



Letters to Pope Francis: Rebuilding a Church with Justice and Compassion

Matthew Fox

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The election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio to the Papacy marked a series of historic Papal firsts—first Jesuit, first from the Americas and first from the Southern Hemisphere. But most moving was his being the first to take the name of St. Francis. At a time when the Vatican is embroiled in decades-long scandals of the Curia and its clergy around the globe, this act has inspired the world to hope for a church rebuilt in the spirit of his namesake, Francis.

Former Dominican priest Matthew Fox presents a series of heartfelt letters to his brother in Christ about the great challenges facing the church today, drawing from the deep spiritual and theological sources that have been suppressed since Vatican II, and implores him to restore the *sensus fidelium* (the sense of the faithful) and reshape a church with justice and compassion.

“LETTERS TO POPE FRANCIS is a polemic against the calcified power structure the pope inherited; but his tone is one of clear respect for the addressee...Fox deserves credit for his relentless consistency as a radical; he kept arguing for a church to broaden its thinking and boundaries, to welcome the outcasts, while the bishops and Vatican turned in, shunning clergy abuse victims, turning nuns into heretics and by the way disgorging billions in legal losses for sheltering pedophiles. One can pity Pope Francis for the mess he has before him; but by criticizing an imperial economy that wreaks injustice on the poor, this pope is digging toward the same taproot that animates Matt Fox. It is unlikely the handlers around Pope Francis would ever let him get a book like LETTERS TO POPE FRANCIS. But...It is not a stretch to imagine this Francis nodding at certain passages from Fox, a latter-day Jeremiah with his trumpet wailing at the wall.” —Jason Berry in *The Global Post*

"Just published, the book is a welcome set of missives, echoing themes that are at once familiar and well argued. Surely, the new Pope will never read these letters, but one wishes that he would, particularly before planning what he will say to millions of Catholic youth in Rio de Janeiro later this month...the bulk of this thought-provoking book is sanely reasoned and profoundly important. I hope that Catholics will read it." — Jon Sweeney on *The Huffington Post*

"Matthew Fox's creation spirituality is the spirituality of the future; and his theology of the Cosmic Christ is the theology of the future." — Father Bede Griffiths

“Matthew Fox might well be the most creative, the most comprehensive, surely the most challenging religious-spiritual teacher in America. He has the scholarship, the imagination, the courage, the writing skill to fulfill this role at a time when the more official Christian theological traditions are having difficulty in establishing any vital contact with either the spiritual possibilities of the present or with their own most creative spiritual traditions of the past...He has, it seems, created a new mythic context for leading us out of our contemporary religious and spiritual confusion into a new clarity of mind and peace of soul, by affirming rather than abandoning any of our traditional beliefs.” — Thomas Berry

"History will name Fox one of the great Christian spirits of our age." — John Shelby Spong

“Those who illumine the questions of life walk a dangerous path. They hold up for examination the very

pilasters of the systems that depend on them for its credibility. They threaten old paradigms and open new possibility where once only cocksure certitude had been. Galileo did such things and suffered for it. Luther did such things and was exiled for it. Matt Fox did such things and cast a light into the recesses of the medieval mind that was a whole world wide. He brought to light again the notions of basic wholeness and the essential goodness of creation. He gives us all new light into the nature of God in the nature of the self.”
— Sister Joan Chittister

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