy and who urges the universal church to get on with the reforms of the council cannot be considered radical. Refreshing and authentically prophetic, yes; radical, no. Only those resistant to his message of mercy, his call for discernment, his embrace of God's love, and his simplicity of life would consider him radical.

More than once Francis has excoriated a remote, narcissistic hierarchy more concerned with its own clerical privilege than it has been for the poor, the marginalized, the wounded, and the outcast. His rejection of the trappings of papal power invites all the bishops to do the same.

The "Francis effect" has not yet resulted in any notable uptick in vocations to the priesthood or religious life; nor has a marked increase in Sunday participation in the Eucharist occurred. At the moment the Francis effect occurs more broadly in vigorous conversations about access to the Eucharist for divorced and remarried, about LGBTQ rights, about Catholic identity of institutions, religion and politics, and a younger generation that has left the church in droves.

Anyone wanting a smart, readable, and optimistic account of the Francis era will welcome G.'s account.

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Renewing Islam by Service: A Christian View of Fetullah Gülen and the Hizmet Movement.
By Pim Valkenberg. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2015.
Pp. xx + 288. \$65.

Valkenberg renders an important service to anyone either interested in the Hizmet Movement, engaged in Christian/Muslim dialogue/theology, or desirous of encounter with an Islam unlike the popular media's portrayal. Although V. confesses having only a "basic grasp of Turkish" (68), he nonetheless does a yeoman's job of thoroughly examining the religious motivations, sources, ideas, and goals of Turkish-Muslim thinker, preacher, and spiritual guide, Fetullah Gülen (who resides in Pennsylvania), and the loosely organized Hizmet (service) movement whose millions of members he inspires. V. reviews the main published works of Gülen and a growing body of scholarly-secondary literature, but also he analyzes the many websites associated with Hizmet, interviews various members and non-members about their interactions with