

## September Informational

A very good article on **global warming**:

[http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/04\\_33/b3896001\\_mz001.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/04_33/b3896001_mz001.htm)

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An excellent site for finding the **meaning of acronyms** - over 300,000 stored here:

<http://www.acronymfinder.com>

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Check out your awareness skills ... concerning **the US penny**:

[http://www.exploratorium.edu/exhibits/common\\_cents/index.html](http://www.exploratorium.edu/exhibits/common_cents/index.html)

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**ALL of Murphy's laws** can be found here: <http://www.murphys-laws.com/>

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### **Laughter is necessity for healthy Christian, says Jesuit magazine**

HUMOR-CIVILTA Jul-15-2004 (360 words) xxxi

By Cindy Wooden [Catholic News Service](#)

ROME (CNS) -- While faith is not a laughing matter, a healthy Christian is able to laugh, according to an article in the influential Jesuit magazine *Civiltà Cattolica*.

"If a Christian lacks a sense of humor, it is a sign, among other things, of a religious education too focused on conformity," said the article by Jesuit Father Luciano Larivera.

The mid-July article, "The Nature and Necessity of Humor," offered a dry survey of modern neurological, psychological and philosophical studies on humor, laughter and smiles, as well as a brief discussion of humor and spirituality.

The studies show "adults laugh on average 18 times a day, while children laugh 10 times as much," Father Larivera wrote. "Behavioral biologists maintain that hilarity contributes to the survival of our species; otherwise we would have stopped laughing millennia ago."

The priest also referred to recent laughter-is-the-best-medicine studies showing that when someone laughs "there is an increase of endorphins and a reduction of substances which weaken the immune system."

On the spiritual side, he said a healthy and mature sense of humor consists in a person's ability to see the absurdity present in his or her own life and to be somewhat detached from it.

The ability to laugh at oneself, he said, coincides with the Christian virtue of humility and with an awareness that, while the religious life involves striving to do God's will, God surpasses all human understanding.

With humility as the basis of one's sense of humor, he said, one can avoid the pitfall of being trivial, silly or ignorant of the real pain existing in the world and the real sacrifice made by Christ to bring salvation.

Father Larivera cited a study by a Belgian psychologist demonstrating that people who have a tendency toward religious fundamentalism "tend to avoid humor" because it "undermines their sense of security" and their impression that being always faithful means being always serious.

On the other hand, he said, St. Thomas Aquinas made it clear that, while it was not appropriate for Christians to act like buffoons, "virtue consists in knowing how to distance oneself, how to play and to laugh."

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Here's a **neat exercise in coloration** ... and what it might say about you:  
[http://www.chinapaint.com/eng/flash/colorandme\\_en.swf](http://www.chinapaint.com/eng/flash/colorandme_en.swf)

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**THIS IS FROM JOHN ALLEN'S WEEKLY ONLINE COLUMN FROM NCR -- THE NEXT PAPACY**  
<http://www.nationalcatholicreporter.org/word/word060404.htm>

Last week I traveled to Washington, D.C. for the convention of the Catholic Press Association. It's a gathering of writers, editors and other staffers representing the nation's diocesan publications, and I had been asked to share a panel with Fr. Richard John Neuhaus of *First Things*. Our topic was the next 25 years in the life of the Catholic Church...The text of my presentation follows.

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...I make no pretense of having either Fr. Neuhaus' depth of experience or clearly articulated point of view and will limit myself to a more strictly reportorial approach, which I will outline in a moment.

First, however, I'd like to briefly lay out the perspective I bring. I am what the Italians call a *Vaticanista*, meaning that it is my full-time professional work to track the vicissitudes in this 108-acre island of ecclesiastical life in the heart of modern urban Rome called "the Vatican." Concretely, this means that several times a year I have the opportunity to go to the third floor of the Apostolic Palace, into the papal apartments, to watch the Holy Father receive some dignitary, usually a head of state. Almost every day I'm in Rome takes me in and out of some office of the Roman Curia. I'm in constant phone and e-mail contact with officials of the Curia, trying to keep my finger on the pulse of what's going on. My life is composed of a seemingly infinite series of congresses, symposia, plenary assemblies, book presentations, press conferences, lunches and dinners and embassy parties. All are venues in which contacts are developed that are the lifeline of covering any beat, especially one that emphasizes a personal rapport with sources like the Vatican. Finally, I move when the pope moves. In the last three and a half years, therefore, I've been with the Holy Father to Greece, Syria, Ukraine, Canada, Guatemala, Mexico, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Spain, Croatia, Slovakia and Bosnia.

