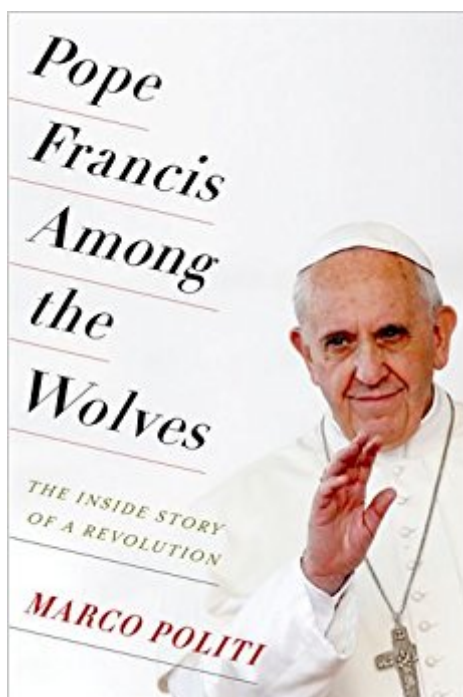


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Pope Francis Among The Wolves: The Inside Story Of A Revolution



Synopsis

Marco Politi takes us deep inside the power struggle roiling the Roman Curia and the Catholic Church worldwide, beginning with Benedict XVI, the pope who famously resigned in 2013, and intensifying with the contested and unexpected election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, archbishop of Buenos Aires, now known as Pope Francis. Politi's account balances the perspectives of Pope Francis's supporters, Benedict's sympathizers, and those disappointed members of the Catholic laity who feel alienated by the institution's secrecy, financial corruption, and refusal to modernize. Politi dramatically recounts the sexual scandals that have rocked the church and the accusations of money laundering and other financial misdeeds swirling around the Vatican and the Italian Catholic establishment. Pope Francis has tried to shine a light on these crimes, but his work has been met with resistance from entrenched factions. Politi writes of the decline in church attendance and vocations to the priesthood throughout the world as the church continues to prohibit divorced and remarried Catholics from receiving the communion wafer. He visits European parishes where women now perform the functions of missing male priests—and where the remaining parishioners would welcome the admission of women to the priesthood, if the church would allow it. Pope Francis's emphasis on pastoral compassion for all who struggle with the burden of family life has also provoked the ire of traditionalists in the Roman Curia and elsewhere. He knows from personal experience what life is like for the poor in Buenos Aires and other metropolises of the globalized world, and highlights the contrast between the vital, vibrant faith of these parishioners and the disillusionment of European Catholics. Pope Francis and his supporters are locked in a battle with the defenders of the traditional hard line and with ecclesiastical corruption. In this conflict, the future of Catholicism is at stake—and it is far from certain Francis will succeed in saving the institution from decline.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Columbia University Press; Tra edition (September 15, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0231174144

ISBN-13: 978-0231174145

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 1.1 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (21 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

In this volume, translated by William McCuaig, Marco Politi provides what is described as an "inside story of a revolution" waged by an Argentine cardinal, Jose Mario Bergoglio, who was elected Pope of the Roman Catholic Church in March 2013. With regard to the book's title, Politi recalls a legend: "Saint Francis of Assisi once met a wolf, to which he addressed a mild sermon. Won over by the saint's words, the fierce animal grew gentle and submissive, lowered its head, and followed him. The adversaries of Pope Francis, however, are not so quick to yield." In a homily dated 23 February 2014, Pope Francis observes: "A cardinal enters the Church of Rome, my brothers, not a royal court. May all of us avoid and help others to avoid, habits and ways of acting typical of a court; intrigue, gossip, cliques, favoritism, and partiality." By all accounts since then, Pope Francis has been actively engaged in eliminating or avoiding throughout and beyond the Vatican the "habits" and "ways" to which he referred. Given the opposition to what some characterize as a "revolution," consider this brief excerpt from the book: "His objective is to involve bishops, clergy, and laity in his project for change. Yet it is difficult to reform the Catholic Church and even more difficult to change its long-standing mechanism of command. The opponents are tenacious, and behind the scenes their aggressiveness has provoked a growing campaign to make the pope look illegitimate. Their hope is that the Bergoglio pontificate will end soon.

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