

# Pope Francis in America: A Biased Perspective

By Joseph Montville, Director, Program on Healing Historical Memory at S-CAR, jmontvi1@gmu.edu

Washington, DC, Manhattan, and Philadelphia were paralyzed yet filled with excitement. John Paul II had drawn big enthusiastic crowds on his visits, but there was a distinct quality of multi-faith and even atheistic excitement for Francis.

He had forsworn the limousine after his election as pope, and taken the minibus with his fellow cardinals back to their rooms. He chose to live in a small apartment and not the grandiose traditional apartment of the pontiff.

Francis visited young prisoners in Rome and washed their feet on Holy Thursday before Good Friday in 2013. The twelve youth included two women and two Muslims.

The next year, he went to a home for the disabled and washed the feet of Christians, non-Christians, and non-believers. Traditionally, popes would wash the feet of priests.

That's what he does. There is a strong tradition among certain Hebrew prophets, known intimately to Jesus of Nazareth, and revealed to Prophet Muhammad, which enjoins believers to care for the poor and the

sick, the widows and orphans — those most needy and often treated as the least among us.

Francis was all Jesus all the time. But not a finger-wagging critic or fire and brimstone preacher. Since we are all sinners — I'll risk a blatant generalization here — Francis drew almost everyone in. (There was one Arizona Republican congressman, a Catholic even, who boycotted the joint meeting of Congress because he said Francis was too liberal and believed in the dangers of climate change. He sent out a fund-raising letter extolling his courage.)

In New York, the Washington Post reported that after Francis addressed the UN General Assembly and prayed at the World Trade Center site, he drove up to Central Park.



Joseph Montville Meeting with Pope Francis in June 2015.  
Photo: Joseph Montville.

COMMENTARY

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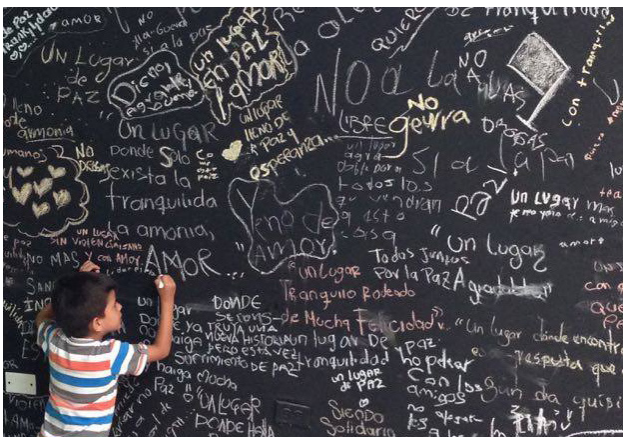
# Reconciliation from the Bottom Up: Experiences from San Carlos and Granada

By Laura Villanueva, PhD Student, lvillan2@masonlive.gmu.edu and Andrea Bustamante, Political Scientist and International Development Specialist, Graduate Institute Geneva, andrea.bustamante@graduateinstitute.ch

Jacqueline, Sandra, Claudia, and Rubiela, a delegation of local women peacebuilders from Colombia, shared their bottom-up peacebuilding experiences with the S-CAR community on September 10, 2015. Granada and San Carlos, two municipalities in the state of Antioquia, were among the hardest hit by violence and displacement. Between 1995 and 2006, paramilitary groups, the national army, and the guerrillas battling for control of the territory led to the killing of thousands and displaced around 80% of the population. After President Uribe (2003-2005) held dialogues with the paramilitaries, the violence subsided. When the current President, Juan Manuel Santos, signed into law the Victims and Land Restitution Law, the displaced began to return to their communities. What followed was bottom-up reconciliation efforts by the people in both San Carlos and Granada.

The four local women peacebuilders shared their efforts in rebuilding the social fabric of their communities. They shared their personal experiences in the conflict, discussed reconciliation initiatives, and expressed a common goal of restoring the dignity of all the victims of the conflict. These efforts ranged from clearing land mines, building the *Salón del Nunca Más* (the Hall of Never Again), *Jardín de la Memoria* (the Memory Garden), and memorials in public squares, to creating youth-programs addressing mental trauma, choosing educational pedagogy such as the Waldorf method, and building psychosocial approaches appropriate for dealing with the trauma in their communities.