The advantage of my job is that I get to watch this institution day in and day out, developing a warts-and-all understanding of what makes it tick. That is true not just of the Vatican, but also of the College of Cardinals, the body that will elect the next pope (and out of whose 125 members under 80 the next pope will be selected). By this stage, I've interviewed more than 60 cardinals about their vision of the future of the church, and the profile of the kind of leadership the church will need. Hence what I hope to offer this morning is the fruit of that experience.

### **Approach**

What I intend to do is a bit of political analysis. I will sketch what I have come to see as the four basic currents of thought within the College of Cardinals, identifying in each case a representative cardinal who is currently regarded as a serious contender to be pope. Then I will tease out consequences of this cardinal's election on three key issues sure to be on the next pope's agenda: collegiality; evangelization; and the church's relationship with Islam. In this fashion, I will put together four possible scenarios of where the Catholic church might go over the next 25 years.

### **Issues**

Let me briefly outline the three issues. I did not select these three themes at random; they are instead the most common issues I hear in conversations with cardinals, when I ask what will loom largest when it comes time for them to vote.

- **Collegiality:** This terms gathers up a number of questions about how power is exercised and decisions made in the Catholic church. A number of cardinals believe that for a variety of complex historical reasons, the power of Rome in the 19th and 20th centuries over the local churches was expanded to an unprecedented degree, and that various attempts to inject balance have been largely unsuccessful. Some of these cardinals would argue for a greater role for bishops in setting policy in the universal church, while others support greater

freedom for bishops in governing their own dioceses. Others, however, see a strong papacy as essential in a world in which secularism, relativism, and various nationalisms threaten the unity of the church. Still others see "collegiality" as a code word for broader questions about power in the church, especially how laity can collaborate on matters such as personnel, finance and administration.

- **Evangelization:** While the Catholic church recorded impressive gains in parts of the world in the 20th century, especially Africa, Latin America and Asia, the traditional cradle of Catholic culture in Europe is experiencing an ecclesiastical winter. Vocations have experienced dramatic declines, Mass attendance rates are in some cases in single digits, and the diminished public influence of the church can be seen from the fact that 12 European nations now have some form of civil registration for same-sex unions, and three offer full marriage rights. Given the rising tide of Islamic immigration, some fear a day when Christianity will no longer be the dominant religious impulse in Europe. One striking statistic: there are already more practicing Muslims who go to mosque on Friday in the United Kingdom than practicing Anglicans who go to church on Sunday. While the signals are more mixed in North America, one can certainly find similar indicators of crisis. What pastoral strategy is best suited to revitalize Christianity in the developed world will certainly be among the front-burner debates.

- **Islam:** Before Sept. 11, 2001, several cardinals believed that the church's relationship with Islam was among the most important challenges facing the next pope. Now, virtually all think so. Broadly speaking, there are two camps. Doves believe that the church must reach out to moderate centers of opinion. By denouncing social and political injustices that the suffering of Muslim peoples, the church will demonstrate its friendship to Islam, as well as its independence from Western political agenda. Efforts to convert or confront Muslims are rejected. Hawks say it is naïve to believe there is such a thing as moderate Islam, in terms of social influence. In the near term, they believe that in the zones where Christians and Muslims rub shoulders -- Indonesia, North Africa, the Arab world, Europe -- the reality is likely to be conflict, and Christians had better be ready. That means demanding reciprocity for religious freedom in the West, calling a spade a spade when Muslims engage in terrorism, and not turning the other cheek when Christian communities are under assault.

