

TWELVE QUESTIONS TO POPE FRANCIS

from

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Eyes of Europe is putting together 12 questions to Pope Francis, a man with a strong personality who seems willing to run a church of poverty.

He is a man whom the College of Cardinals considered capable of reforming the Church and a man who can reach our hearts - a quality which is regarded as essential to convey faith and trust in our troubled times.

1. Francis? A most challenging name when you come to think of it. Why did it take 600 years before a pope dared to bear this most challenging of all names?
2. The inter-religious dialogue was initiated in Assisi, in Francis' church, by the Polish pope in 1986. Does Pope Francis intend to resume this as a first step in his most challenging mission? What would his next initiative in this direction be?
3. Populism and nationalism triumph all over the world, reinforcing the "Clash of Civilizations" theory (Huntington). Does Pope Francis stand for a permanent dialogue , [with other Christian denominations](#) ,as well as with [other religions](#) and free thinkers? How will he tackle the challenge of evangelism across the world, especially in Latin America and Africa?
4. What about a daring dialogue with the modern world to determine the proper role of the [laity](#) within the church; modernization of [religious life, the possible roles of](#) married priests and [women, collegiality, religious liberty](#), collaboration and co responsibility in the Church. Has he considered the possibility of a vast Vatican III dialogue in real time, not only with all church communities but specifically with the younger generation, on the internet and social networks? Will Pope Francis initiate a transparent and permanent bottom - top dialogue within the Christian communities across the world and more specifically with youth?

5. Europe and the world are in dire need of a new Social Contract. Does Pope Francis stand for reform or conservation? 60% of youths are unemployed in Greece, 55% in Spain, 37% in Italy and more than 40% in the poorer districts of the capital of Europe. What hope can Pope Francis have to offer to these "underprivileged" younger citizens of the planet?
6. Money rules the world, consumption ruins the human mind, the gap between the poorest and the richest proves abyssal. Francis is said to have married Lady Poverty What is Pope Francis intending to do to turn that lethal tide?
7. Francis heard a [sermon](#) that changed his life forever. The sermon was about [Matthew](#) 10:9, in which Jesus tells his followers they should go forth and proclaim that the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) was upon them, that they should take no money with them, not even a walking stick or shoes for the road. Francis was inspired to devote himself to a life of poverty. Francis of Assisi founded the "lesser brothers," fratres minores in Latin. Is this to be Pope Francis's mission and message? Empathy towards today's equivalent: the divorced, the gays of both sexes, all the poor of heart and all the rich who are impoverished in other ways.
8. Jesus' most impressive parable is that of the Good Samaritan which gives priority to ethics and empathy. Mathew XXV, the essence of the gospel, carries the same message: "For I was hungry, and you gave me food:
I was thirsty, and you gave me drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in." Does Pope Francis also think that mankind is in need for more compassion and empathy before anything else?
9. War is everywhere, in Syria, Africa and it could even break out in totally unknown forms in Europe. Benedict XV tried desperately to prevent WWI from breaking out. To no avail. "Be not afraid" was John Paul' II's motto. What will his own motto be? "Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace"?
10. On the night of [Palm Sunday](#), March 28, 1211, Francis established the Order of Poor Ladies, later called [Poor Clares](#).

This was an Order specifically for women. Is Pope Francis going to give a bigger role to women in his church ?

11. Francis believed that nature itself was the mirror of God. He called all creatures his “brothers” and “sisters,” and even preached to the birds and supposedly persuaded a wolf to stop attacking some locals if they agreed to feed the wolf. On November 29, 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis to be the Patron of Ecology. What is Pope Francis going to do to do in order to help preserve nature and our endangered environment?
12. Francis of Assisi had a dream in the country chapel of [San Damiano](#), just outside of Assisi, in which the [Icon of Christ Crucified](#) said to him, "Francis, Francis, go and repair my house which, as you can see, is falling into ruins." Pope Innocent III also had a dream in which he saw Francis supporting the tilting church the [Basilica of St. John Lateran](#) (the [cathedral](#) of Rome, thus the 'home church' of all Christendom).

On August 28, 1963 Martin Luther King had his dream:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.(...) With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. "On March the 13th the Argentinean Jesuit **Jorge Mario** Bergoglio became Petrus' 266th successor to the throne of the Catholic church.

And what would Pope Francis's dream be?

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