Among the many initiatives in Granada, the community built the *Hall of Never Again*, which was not only a physical space but also a place for members of the community to view photos and read stories of the victims. Another initiative, *Granada Siempre Nuestra* (Granada Always Ours) is an NGO and a local initiative that promotes socio-cultural projects.



A child writing on the chalkboard in San Carlos.  
Photo: Jake Rollow.



A Peacebuilding Candle Lighting: Jordan in San Carlos.  
Photo: Casey Ehrlich.

They work towards integral community development that encompasses both educational and entrepreneurial processes. In continuing to build from the local level, they have developed psychosocial approaches for dealing with trauma in Granada that focuses on 'rebuilding imagination' because they believe that the first thing that is limited in a victim is their capacity to imagine another reality.

In San Carlos, the *Memory Garden* is a place where members of the community can plant a symbolic paper flower with the name of a victim. Each color has a different meaning: for the people who survived and returned, the color is light green. For people who were displaced, the color is a dark green and for those who were forcefully displaced, the color is purple. Yellow stands for those who died from land mines, red is for those who were assassinated and white is for women who were raped. Orange represents all those who resisted and dark blue is for those who were forcibly recruited. The garden is full of colors and representative of the complex and painful reality of the conflict.

The lessons they shared about the bottom-up approach used in their communities as well as their personal stories of resilience illustrated the power of the reconciliation model the community is building. The ideas were born from the community and financed by the Colombian government and international community. In 2011, San Carlos won Colombia's National Peace Prize. In light of the agreement between the FARC and the Colombian government that was signed on September 23rd, these local experiences from San Carlos and Granada are a valuable lesson on how the local people can reimagine and rebuild their lives in their communities. ¡La Paz es Imparable! Peace is Unstoppable! ■

# Nailed to the Doorframe: How Past Experiences Inspired Change

By Charles Davidson, PhD Student, [cdavids5@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:cdavids5@masonlive.gmu.edu)

The gates slammed behind us and we were all locked in San Pedro Prison in La Paz, Bolivia. We were surrounded by what seemed to be a tightly packed neighborhood complete with small grocery stores, seamstress shops, and Coca Cola signs. I looked down at my forearm revealing illegible permanent sharpie writing in Spanish that I had been haphazardly informed would be my way out when it was ready to leave. I thought wryly to myself, "let's not rub this off in the next few hours." I also noted that there were what seemed to be as many children in the prison as there were adults. I was later informed that children were incarcerated with their parents as they have nowhere else to live. "The children are paying the price of the parent's crimes."

I simply could not get that statement out of my head. It stuck with me for a week after we returned to the United States and I wound up typing the statement into Google to reveal more about this notion. What the search returned would change the course of my life forever. Article after article described children in war zones who by no choice of their own were suffering due to the decisions that adults in their countries were making. After researching more about the most war-torn places on Earth, I nailed a piece of notebook paper to my doorframe so that I would see it every day as I worked to finish my undergraduate studies at the University of Arkansas.

When the time came, I asked my spiritual mentor, "how should I begin?" His response was unreserved and without alternative, "You can do nothing if you are ignorant about the situations abroad. You need first-hand knowledge about people if you are going to respond to their needs in any productive way...so leave, get out of here and go there." This began an 8-year journey of mine, living in and researching the world's war zones. My search for this knowledge has taken me to Afghanistan, Iraq, Uganda, Colombia, Lebanon, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Around year three, I started to notice a pattern. Living in Colombia, I learned that there existed at the



Charles Davidson (fourth from the left -standing) with D.R.C. military and Police along with local Mai Mai after discussions about the necessity to release children from their ranks .

Photo: Charles Davidson.

time something like 60 organizations working to alleviate the needs of street children in Bogota alone. I wondered: If so much effort was being exerted, why there was any need at all remaining? What I learned was that there was, for many of the organizations, a complete lack of sustainability or reproducibility mechanisms within the organizations. The more I traveled the world, the more I was able to understand just how deep a problem this was for many of the NGOs working in war-torn countries worldwide.

Armed with these experiences, the mission of ForgottenSong, the NGO I subsequently founded, focuses on sustainable, reproducible, native-led business initiatives which aim to make a long term-impact on the vulnerable populations of war-torn countries. We have since started projects in Iraq, Uganda, and Burundi and are about to launch in the D.R.C. Our initial project in Kampala, Uganda, a poultry project comprising 1000 chickens, has since been replicated 75 times. In Burundi, we have seen an almost 7-fold growth on our initial financial investment after only 14 months and sustainability throughout the current civil unrest.