### **The Parties**

Let me briefly sketch what I see as the four "political parties" in the College of Cardinals. Obviously, these are not parties in the traditional sense -- there are no conventions, no bumper stickers, no soft-money issue ads. They are more like loosely defined bodies of thought. At the same time, they do represent distinct options for the future of the church.

1. **The Border Patrol:** These are theological conservatives worried about the impact of relativism and secularization. The principal fear is that Catholicism will gradually assimilate to the surrounding culture. The remedy is doctrinal clarity. Catholicism must have the courage to speak its traditional truths boldly, even, perhaps especially, in the face of a culture that no longer wants to hear them. The price may be contraction in size and social influence, but the church will be more faithful and therefore stronger. The champion of this view within the College of Cardinals is clearly Joseph Ratzinger, the Holy Father's top doctrinal official.

2. **The Reform Party:** These cardinals support internal reform in the church along the lines indicated by the Second Vatican Council. For example, greater "collegiality," meaning decentralization, a greater tolerance of diversity and experimentation, and a reform of the Roman Curia in order to make the papacy more acceptable ecumenically. They are less negative in their diagnosis of contemporary secular culture than the Border Patrol. They grant the dangers of relativism and secularization, but are also encouraged by more positive trends such as the contemporary human rights movement, which create the possibility for dialogue. One exponent of this view is Cardinal Godfried Danneels of Brussels, Belgium.

3. **The Integralists:** "Integralism" refers to the belief that society should be ordered according to the teachings of the Church. The state should protect, fund and promote the church, and the church in turn blesses and demands obedience to the state. Integralists insist that one's political choices be clearly aligned with Church teaching (think Archbishop Raymond Burke's position on Catholic politicians and abortion). Integralists tend to have a special focus on cultural issues such as gender, sexuality and biotechnology, and hence they include some of the church's most fierce "cultural warriors." One leading voice is Cardinal Angelo Scola of Venice, Italy.

4. **The Social Justice Party:** The interest of these cardinals lies in social issues such as debt relief, globalization, and racial justice. While their motivation is rooted in gospel values, these cardinals are less committed to specifically "Catholic" arguments. Instead, they tend to seek coalitions with other movements and forces in society that share similar objectives. One of their emblematic causes is the massive international campaign seeking debt relief for the most heavily impoverished nations of the Third World. One cardinal associated with this point of view is Cardinal Claudio Hummes of Brazil.

### **Four Papacies**

Despite the astonishing stamina of John Paul II, at some point the Holy Father will go to his reward and the Catholic church will find itself at a crossroads. Let's consider what each of these four prospective pontificates

might mean over the next 25 years.

**A Ratzinger Papacy:** Ratzinger is a classic conservative with a distrust of bureaucracies, and is wary of over-concentration of power, including in Rome. At the same time, there is no doubt that on core issues of Christian identity, Ratzinger would lead a strong papacy. One key governance concern is strong bishops -- shepherds capable of teaching, sanctifying and governing. Anything that diminishes the bishops' authority would be problematic. Hence there would be little enthusiasm for instruments such as National Review Boards. On evangelization, a Ratzinger papacy would be deliberately counter-cultural. In a world that is toxic to Christian values, and after a post-conciliar period in which the church uncritically let down its guard, Ratzinger would promote a more inward-focused Catholicism, intent on speaking its own language and living in its own subculture. The church cannot evangelize, this logic runs, if it is not itself evangelized. On Islam, a Papa Ratzinger would be in the "hawk" camp, steeling Christianity for struggle. Dialogue would continue, but it would be more critical. Overall Ratzinger would seek a smaller but more unified Church, a "mustard seed," one whose reduced size produces a more intense fidelity.

