



# Pope Francis: Why He Leads the Way He Leads

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**Pope Francis: Why He Leads the Way He Leads** Chris Lowney

**TIME Magazine's Person of the Year: Pope Francis**

**Learn about the First Jesuit Pope from America's Leading Jesuit Publisher**

***"Pope Francis* by Chris Lowney is that rare and splendid work that leaves you keenly excited and spiritually moved. The writing is lucid, vivid, inviting, and rich. It's a major achievement. I strongly recommend it to any Christian in a leadership role."**

**- Joseph Tetlow, SJ**

From choosing to live in a simple apartment instead of the papal palace to washing the feet of men and women in a youth detention center, Pope Francis's actions contradict behaviors expected of a modern leader. Chris Lowney, a former Jesuit seminarian turned Managing Director for JP Morgan & Co., shows how the pope's words and deeds reveal spiritual principles that have prepared him to lead the Church and influence our world—a rapidly-changing world that requires leaders who value the human need for love, inspiration, and meaning.

Drawing on interviews with people who knew him as Father Jorge Bergoglio, SJ, Lowney challenges assumptions about what it takes to be a great leader. In so doing, he reveals the "other-centered" leadership style of a man whose passion is to be with people rather than set apart. Lowney offers a stirring vision of leadership to which we can all aspire in our communities, churches, companies, and families.

## Pope Francis: Why He Leads the Way He Leads Details

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# **From Reader Review Pope Francis: Why He Leads the Way He Leads for online ebook**

## **James 'jim' says**

A good summary of Ignatian spirituality as exemplified by Pope Francis. It also shows how good leadership has a spiritual underpinning.

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## **Wanda says**

What a gift I gave to myself at Christmas!!!. An excellent reading to everybody. A clear and simple message for each one of us.

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## **Robin says**

I was disappointed. The author seemed to primarily be drawing parallels between his background (Jesuit) and management style with those of Pope Francis. I was expecting a book about why Pope Francis leads the way he does, not about why Chris Lowney leads the way he does.

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## **Sister says**

Very engaging. I borrowed it from a friend and now I want my own copy. I have a better understanding of Pope Francis with each book I read - this is no exception. He certainly seems to be a person who leads by example and isn't afraid to "smell like the sheep". There are many nuggets of wisdom here, even a leadership manifesto in the last chapter. I don't think it matters whether you are leading a small group or a large organization, you can find much in this book to help you be better.

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## **Earl says**

A real must if you are (a) still wondering how the Francesco phenomenon works in the Church, (b) still searching for your own leadership style, or both.

As for me, a lot of these things are really familiar to me as a seminarian, and I think it's good that we share this great treasure that the Pope brings to everyone.

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## **Raul Rodriguez says**

It was an inspiring read. Understanding the challenges, real power and responsibility of leadership in a

changing environment is simply stated and humbling.

A passage that stayed with me in his call to service,

"Do not just look, do something. Once you walk among us and know our reality, you will never be content to witness suffering passively".

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### **Joe Boenzi says**

Recommended to me by one of my students, I bought this book as a resource for a course that I am teaching in the "theology of Church" (ecclesiology). However, during the Easter Season I used this book for my own spiritual reading, taking time with each chapter.

What is different about this book on the pope is that the author normally writes management or business leadership books. That is obvious from the tone and structure. Yet, the author admits from the beginning that he was educated by the Jesuits and that he had lived as a member of the Order for a period of time -- the order to which Jorge Bergoglio (Pope Francis) belongs. He traces the actions and style of Pope Francis to the Jesuit heritage that developed from the founder Ignatius de Loyola over five centuries. This is an important consideration, for Francis is the first Jesuit ever to become pope. His ideas and experiences are grounded in discernment and an apostolic mentality. Lowney cites specific examples from the pope's actions and discourses. The book is respectful, enlightening and practical.

For those who are looking for a better understanding of the Catholic Church under Pope Francis, this is a particularly useful resource.

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### **Joanne says**

Lowney, a former Jesuit and then investment banker, looks at how Pope Francis' Jesuit training makes him uniquely qualified to lead the Catholic Church at this time of crisis. The world is changing rapidly, and the Catholic Church throughout the world is seeing precipitous declines in membership. The former pope called repeatedly for "urgent" change, but that's hard for a 2000-year old, traditionalist organization to do.

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### **Laurie McClary says**

This was originally posted on my website: [www.lauriemcclaryblog.com](http://www.lauriemcclaryblog.com)

I had some reservations about this book when I first picked it up. I wasn't sure what to expect.

Not being Catholic, how would this book apply to me? What does a Pope have to say about leadership with any relevance to the world outside the Catholic Church?

However, within the first couple of pages I was quickly reminded that in the world of today we all have influence. Everyone has a platform and I do mean everyone. Be it family, CEO, or new hire at fast food restaurant.

Then, there is the internet. It opens a whole other door for ordinary people to lead the spreading and implementing of ideas. Hence, this is a time when we are all called to lead. And, as always, the world is desperate for great leaders.

