

## REVIEW

A POPE FRANCIS LEXICON, edited by Joshua J. McElwee and Cindy Wooden. Collegeville, Minnesota : Liturgical Press, 2018 [www.litpress.org](http://www.litpress.org)

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On December 27, 2017 Liturgical Press launched the print and e-book editions of a new volume on Pope Francis's specialized vocabulary. The 204-page book has two introductory texts: a Foreword by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the archbishop of Constantinople, and a Preface by Cardinal Seán O'Malley, archbishop of Boston. There follow 52 brief essays (most of them 3- 4 pages long) by noted bishops, theologians, and journalists from 16 countries : Argentina, Australia, Canada, Greece, Honduras, India, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Nigeria, the Philippines, Spain, U.K., Ukraine, U.S. and Zimbabwe. All of the essays were written in English except two which were translated from Italian and two translated from Spanish.

Where were the Pope's words selected from? From his Encyclicals, homilies, interviews, meditations, pronouncements, speeches and tweets.

What are the key words of some of the essays? Capitalism, Church, conscience, creation, dialogue, dignity, ecumenism, family, gossip, grandparents, hope, immigrant, Jesus, justice, leadership, money, periphery, reform, refugee, Saint Francis, throwaway culture, women, worldliness, youth.

What words are conspicuously absent from this otherwise comprehensive book ? Gospel, human rights, and Peace.

Who is the author of the essay on Dignity? Professor Tina Beattie, Catherine Siena College at the University of Roehampton in London. What important distinction does she make in her inspiring essay? Between intrinsic and extrinsic dignity. The former "pertains to the nature of our being" ( p.44) and the latter "refers to how we live" (p.45). Beattie tells us that "Francis refers to many ways in which dignity is undermined or violated by the selfishness, consumerism, and freneticism of modern life" and points out that the Pope "relates human dignity to the rest of creation "(p.45).

Given the vast conceptual territory covered by this extraordinary volume, the inclusion of an Index would greatly enhance its (in)formativity, thus helping readers find other relevant words in Pope Francis' lexicon. Readers familiar with the Pope's acclaimed *Laudato Sí* Encyclical (2015) will be delighted to see it quoted 6 times in the admirably well written essay on Worldliness by Mollie Wilson O'Reilly.

In short, an illuminating volume, inspiring both in content and style. May it be translated into many languages. Especially recommended as an introduction to Pope Francis' diverse and dignifying lexical wisdom.