**A Danneels Papacy:** Papa Danneels would aspire to be the pope of collegiality. One could expect to see a deliberative role for the Synod of Bishops and a thorough reform of the Roman Curia, limiting Rome's capacity to intervene with local churches, and ensuring that its composition reflects the broader Catholic community. (Among other things, Danneels has said he would name women to run curial dicasteries). Another ecumenical council is possible, but in the meantime conciliar structures at lower levels, such as regional synods, would develop. On evangelization, Danneels believes that a more engaged and optimistic church, using the language of beauty rather than condemnation, is the right dialogue partner for the Western world. A Danneels papacy would not change the church's teaching on sexual morality, for example, but would issue fewer disciplinary documents, and spend more time promoting Christian families in order to offer models of faithful monogamous heterosexual marriage. On Islam, Danneels would pursue the "dove" program of reaching out to moderates and critiquing injustices that harm Islamic peoples. His foreign policy would reflect the basic outlines of the European Union approach on matters such as the Middle East and Iraq.

**A Scola papacy:** An essential difference between the Border Patrol and the Integralist instinct is that Integralists are more focused *ad extra*, more optimistic about the church's capacity to form culture. As such, reform of ecclesiastical structures would be a comparatively low priority, stacked up against the urgent work of fostering distinctively Christian cultural proposals -- a Catholic understanding of gender, for example, to counter the influence of secular feminism. Evangelization would be the hallmark of his papacy, but not in the sense of "inculturating" the Christian message to make it more digestible. Instead, Scola would challenge the ethos of tolerance that pervades pluralistic democratic cultures -- on abortion, on reproductive rights, on new biotechnological innovations. It would mean a more scrappy, confrontational Catholic church, closer to what Americans have come to call "the religious right," though with a more solid intellectual underpinning. A Scola papacy would be contentious with respect to Islam, since it would foster an integrally and explicitly Christian vision of the virtuous society. One flashpoint would be Europe, since a Scola papacy would try to revitalize the continent's Christian identity, seeking to contain the influence of Islam.

**A Hummes Papacy:** Though Hummes is conversant with the theological literature in the West, he regards many debates over the fine points of how the synod works, or the primacy of the universal church, as analogous to counting how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. The overwhelming challenge facing the church, from this point of view, is addressing the structural inequalities in the world that condemn millions of God's people to poverty, disease, and civil unrest. Hence, Hummes would practice collegiality, but may not pursue a thorough program of structural reform because he would have other priorities. On evangelization, Hummes would address resources to developing nations, seeing the struggle for human dignity as itself a form of evangelization. He would also focus on resisting the inroads of aggressive evangelical and Pentecostal "sects" in Latin America and, increasingly, Africa. To that extent, his might be a somewhat less "ecumenical" papacy than the present. Reflecting his Latin American background, Hummes is not well schooled in Islam, but could be expected to bring sympathy for the underdog to key Islamic concerns such as the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

## Conclusion

While I cannot guarantee that one of these four men will be the next pope, I can construct plausible electoral scenarios in which each could be elected. This reflects the reality that no one of the four parties has a two-thirds majority in the College of Cardinals, and hence trade-offs will be inevitable. The outcome is impossible to anticipate. In other words, the deck has not yet been stacked and the die has not yet been cast. The story of the next papal election is being written now, and the psychology of the cardinals who will cast ballots is still being

shaped by the public discussion in the church today. For all those concerned with the future, this is a conversation well worth joining.

## Who Knew? U.S. Presidential Trivia

John Roach  
for National Geographic News  
August 27, 2004

### How They Measured Up

The smallest President was James Madison (1809-17). The fourth President, Madison stood 5 feet, 4 inches (163 centimeters) tall and weighed less than 100 pounds (45 kilograms).

Henry Harrison, the ninth U.S. President, died of pneumonia on April 4, 1841. Only a month earlier he had given the longest U.S. presidential inauguration speech on record—in the snow.

The tallest President was Abraham Lincoln (1861-65). He stood 6 feet, 4 inches (193 centimeters) tall.

The heaviest President was William Howard Taft (1909-13), who sometimes tipped the scales at more than 300 pounds (136 kilograms) during his tenure. After he became stuck in the White House bathtub, Taft ordered a new one installed. The replacement was big enough to hold four grown men of average size.

The oldest President ever elected was Ronald Reagan (1981-89). The 40th President took office at the age of 69.

