

THE ROLE OF EUROPE IN THE LAST THREE PAPACIES

Frank Turner

OUR THREE POPES are two very different Europeans, and one, as he said himself, ‘from the ends of the earth’.¹

Pope, now St. John Paul II had experienced the worst tyrannies of twentieth-century Europe and was able, without exaggeration, to identify Catholic Christianity as a witness to profound civilisational values and, being an oppressed community, as a credible advocate for freedom. He became a charismatic global presence, a geopolitical force in his own right, especially on the European scene.

Benedict also grew up under a European tyranny that sought to crush everything in its path. Later, as a distinguished university professor confronted by the liberalising movements of the 1960s at their most disruptive, he came to see both perennial European civilisation and the Church itself as a bulwark against lethal irrationality and societal chaos.

Francis, of Italian parentage, ironically restored the papacy to its cultural base. But his parents were no emissaries of colonialism. He, too, had faced a brutal tyranny, a vicious parody of European Fascism. During his papacy, however, the pre-eminent sufferers across the world are not oppressed by a single regime but by an international system which demands total freedom for finance and industry while rejecting its victims. Unlike his predecessors, he has also vigorously challenged a rigid and coercive (and in his sense ‘worldly’) *ecclesiastical* apparatus that proved immune to reform under John Paul II and Benedict.

¹ Pope Francis, ‘First Greeting of the Holy Father Pope Francis’, 13 March 2013, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco_20130313_benedizione-urbi-et-orbi.html.

John Paul II

John Paul's long papacy was immensely rich in encyclicals, exhortations to the Church and speeches to the world. I focus on three representative documents: his address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg of October 1988; *Spes aedificandi* (1999), the apostolic letter in which he named three women saints as co-patrons of Europe; and *Ecclesia in Europa* (2003), the apostolic exhortation following the second episcopal synod on Europe.² The latter two documents were directed towards the life of the Church itself, not towards Europe as such, yet they embody John Paul II's aspirations for and criticisms of Europe and the European Union. His approach rests on three pillars.

Christianity exercises a foundational influence on the development of European civilisation; this influence is unique in its scope and depth.

John Paul began his 1988 address to what was then the European Community—to which 'some three hundred and thirty million citizens ... have entrusted the mandate of directing their common destinies' (n. 1)—by affirming it as a structure intended less to promote economic growth or general prosperity than to assure the peace of the continent after a turbulent half-century. Subject to the later terrible exception of the Balkans, this aim was broadly achieved, peace 'definitively established among its member States', which had been at war 'throughout the centuries' (n. 3).

He writes in *Spes aedificandi*:

The Christian faith has shaped the culture of the Continent and is inextricably bound up with its history, to the extent that Europe's history would be incomprehensible without reference to the events of the first evangelisation and then the long centuries when Christianity, despite the painful division between East and West, came to be the religion of the European peoples. (n.1)

John Paul rests his hope for the future on the civil and political extension of this influence. Through the European Union the unity of the continent has received '... a more precise political definition. Ahead lies the

² John Paul II, address to the European Parliament, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1988/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19881011_european-parliament.html; John Paul II, *Spes aedificandi*, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_jp-ii_motu-proprio_01101999_co-patronesses-europe.html; John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20030628_ecclesia-in-europa.html.

daunting challenge of building a culture and an ethic of unity for, in the absence of these, any politics of unity is doomed sooner or later to failure.’ (n.10)

This Christian influence reflects a universal moral law. Any authentic European unity must be built on this moral law in the future, as in the past.

Spes aedificandi warned that economic interests, ‘while sometimes bringing people together, are at other times a cause of division’. A deeper source of unity is essential:

A Europe which would exchange the values of tolerance and universal respect for ethical indifference and scepticism about essential values would be opening itself to immense risks and sooner or later would see the most fearful spectres of its past reappear in new form.

Christianity, though, reflects a ‘universal moral law written on the heart of every human person’ (n. 10).

John Paul II’s most systematic exposition of this theme is found in the encyclical letter *Fides et ratio* of 1998.³ There he speaks confidently of ‘right reason’ (*orthós logos, recta ratio*). Reason ‘successfully intuits and formulates the first universal principles of being and correctly draws from them conclusions which are coherent both logically and ethically’. ‘It is as if we had come upon an implicit philosophy, as a result of which all feel that they possess these principles, albeit in a general and unreflective way.’ (n.4) As applied to the public realm, though, his position faces two difficulties.