Therefore, the question becomes, being a leader, why would I not want to look to charismatic people who are leading and inspiring people without sacrificing integrity? Indeed, as the book shows us, Pope Francis is one such person.

So, where did the Pope acquire his leadership capabilities?

The author, Chris Lowney, and Pope Francis share similar backgrounds. Specifically, they both attended Jesuit Seminary. It was in Jesuit seminary that they both experienced leadership formation developed by influencing vision, decision-making, and priorities. However, as opposed to the Pope, Lowney's career took him away from leadership within the church and into Managing Director for JP Morgan & Co.

Lowney gives illustrative stories about Francis and the life of the Jesuit, He shares fascinating experiences and values that led both Francis and himself to where they are today. It is written creatively by weaving the religious and the secular together to give insight to great leadership.

Now, after reading this plainly spoken and well-researched book, I feel I have a little more insight into the Pope. Therefore, I find myself paying closer attention to him and what the media reports. I hear of him kissing people with AIDS, washing the feet of a female Muslim prisoner and driving a Ford Focus. These are the actions of an influential man who is leading by showing us actions we need to take, by challenging the status quo and by connecting to people.

Other Stuff:

Opening Line: There is no leadership training program for popes-to-be.

Closing Line: As Cardinal Bergoglio once put it, "My hope in God is in the journey, and in the quest in allowing myself to search." May we feel similarly about our own journey.

The meaning: We need new ways of imagining leadership and better ways of preparing ourselves and others to lead. Looking to Pope Francis and his leadership is one way of doing that.

Highlights: At the beginning of each chapter there was a quote from Pope Francis. The last chapter had this quote, "Our life is a journey, and when we stop moving, things go wrong." Homily, March 14, 2013

Lowlights: It made the Pope look too perfect. It would have been nice to have read one story where the Pope blew it and what he learned from that

Memorable Line: "Fix your gaze on the mission, the vision, the goal that ultimately draws and inspires; and then make yourself free to race after it, free from anything that might hold you back." Pg.114

Final Thoughts: Pope Francis understands why God gives power, it is to serve others.

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## **Sarah says**

I wasn't sure what to expect with this book. Would it be a business book? Or a spiritual book written by a business guy? Or a biography with business tips? Or...something altogether different?

Turns out, the answer is yes.

This is a book of lessons, yes, but it's also a book of insight. So much has been said about Pope Francis. The man can't say a sentence without people jumping in to interpret and explain.

Lowney takes a different approach. He has Jesuit training and shares some important background with Pope Francis, so he uses that as the lens through which he considers what we can all learn from Pope Francis.

It's hard to believe, really, that this is based off of a year. In some ways, that's the beauty of it.

It's not overwritten or stretched out: this is a book that's tightly written and well-researched. It reads like a book off the NYT bestseller list, minus the snark and cynicism.

I found myself appreciating Jesuit spirituality more, because Lowney explains it. In learning more about it, I suddenly have a view into Papa.

This book is partly journey, partly lesson, partly fun reading. Highly recommended.

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### **Jim McTague says**

Compelling, well-written book which examines the Pope through the lens of his Jesuit formation. Lowney suggests that leaders adopt the Francis approach to management, which essentially is the credo of Francis Ignatius, the Spanish soldier who founded the Jesuit religious order. You don't have to be Catholic to enjoy this provocative call for leaders to be morally grounded.

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### **Peter Atkinson says**

In *Pope Francis – Why He Leads The Way He Leads*, Chris Lowney reveals how Pope Francis' Jesuit background has shaped his leadership principles. The author draws on 3 sources of information to illustrate Pope Francis' leadership style:

- What he has been “saying and doing” during his papacy;
- Leadership values he emphasized while supervising Jesuit trainees in Argentina;
- Principles he learned during his own Jesuit training.

Lowney identifies “six habits and convictions” (9) that define Pope Francis' leadership – habits and convictions that, at face value, seem somewhat paradoxical.

In Chapter 2, Lowney identifies a few aspects of Jesuit training that heavily influenced Pope Francis' leadership values. St. Ignatius developed Spiritual Exercises – a series of meditations on Jesus' life, the novice Jesuit's personal history, and how specifically the novice might follow Jesus. Lowney believes that “These Exercises are almost certainly the most fundamental influence on the pope's spirituality.” (12) Another Jesuit influence on him has been the “frontier spirit” of Jesuit missionary life. A third influence is the expectation that young Jesuits teach.

