

A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis



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A CONVERSATION *with* POPE FRANCIS

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In an interview published exclusively in English in the Jesuit journal *America*, Pope Francis speaks candidly about his historic role as the first Jesuit pope, his ideas on church governance, the moral teachings of the church and how he has learned from his mistakes. “I am a sinner. This is the most accurate definition,” Pope Francis told Antonio Spadaro, S.J., who conducted the interview on behalf of Jesuit journals around the world. “It is not a figure of speech, a literary genre. I am a sinner.” In a remarkably wide-ranging and candid conversation, Pope Francis speaks about his years as a Jesuit superior, where “my authoritarian way of making decisions...created problems”; the role of eight cardinals who will soon release a report on church reform (“I do not want token consultations, but real consultations”); and what it means to “think with the church” (“We should not even think...that ‘thinking with the church’ means only thinking with the hierarchy of the church).

Father Spadaro, the editor of *Civiltà Cattolica*, the Jesuit journal edited in Rome, spoke to Pope Francis in person in August 2013. Questions were submitted by Jesuit journals from around the world. “Organizations as old as America rarely do anything completely unprecedented,” writes *America* editor in chief Matt Malone, S.J., in his introduction to the pope’s interview. “This issue of *America*, however, is truly a first.”