First, this conception of reason is quite other than



³ Available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html.

the ‘reason’ invoked in secular life and politics, where what rightly counts is not ‘right reason’ but ‘critical reason’, in which arguments are tested through criticism. The *magisterium* does not dispute. Neither the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (which appeared under John Paul II) nor papal encyclicals seek to justify, through a process of critical reason, the positions taken, or to critique opposing arguments.⁴

John Paul argues that this division over reason (rather than, for example, over class struggle or national expansionism) lies at the heart of Europe’s disunity. Two opposing visions animate a constant tension. For believers, obedience to God is the source of true freedom, ‘a freedom for truth and good’; secular humanism,

... having suppressed all subordination of the creature to God or to any transcendent order of truth and good, sees man in himself as the principle and end of all things, and society, with its laws, norms, and achievements as his absolutely sovereign work.

From this last sentence, he infers, ‘Ethics have no other foundation than social consensus, and individual freedom no other constraint than that which society chooses to impose on it in order to safeguard the freedom of others’.⁵

The key question is, how can this cultural clash be arbitrated? John Paul simply returns to his starting point:

Faced with this diversity of points of view, the highest function of the law is to guarantee to all citizens equally the right to live in accordance with their consciences and not to contradict the norms of the natural moral order which are recognized by reason.⁶

This argument appears to be circular. But it is probably better understood as a sheer restatement of what he affirms and what secular humanists deny: that ‘right reason’ and the ‘natural moral law’—which transcends all cultures yet which can be identified definitively from within a single (European) culture—necessarily underpins legitimate ‘critical reason’.

That leads to the second problem, here only stated rather than discussed: this ‘universal moral law’ does not command universal assent. John Paul’s argument rests on the claim that the Church can authentically

⁴ Those who seek to offer Christian insights in a methodologically secular environment, where ‘arguments from authority’ count for nothing, well know the acute tension between these two ‘reasons’.

⁵ John Paul II, address to the European Parliament, n. 8.

⁶ John Paul II, address to the European Parliament, n. 8.

define this universal moral law, though he is fully aware that this claim will not be accepted by secular humanists.

Fifteen years later, in *Ecclesia in Europa*, he writes of 'the loss of Europe's Christian memory' (n.8) and of a 'silent apostasy' in which the human being is 'the absolute centre of reality'—forgetting 'that it is not man who creates God, but rather God who creates man' (n.9). The rejection of this true subordination is not, in his view, the fruit of reasoned intellectual discussion. It is *suppressed* and eventually 'forgotten', by an essentially irrational process of force or manipulation.

Therefore the *intellectual* ground of the shift rests on primary trust in the alternative concept of reason posited by secular humanism. But a second cause is discernible, though its weight is not acknowledged by John Paul. This 'suppression' and 'forgetting' of truths, this 'silent apostasy', might be less a rejection of faith propositions themselves than a deliberate repudiation of the way those propositions were embodied (and sometimes betrayed) in the everyday life of the Church.

In a distinction made more easily in French than in English, emerging European culture rejected less *le christianisme* than *la chrétienté*: less Christianity as such than 'Christendom', the Church's control of the public arena, the bargain by which the Church blessed political power while the state sponsored ecclesiastical institutions. We shall see that the Church's *magisterium* nowadays affirms the autonomy of the secular political order. But one cannot read back this modern affirmation into the 'Christian heritage', as when *Ecclesia in Europa* claims that the positive characteristics of the democratic state derive decisively (nn.108, 109) from Christianity. They derive also from the rejection of Christendom.

A culture that explicitly or implicitly rejects or suppresses this universal law is adrift, and inevitably spawns a destructive politics and economics, whereas a truly human culture will bear fruit in a beneficent politics and economics.

The future is viewed more with dread than with desire. Among the troubling indications of this are the inner emptiness that grips many people and the loss of meaning in life. (n.8)

Among the 'symptoms' of this existential dread named by John Paul are: the falling birth rate,

... the weakening of the very concept of the family, the continuation or resurfacing of ethnic conflicts, the re-emergence of racism, interreligious tensions, a selfishness that closes individuals and groups in upon themselves (n.8)

The resulting 'lack of concern for ethics and obsession with interests and privileges' is also reflected in our socio-economic structures, so that,

... the current process of globalization, rather than leading towards the greater unity of the human race, risks being dominated by an approach that would marginalize the less powerful and increase the number of poor in the world (n.8).