After several years of work, I began to understand just how important higher education was going to be in furthering my options and in sharpening my skills, and I knew that I needed to balance my life experience with academic knowledge to be as effective as I can be. After one year as an Anthropology Master's student, I knew that S-CAR was going to be the place that would foster continued growth and allow me to continue to pursue my passions. After learning more about the ways that S-CAR prepares academics and practitioners for future work, I saw my horizons quickly expanding.

I am not yet sure where I want to go in the field of conflict analysis and resolution, but my goal is always to remember the sheet of notebook paper nailed to my doorframe and to grow ForgottenSong until we have a presence in every war-torn country in the world... We'll see what happens. ■

initiatives

# Strategies in Reducing Religious Sectarianism: Voices from the Field

By Najla Mangoush, PhD Student, nmangous@masonlive.gmu.edu

**O**n Friday, October 2, 2015, the United Nations General Assembly hosted an event that looked to offer concrete strategies in reducing religious sectarianism through the lens of Libyan and Kenyan case studies.

This high level event in New York was organized by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the United States Department of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, and Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) together with the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers. It brought together decision makers, policy experts, religious leaders, tribal leaders, and civil society stakeholders to discuss the drivers of sectarianism and ways it impacts conflicts and mediation efforts.

The event, "*Strategies in Reducing Religious Sectarianism: Voices from the Field*," started with opening remarks from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Timo Soini. He stressed the importance of religious and traditional leaders in the pursuit of sustainable peace and complimented the efforts of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers in enhancing inclusive mediation. Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Iyad Mandani set the context for sectarianism by demonstrating that the current century is the century of identity that follows times characterised by ideologies. He called for taking seriously the tendency of people to emphasize identities and for developing positive strategies that take into account the role of religion. Spain emphasized the importance of synergy between different tracks of diplomacy and the US Department of State highlighted that collaboration between religious communities and leaders is necessary for determining the causes of violent sectarianism.

I was fortunate and very honored to be a part of this event and in my presentation, I looked at the important role of religious leaders and actors, not only



Najla Mangoush. Photo: Najla Mangoush.

in mitigating conflicts but also in restorative justice responses. I further stressed that in Libya, it is Muslims who are killing Muslims and this dimension needs adequate understanding in determining responses to violent extremism.

The moderator of the panel, Pekka Haavisto, the Special Representative on Mediation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, stressed the importance of understanding the complexity of the issues surrounding sectarianism and the multiple identities that need due attention.

The meeting was also supported by a consultative meeting between the panelists from Kenya and Libya that will feed future developments in concrete responses to sectarianism. The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers will follow up on these efforts. ■

## Upcoming S-CAR Community Events

### Saturday, October 24 and Sunday, October 25, 2015

Peace and democracy in Sudan  
9:00am-5:00pm

### Tuesday, October 27, 2015

Stories from the field: Reflections on qualitative research in Indonesia  
2:00pm-3:30pm

### Tuesday, November 3, 2015

The Presence of the Absent  
12:00pm-2:00pm

### Thursday, November 5, 2015

Teaching the Cold War - Memory Practices in the Classroom  
3:00pm-5:00pm

### Wednesday, November 11, 2015

Retirement Celebration: Sandra Cheldelin  
6:00pm-8:00pm

For more, visit [scar.gmu.edu/events-roster](http://scar.gmu.edu/events-roster)

# Student Opinion: Reevaluating the Discussion of Tolerance in the U.S.

By Samantha Borders, PhD Student, sborders@masonlive.gmu.edu

The nature of tolerance and its place within American society has of late come to the forefront of national attention, through issues such as the legalization of gay marriage. To say that exchanges surrounding this topic are “heated” is to put it lightly, and we find ourselves amidst increasing social division and lacking in the cohesion so needed in our leadership and society. Our inability to engage in dialogue in a manner that grants dignity to the opposing party is a glaring issue, and while this is not a problem exclusive to the US, it is one that is imperative to address.

One such divisive point that has brought the character of the nation under scrutiny is the recent debacle surrounding Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis’ refusal to issue gay marriage licenses; her actions thereby countering the decision by the Supreme Court on June 26. While supporters of the LGBTQ movement found a moment of celebration in light of this ruling, others saw it as a violation of their religious freedom and began to push back. This has created a new level of tension and self-identified persecution amongst those who believe strictly in heterosexual marriage as the only acceptable definition of that institution.