In chapters 3 and 4, Lowney explores Pope Francis' first two apparently contradictory convictions: know yourself deeply but live to serve others. Before he was ordained, the pope wrote a credo that reflects his profound understanding of himself: I am flawed, I am a good and gifted person, and I am called to offer my gifts. Lowney explains how the pope's credo drives him to lead with integrity and purpose:

- I am flawed. I can't function effectively in the world if I give free rein to every impulse. I owe it to myself to battle my own demons.
- I am gifted and fundamentally good. There is a unique contribution that I can make, and therefore,
- I am called to lead. (39)

In Pope Francis' view, a leader must, though, transcend self to serve others. Lowney shares as the symbol of Pope Francis' devotion to serving others his memorable Holy Thursday 2013 washing of the feet of several male and female young people in the Casal del Marmo juvenile detention centre. He also gives other examples of the pope's humble service to others, such as the time when he was bishop and flew from Argentina to Japan and back just to spend a few hours with seminarians studying there. When invited by them to spend his time in Japan sight-seeing, he declined, saying, "I came here to see you." (46)

Chapters 5-6 address Pope Francis' third and fourth convictions: immerse yourself in the world but withdraw from the world daily. Telling examples Lowney provides of the pope's commitment to engaging in the commonest elements of everyday life are taken from his time spent running a seminary in Argentina. While there, he would rise early each morning to do the laundry and to feed the pigs on the farm attached to the Colegio Maximo complex. He also insisted that the young Jesuits he trained went into the impoverished nearby neighbourhoods to teach catechism to the children. As pope, he continues his immersion in the world by rejecting the idea of living in the isolation of the papal apartment, and instead, choosing to share meals and live among the other residents of the Vatican guesthouse. Lowney describes the pope's leadership as dirty-footed: "Those dirty feet – Bergoglio's at the pig trough and the seminarian's in the barrio – crystallize a vital but increasingly endangered leadership habit: the commitment to stay in touch, deal with reality, accept accountability for one's work and decisions, and recognize that we humans are all inextricably linked. (59)

During his Holy Thursday 2013 homily, he directed priests to "tend their flocks so attentively that they would come to bear the 'smell of the sheep.'" (72) Throughout the first year of his papacy, he personally called and emailed individuals to model his leadership theme of remaining "grounded", learning from people before you teach them, and treating "each person as a uniquely dignified individual." (73) The wisdom of Pope Francis' dirty-footed leadership is thus:

- You can't lead us if you don't know our reality;
- You will know our reality only by walking among us;
- Don't just look; do something and learn something. (66)

Paradoxically though, Pope Francis' antidote for dealing with the problems and challenges of the world is his fourth conviction - to "Step back from it all" and "commit to a regimen of reflection [particularly prayer]." (74) He modeled this value on his first day as pope by foregoing administrative duties to pay a visit to St. Mary Major Basilica to pray. Lowney points out that the pope's emphasis on "decluttering his mind to refocus on priorities" (80) several times a day is grounded in the Jesuit practice of the Examen – the daily examination of conscience. Lowney humorously suggests we use the "Bergoglio app" to remind ourselves everyday to carve up some daily reflection time: "Even the dumbest of smartphone alarms can be programmed to chime us into a few moments on nonaction each day." (87)

The final two convictions of the pope, as identified by Lowney, are the subjects of chapters 7 and 8: Live in the present and revere tradition, but create the future. The author explains that Pope Francis' commitment to always attending to the moment is based on Jesuit tradition which states "Do what you are doing". (92) He shares as an example the time when the pope was Cardinal and risked being late for an appointment in order to hear the unplanned confession of a distraught man. Then again, pope has made several pronouncements like the following on the importance of basing actions on Catholic values of the past: "A Christian without memory is not a true Christian ... he or she is a prisoner of circumstance, of the moment." (98)

Though he reveres the Catholic values and traditions of the past, Pope Francis is not overly attached to the status quo, according to Lowney. He argues that the pope inherited from Ignatius of Loyola, the Jesuit founder, a bias for action. Ignatius, a proponent for missionary zeal, told his followers, "Live with one foot raised." (123) For Lowney, it's the pope's belief in momentum and progress that drive his commitment to change.

Lowney postulates two steps in Pope Francis' change philosophy. The first step is depicting a new culture for the Catholic Church. He wants a "humbler, simpler Church" that embraces "those at society's peripheries – the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized. 'How I would like a Church that is poor and for the poor,' he has told journalists." (126) The next step is moving from vision to action, which requires four aspects of change agency:

- Unify the team around a common mission;
- Put the mission ahead of self-interest;
- Don't run from the future; run toward it;
- Be biased toward action and tolerate failed experiments. (128)

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## **T Lewandowski says**

Wonderful, thoughtful book. Written by a man who completed part of the Jesuit formation program. Good insights both for the spiritual person and those without a religious/spiritual affiliation. Will be one to re-read.

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## **John says**

A fascinating look at Pope Francis from an ex-Jesuit who has written about leadership. Several fascinating tales about the pope's life.

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## **Jennifer says**

This book illustrates a common sense approach to leadership with an Ignatian spirituality twist. Certainly Pope Francis's leadership style, which is grounded in his Jesuit training, is a wonderful back drop to convey how to lead others in a moral, ethical, and effective manner. This Christian/Catholic spin to leadership training using many of Pope Francis's experiences, quotations, and anecdotes is lovely, but the bottom line is still the same: A great leader lives in the present, reveres traditions, and creates the future. Does any leader NOT know this already?