These elements have in common that they 'express a hope that is restricted to this world and closed to transcendence' (n. 10): they are illusory.

It is important that John Paul readily acknowledges the failings of the Church and its leadership. It has been calculated that by the mid-1990s he had apologised for at least forty instances of sins and errors perpetrated in the name of the Church: for the treatment of Galileo, Jan Hus and Martin Luther; for the Inquisition; above all, perhaps, in respect of slavery and racism, to Jews and Muslims (about the Crusades).⁷ He does not associate such sins and errors, however, with the rejection of the world-view he so passionately advocates, or admit that grievous failings in our own time (say, the mismanagement of the crisis of child abuse) may also be laid at the door of the Church, and might reasonably erode trust in its capacity to interpret—by way of critical and practical reason—the 'universal moral law' and apply it convincingly to the societal issues of our time.

Benedict XVI

Pope Benedict analyzes Europe in terms that recall John Paul's triple schema. Consider John Paul's proposition that Christianity is a foundational and decisive influence on European civilisation. In April 2005 (the day before the death of John Paul), the then Cardinal Ratzinger lectured in Subiaco, Italy, on the crisis he identified in European culture.

Of course, Christianity did not start in Europe, and so cannot be classified as a European religion, the religion of the European cultural realm. But it was precisely in Europe that Christianity received its most historically influential cultural and intellectual form, and it therefore remains intertwined with Europe in a special way.⁸

⁷ Edward Stourton, *John Paul II: Man of History* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2006), 276–278.

⁸ Benedict XVI, 'Europe in the Crisis of Cultures', in *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio*, volume 2, *Anthropology and Culture*, edited by David L. Schindler and Nicholas J. Healy (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 190.

Yet, a culture has developed 'that most radically contradicts, not only Christianity, but the religious and moral traditions of humanity as well'. From this momentous opposition derives 'the responsibility that we Europeans have to assume at this moment in history: what is at stake in the debate about the definition of Europe, about its new political form' (191).

Where Benedict goes *beyond* John Paul is in his specific concern with what he regards as the European Union's *constitutional* expression of this rejection. Receiving a study group of the European Peoples' Party (EPP; the largest group in the European Parliament) on a visit to Rome in March 2006, he noted the refusal, in the text of the Convention charged at that time with preparing a draft treaty to establish a constitution for Europe, to single out in its preamble the Christian heritage of Europe and to include the mention of God. In 'Europe in the Crisis of Cultures' he had agreed that the *institutional* rights of the Churches were not threatened by the Convention, but went on:

However, this means that the Churches find room in European life only in the realm of political compromise, but that when it comes to the foundations of Europe, their actual substance has no room to play any formative role. (191)

Even Muslims, he protested 'do not feel threatened by our Christian moral foundations, but by the cynicism of a secularized culture that denies its own bases'. Similarly, 'it is not the mention of God that offends adherents of other religions, but rather the attempt to build the human community without any relationship to God whatsoever' (192).

Like John Paul, Benedict did not engage with the perspective of his ultimate opponents, not considering the *political* consideration that, in a multicultural community, a document designed to promote the unity



of the EU should avoid favouring the religious against the non-religious perspective, or one religious body over another. Yet if Europe is indeed the locus of the drama of a profound conflict between theism and atheism, it would be unreasonable to expect the Treaty of Union to resolve this conflict in favour of one side or the other.

John Paul II's second argument, that Christianity embodies an ultimate truth of anthropology in the form of 'a universal moral law', is also echoed by Cardinal Ratzinger in Subiaco: 'From its very beginning, Christianity has understood itself as the religion of the *logos*, as the religion according to reason' (196).

Hence, to the EPP Study Group in 2006, Benedict explained the principal focus of Church interventions in the public arena (the Church's long tradition of advocacy on abortion and euthanasia, its defence of 'the natural structure of the family—as a union between a man and a woman based on marriage') as rooted in

... principles which are not negotiable These principles are not truths of faith, even though they receive further light and confirmation from faith; they are inscribed in human nature itself and therefore they are common to all humanity.⁹

Like John Paul, he therefore holds that these principles, though not 'truths of faith', may be declared authoritatively, even if at any given time they may be contested (inside the Church, as well as outside).