Here is where we find the current shift in American public discourse, and we are now confronted with a reality that is law. It is not proposed here what stance one should take regarding this SCOTUS ruling, but rather to look more closely at how we as specialists in the conflict analysis and resolution field might begin to approach this topic with due caution and care and encourage others to follow suit. Where public opinion might draw lines between the concepts of religious and secular tolerance, there may in fact be more synthesis present than is widely acknowledged or understood.

Tolerance is defined as “a fair, objective, and permissive attitude toward opinions, beliefs, and practices that differ from one’s own,” and is, indeed, an ideal many Americans wish to uphold. Valued as something that ought to be universally embraced, the average citizen idolizes almost too much a utopian conception of unity while simultaneously failing to see the benefit of conflict

and how it might actually forward the general cause toward the concept of a more perfect union. In this instance of blatant refusal like Davis’ to enforce the law of the land, should we as CAR specialists instead see an opportunity to channel this conflict in the direction of more open communication? Simply, yes.

One aspect that is not brought to broader attention is the idea of restoration of communities who disagree with the ruling. The popular online meme campaign of “Still does the job” is an easy example of how objectors are viewed and how there is great pushback against their viewpoints. However, rather than comment on the morality of their positions, it is more beneficial that we begin to construct spaces where those who dissent can have the security necessary to learn how to coexist in a society that does not strictly adhere to their values. Their vehement defense of conservative values represents a vicious cycle that is only fueled by the sharp criticism of more liberal voices.

By no means does this advocate exclusion or isolationism, but rather granting dignity to those who feel the core of their identity is being attacked, namely groups who hold socially conservative values linked primarily to religious beliefs. In an interview with CNN, Davis remarked on verbal attacks made in response to her actions, such as branding her “Hitler.”

Social censoring, a method of accountability in any society, can quickly devolve into adding the proverbial fuel to the fire of conflict if not administered with proper intention. Such name calling as listed above presents little to no possibility of redemption for the accused, and is a process of dehumanization widening the rift in our society. While outrage at her comments and actions may be appropriate, if we are seeking to create a society of plurality of opinion, we must do more than discuss issues of tolerance: we must also address the goals in debating the issues of the day.

There will be more Kim Davises in times to come, but rather than immediately focusing on the level of her divergence from what is now the increasingly accepted social norm, we should channel our efforts towards engagement that allows for reconciliation, instead of alienation, at the end of the debate. If we cannot engage in dialogue without depriving others of security or opportunities for restoration, then perhaps we as a society should have a more honest look at what we truly value when discussing the issues of the day. ■

## Recent S-CAR Media

### **Making Nonviolent Statecraft into a Self-Evident Truth**

Marc Gopin, S-CAR Faculty  
*Tikkun* 10/03/15

### **Why U.S. and Chinese Cities will make or break any global climate deal**

Michael Shank, S-CAR PhD Alumnus  
*The Conversation* 9/23/15

### **Colombia's Imminent Peace Agreement: A Brief Analysis of What the Agreement is, What is next and What is Missing**

Catalina Rojas, S-CAR PhD Alumna  
*PCDN* 10/01/15

**Conflict Analysts from S-CAR have appeared on 21 occasions since the last newsletter. These 3 represent a sample of those publications. For a complete list, visit <http://scar.gmu.edu/media>**



Samantha Borders.  
Photo: Samantha Borders.

press

## Umed Partov, Malta Dual Degree Student

By Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, PhD Candidate and Newsletter Editor, kdegraff@masonlive.gmu.edu

Umed Partov is a current S-CAR Masters student who holds a BA in Business Administration and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Montana. "I decided to come to S-CAR to study the role of non-violent religious identity in countering violent extremism and terrorism." Umed believes that academic research on counter-terrorism is in its infancy stage, and perhaps that is why the international community had failed to address and fully understand this phenomenon. Says Umed, "S-CAR has prominent scholars and the largest network of professionals in conflict resolution field, which is an invaluable asset for my academic development and research."