The youngest *elected* President was John F. Kennedy (1961-63), who reached the White House at 43. But the youngest President to ever serve was Theodore Roosevelt (1901-09), who was elected Vice President on a ticket with President William McKinley. In September 1901 a deranged anarchist shot McKinley twice in Buffalo, New York, and Roosevelt assumed the top office at 42.

### At Play

Benjamin Harrison (1889-93), the 23rd President, was the first President to attend a baseball game. He saw the Cincinnati Reds beat the Washington Senators 7 to 4 on June 6, 1892.

William Taft started the tradition of the Presidential "first pitch" of baseball season. The event took place on April 4, 1910, during an opening day game between the Washington Senators and the Philadelphia Athletics.

Since Taft's first pitch, every President but one has opened at least one baseball season during their tenure. The exception: Jimmy Carter (1977-1981).

John Quincy Adams (1825-29), the sixth President, customarily took a nude early morning swim in the Potomac River.

George Washington (1789-1797), Thomas Jefferson (1801-09), and John Adams (1797-1801) were all avid collectors and players of marbles.

### Assassination and Death

Four sitting Presidents have been assassinated while in office: Abraham Lincoln, James Abram Garfield (1881), William McKinley (1897-1901), and John F. Kennedy (1961-63).

Six other Presidents were luckier and survived their assassination attempts: Andrew Jackson (1829-37), Theodore Roosevelt (1901-09), Franklin Roosevelt (1933-45), Harry Truman (1945-53), Gerald Ford (1974-77), and Ronald Reagan (1981-89).

Other Presidents have died while in office:

- William Henry Harrison (1841), the ninth President, died of pneumonia one month to the day after making—in the snow—the longest U.S. presidential inauguration speech on record.
- Zachary Taylor (1849-50), the 12th President, died in 1850 of an inflamed stomach and intestines just 16 months after he took office.
- Warren Harding (1921-23), who presided over a scandal-plagued administration, died suddenly on August 2, 1923. Medical records suggest Harding battled high blood pressure and died of a heart attack. But rumors at the

time claimed Harding either took his own life or was poisoned by his wife, who sought to end Harding's notorious philandering.

- John Adams (1797-1801), the second President, and Thomas Jefferson (1801-09), the third President, both died on July 4, 1826. Calvin Coolidge (1923-29), the 30th President, was born on July 4, 1872.

### **Geography**

The first President born a U.S. citizen was Martin Van Buren (1837-41). Van Buren was delivered on December 5, 1782, making him the first President born after the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Virginia is the birthplace of the greatest number of Presidents. It boasts eight. Thirty-one states have never claimed a native son as President.

Teddy Roosevelt was the first President to travel abroad while in office; he visited the Panama Canal in 1906.

In 1943 Franklin Roosevelt made the first Presidential flight.

Richard Nixon was the first President to visit all 50 states.

Bill Clinton set a record for the most trips abroad: 133.

### **Elections and Politics**

George W. Bush, the 43rd and current President, lost the popular vote to Al Gore in 2000. Bush is the fourth President to attain the highest office in the U.S. without the backing of the majority of the people. He shares the distinction with John Quincy Adams, Rutherford G. Hayes (1877-81), and Benjamin Harrison.

James Monroe (1817-25), the fifth President, received every Electoral College vote except one. The holdout: a New Hampshire delegate who wanted to preserve the legacy of George Washington, the first and only President elected unanimously by the Electoral College.

Gerald Ford (1974-77) was the only President to serve who was not elected by U.S. voters either as President or Vice President. In 1973 then-President Richard Nixon (1969-74) appointed Ford Vice President after former Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned. When Nixon resigned from the White House on August 9, 1974 (the only President to do so), Ford became President.

Bill Clinton (1993-2001), the 42nd President, was the second President to be impeached. In 1998 Clinton was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives but acquitted by the Senate. Andrew Jackson was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives in 1868, but he was also later acquitted by the Senate.

George W. Bush is the second President to follow in the footsteps of his father. George Herbert Walker Bush was the 41st President. John Quincy Adams (1825-29), the sixth President, was the son of John Adams (1797-1801), the second President.