Note the contrast with, say, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), for whom the notion of a universal law is a *strictly formal* principle: an act is truly moral only in so far as it can be applied universally, by every rational person, not just by one person deciding subjectively. Benedict, more

**Confidence in
the primacy
of the logos**

ambitiously, gives to this universal moral law a specific (and empirically deniable) *content*, such as 'the natural structure of the family'. This confidence in the primacy of the *logos* lies at the very heart of Benedict's thought. With utter clarity, *Deus caritas est* (2005) had acknowledged that being Christian is 'not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person' (n.1): Jesus Christ. This new horizon and the faith that can perceive it is not *irrational*, but is a leap beyond 'natural reason'. Benedict

⁹ Benedict XVI, address to the members of the European People's Party, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/march/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060330_eu-parliamentarians.html.

asserts a necessary and enriching complementarity of faith and reason, so that neither alone can lead us fully into truth.¹⁰

In *Caritas in veritate* (2009), however, he argues that, even though God is Love, this love must be *interpreted in truth*. Benedict manifests an immense, even disconcerting, theological confidence. He finds his title by *inverting* a Pauline phrase, ‘speaking the truth in love’ (Ephesians 4: 15), proclaiming this coinage to be a defence against prevalent relativism (n.2). It is ‘the principle around which the Church’s social doctrine turns’ (n.6), and even (in the opening sentence of the encyclical), ‘the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity’ (n.1). Ephesians insists on the need to speak truth, of which the test of authenticity is love. Conversely Benedict writes that love finds its criterion of authenticity in truth, or ‘right reason’.

Passing to the third term of John Paul’s schema, we note that Benedict, too, holds that practical political policies will follow, for better or for worse, from the validity (or its lack) of an underlying world-view. In Subiaco he described three emerging threats of the contemporary era: terrorism, ‘the new war without borders and without fronts’ which rendered it necessary for ‘constitutional states to adopt security measures similar to those that formerly existed only in dictatorial regimes’ (even though, ominously, ‘all these precautions can never really be sufficient, since the sort of worldwide control that would be needed is neither possible nor desirable’); the bio-technical capacity to “construct” man himself’, who thus ‘no longer comes into being as a gift of the Creator, but as the product of our action’; and the all-too-familiar issues of scandalous global inequality and poverty, the exhaustion of the earth’s resources, and (strangely) ‘the clash of cultures’. He comments on the loss of ‘moral energy’ that follows from the technical mentality that ‘confines morality to the subjective sphere’ (188–189).

He proposes no policies to respond to these three threats, since the Church’s competence does not lie in making ‘subjective’ and ‘technical’ political judgments. In *Deus caritas est* he writes:

The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight

¹⁰ It is also true—though I do not know any passage in which the implications are explored by Benedict—that faith and reason come into sharp tension in *Christian revelation itself*: as the apostle Paul insists, the cross of Christ is ‘a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles’ (1 Corinthians 1: 23), and its wisdom is ‘not a wisdom of this age’ (1 Corinthians 2:6).

for justice. She has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper. (n.28)

Similarly, in *Caritas in veritate*, he writes, ‘Reason always stands in need of being purified by faith: [However] for its part, religion always needs to be purified by reason in order to show its authentically human face.’ (n.56, emphasis in original)¹¹ Crucially, however, it is Benedict’s position, as it is John Paul’s, that the Church has the right to distinguish a technical political issue from a universal moral law.

Francis

Viewing Pope Francis through the lens of our triple scheme is intriguing, since he either subverts or abandons each of its pillars. He thinks in a different register entirely about Europe and about the role of the papacy.

First, is Christianity a foundational influence on Europe and the EU? Addressing the European Parliament in November 2014 he quotes *Ecclesia in Europa*, where it asserts that the roots of human rights and human dignity are European, in an ‘enriching encounter’ between ‘Celtic,



¹¹ This same theme—his respect for the secular authority of politics, combined with his argument that faith plays a crucial reciprocal role—marked the main speeches of Benedict’s visit to London in September 2010.