Umed has worked for a number of organizations including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office in Tajikistan, United States Agency for International Development in Tajikistan, the Center for Central and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Montana, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations in New York City, and the United Nations Population Fund in New York among others. In his recent position as a National Program Officer at OSCE in Tajikistan, Umed implemented capacity-building projects for mid-

and-senior level border officials from 57 OSCE participating states. In this position, he "initiated and coordinated International Cross-Border Research Conference on Evolving Transnational Threats and Border Security, organized high-level roundtables and thematic events on ISAF withdrawal from Afghanistan and possible security scenarios for Central Asian countries, drug trafficking, weapon smuggling, human trafficking, illegal migration, and other current security related issues."

One of the very important projects that Umed worked on, of which he is very proud, was USAID's Tajikistan Safe Drinking Water Project. "I conducted project monitoring and evaluation to ensure the project's progress towards desired outcomes and objectives." ■



Umed Partov.  
Photo: Umed Partov.

## Ignacio Peiro Boloix, Undergrad Student

By Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, PhD Candidate and Newsletter Editor, kdegraff@masonlive.gmu.edu

In his relatively short time studying at Mason, Ignacio Peiro Boloix describes his course in conflict analysis and resolution as "very rewarding." Originally from Spain, Ignacio is an exchange student from the University of Zaragoza, and is currently enrolled in a CONF 101 course session with Edi Jurkovic, a PhD student. "I have become very interested in this field because I see its practicality in the real world and the teacher for the class makes the content very interesting."

Ignacio's interest in the field of conflict resolution started in 2014, when he took part in simulation exercises focused on the work of the European Union in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, and in the Young European Council in Brussels.

"These were wonderful experiences and aside from making friends from all over the world, I discovered the field of conflict resolution and decided to learn more about it."

Ignacio studies Law and Business at the University of Zaragoza in Spain, and combined with his conflict resolution courses he hopes to acquire the tools needed to comprehensively understand human interaction especially how people choose to behave in a certain way. Ignacio's plan after completing his education is to go back to Europe and work for the European Union. "In the EU problems must be solved with solutions which satisfy the interests of all the 28 Member States. In my opinion, Conflict Resolution skills are essential in such a situation."

Outside of his academic studies, Ignacio loves to travel and go skiing. "I live near the Pyrenees Mountains and I take advantage of the outdoors whenever I can." ■



Ignacio Boloix Peiro.  
Photo: Ignacio Boloix Peiro.

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At the moment his car came into view, a rainbow appeared above Central Park West and 63rd St. “And then a wisp of a cloud perpendicular to the rainbow created the shape of a cross.... People wept. These people were already believers, but this, as people around here say, was ridiculous. Naturally, they credited the pope.”

There is no way for me to capture the impact of the pope’s exhaustive and exhausting program in our country. And so I will focus on those efforts most moving to me and most relevant to our concerns for conflict analysis and resolution.

Time published a special edition called “Francis: The Pope’s Bold Message Comes to America,” by John I. Allen, Jr., Vatican specialist for the Boston Globe, that noted that Francis’ visit was his first and that “America is the mother ship of free-market global capitalism that Francis, history’s first pontiff from the developing world, routinely excoriates as ‘savage’ for fostering an ‘economy that kills,’ denouncing it as responsible for a ‘throwaway culture’ in which whole categories of human beings are regarded as disposable.” Allen also said that the U.S. had given Francis possibly his best-known antagonist, the very conservative Cardinal Raymond Burke formerly of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and St. Louis. At a summit of bishops from around the world in October, 2014, Burke suggested that Francis owed the church an apology for suggesting that its traditional ban on divorced and civilly remarried Catholics receiving the sacrament of communion could change. Burke had also insisted that Secretary of State John Kerry could not receive communion because he is pro-choice.

Francis is so soft-spoken, even in his native Spanish, that it’s hard to imagine him as tough. But the pope soon removed Cardinal Burke from his position as head of the Vatican Supreme Court and appointed him patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, whatever that is. Burke had said the Church appeared rudderless under Francis. But he was the one who appeared to be up the Tiber without a paddle. And when Francis entered the House of Representatives for his joint address to Congress, in which the members had been strictly instructed not to touch him, the pope walked out of his prescribed path to single out John Kerry for a hand shake.

My bias is toward Francis as peacemaker. A highly respected Italian journalist, Massimo Franco, has written that Francis is potentially an even more crucial political



Pope Francis blessed The sculpture 'Synagoga and Ecclesia in Our Time' on the campus of St. Joseph's in Philadelphia that was created to counter centuries of anti-Semitic imagery in Catholic art.

Photo: St. Joseph's University.

actor than John Paul II, whose initiatives helped stimulate the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. “As the first pope from the developing world,” Franco wrote, “Francis is important for every issue facing the world today: poverty, the environment, immigration, and war.”

In June 2014, Francis invited the presidents of Palestine and Israel to come to the Vatican to pray for peace. This unplanned initiative started in May when Francis on his way to Bethlehem in the West Bank drove past what Israel calls a, “security fence,” and Palestinians call an, “apartheid wall.” He asked his driver to stop, and he went up to the wall and prayed silently for about five minutes. He then placed his hands on the wall, leaned forward so his forehead touched it, and made the sign of the cross. The Vatican spokesman, Father Frederico Lombardi, later said, “The pope thinks like a prophet. He imagines a day when the wall won’t be necessary to keep these two peoples apart.”

Presidents Peres and Abbas went to Rome on June 8 to accept Francis’ invitation. As John Allen describes the scene, Peres and Abbas joined Francis who had also invited Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople to the event. This fact also had major peacemaking implications because the Church of Rome and the Eastern Orthodox Church have still not formally healed the Great Schism of 1054 CE. The four men exchanged embraces and kisses before TV cameras, and then Francis led them into Vatican gardens that had no obvious Christian symbolism. Their service involved readings from scriptures and prayers from Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Francis said, “Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare. Only the tenacious say yes to encounter and no to conflict; yes, to negotiations and no to hostilities; yes to respect for agreements and no to acts of provocation.” The prayer meeting at the Vatican had been the result of careful planning by Pope Francis well before his trip to Israel and Palestine. At a Vatican meeting of forty Christians, Jews, and Muslims in 2014, Francis approached Omar Abboud, his countryman from Argentina and leader of the Islamic community in Buenos Aires. Francis told the stunned Abboud that for the first time in an official papal delegation to the Holy Land there will be a Jew and a Muslim. He said, “The Muslim is you.”

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Francis had been developing ties to the Muslim community in Argentina as archbishop, and he had visited the Islamic Center in Buenos Aires three times. In November 2014, the Wall Street Journal reported the pope standing beside Istanbul Grand Mufti Rahmi Yaran in the legendary Blue Mosque facing Mecca and bowing his head in a long prayer. The National Report, an American conservative journal, reported with obvious discomfort that Francis had said, “the Koran, and the teachings contained therein, are just as valid as the Holy Bible.” Further, he said, “Jesus Christ, Jehovah, Allah. These are all names employed to describe an entity that is distinctly the same across the world.”

The Jew in the delegation to the Holy Land was to be Rabbi Abraham Skorka, head of the Latin American Rabbinical Seminary in Buenos Aires, and co-author of a book with Francis when he was Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio. I met Rabbi Skorka in Buenos Aires at the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) annual meeting last year, and in Rome this year at the ICCJ meeting, where I also had the chance to meet Pope Francis. My impression is that Rabbi Skorka may be Francis’ most trusted friend.

Toward the end of his Philadelphia visit, Francis went to St. Joseph’s University to bless a very special new bronze sculpture symbolizing Catholic unity

with the Jews. Rabbi Skorka had given the dedication speech and arranged for Francis to stop by. (Skorka told the Forward that he had also been involved in arranging the Abrahamic summit at the Vatican.) The sculpture, by Joshua Koffman, titled “Synagoga and Ecclesia in Our Time,” depicts two women facing each other, one a Jew holding a Torah scroll and the other a Christian holding a Bible. It was meant to correct a medieval representation found on many European churches of Synagoga blindfolded by a snake and looking downcast like a loser to Ecclesia. Commenting on Francis’ role in attempting to heal the painful history of Jewish-Christian relations in Europe, the Forward’s Nathan Guttman wrote that many experts and Jewish communal officials, “believe that Francis has taken the relationship to a new level... a strong commitment to eradicating anti-Semitism from the Catholic Church with a unique personal approach and closeness to the Jewish community.”

To summarize Pope Francis’ impact in America, I yield to President Obama in his press conference of October 2, when asked his impression of the visit. Obama said, “I love Pope Francis. He’s a good man with a warm heart and a strong moral imagination. His impact here was great primarily for me on his emphasis on caring for the least among us. What more can we do to love, sacrifice, and help others. Pope Francis made me want to do better.” ■



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