Germanic and Slavic sources, and ... Christianity which profoundly shaped them'.¹² But it quickly emerges that his primary interest is precisely in the *encounter*: in a dynamic and multicultural identity, it is encounter that must *reshape* Europe:

The roots of our peoples, the roots of Europe, were consolidated down the centuries by the constant need to integrate in new syntheses the most varied and discrete cultures. The identity of Europe is, and always has been, a dynamic and multicultural identity.¹³

If we leave aside Francis's addresses to Europe's political leaders, we can better weigh his sense of global proportion. His 'apostolic exhortation' *Evangelii gaudium* (2013), for example, a couple of hundred pages long in printed editions, contains only one glancing reference to European thought; and even that reference relativises it:

The Bishops of Oceania asked that the Church 'develop an understanding and a presentation of the truth of Christ working from the traditions and cultures of the region so as to ensure that the faith and the life of the Church be expressed in legitimate forms appropriate for each culture'. We cannot demand that peoples of every continent, in expressing their Christian faith, imitate modes of expression which European nations developed at a particular moment of their history, because the faith cannot be constricted to the limits of understanding and expression of any one culture. (n. 118)

Contrast this passage with Cardinal Ratzinger's argument that Christianity 'received precisely in Europe its most effective cultural and intellectual imprint and remains, therefore, identified in a special way with Europe'. To the extent that Christianity is identified in a special way with Europe, Francis sees a problem and a challenge.

Second: does Christianity embody, at its heart, a universal moral law which grounds human welfare? To answer this, we may turn to the powerful rhetoric of impassioned homily delivered at Lampedusa in July 2013 (within a few months of Francis's election) after a flimsy migrant

¹² John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, n. 19, quoted in Pope Francis, address to the European Parliament, 25 November 2014, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/november/documents/papa-francesco_20141125_strasburgo-parlamento-europeo.html.

¹³ Pope Francis, address at the conferral of the Charlemagne Prize, 6 May 2016, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2016/may/documents/papa-francesco_20160506_premio-carlo-magno.html.

vessel had sunk in the Mediterranean. He cites two great biblical questions: ‘Adam, where are you?’ and ‘Cain, where is your brother?’.

‘The other’ is no longer a brother or sister to be loved, but simply someone who disturbs my life and my comfort How many of us, myself included, have lost our bearings; we are no longer attentive to the world in which we live; we don’t care. These brothers and sisters of ours [those drowned in the Mediterranean] were trying to escape difficult situations to find some serenity and peace but instead they found death Their cry rises up to God!¹⁴

His biblical reference is from Genesis, not from the Christian scriptures, and his homily does not invoke truth understood as the religion according to reason. He insists on the *anthropological* truth of our connection to the whole human race, and therefore of our human responsibility. Nor does he argue that the Christian heritage must be recovered and ‘remembered’: he claims that our *very humanity* must be recovered and remembered in the face of the ‘globalisation of indifference’ and the ‘culture of comfort’, which invite us to ‘think only of ourselves’.

In his speech of May 2016 accepting the Charlemagne Prize conferred by the city of Aachen for promoting the unity of Europe, he grounds his hope in ‘remembering’; not, though, in a remembering of Europe’s Christian heritage, but in a ‘memory transfusion’, citing the Jewish holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel. Such memory can deliver us from the temptation of ‘building hastily on the shifting sands of immediate results’, whereas the founding fathers of Europe ‘dared to change radically the models that had led only to violence and destruction ... to seek multilateral solutions to increasingly shared problems’. ‘Today more than ever, their vision inspires us to build bridges and tear down walls.’¹⁵ (The critical reference to Europe’s rejection of refugees is unmistakable.)

**To build
bridges and
tear down
walls**

He hopes not that ‘European values’ will transform a world that lacks them, but that the fears *Europe itself* experiences, together with the entire world, can be overcome. Europe’s pursuit of human rights is compromised by an individual (‘I am tempted to say individualistic’) conception of the human person, that cannot promote the common good or solidarity with those who suffer:

¹⁴ Pope Francis, homily, 8 July 2013, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130708_omelia-lampedusa.html.

¹⁵ Pope Francis, address at the conferral of the Charlemagne Prize.

What has happened to you, the Europe of humanism, the champion of human rights, democracy and freedom? What has happened to you, Europe, the home of poets, philosophers, artists ... the mother of great men and women who upheld, and even sacrificed their lives for, the dignity of their brothers and sisters?¹⁶

This substantive abandonment of the second term of the triple schema renders the third term inapplicable. What is required, believes Francis, is *openness*, the commitment to build bridges rather than walls. However, he proposes a crucial middle axiom, *dialogue*, that itself illustrates how different is his frame of reference from that of his predecessors.

John Paul II was passionately committed to inter-Church dialogues, especially that with the Moscow Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church, and was deeply frustrated by its lack of apparent fruit. But he actively discouraged dialogue within the Roman Catholic Church itself, and we have seen that his style towards the outside world was one of proclamation. Benedict did indeed hold that secular politics and religion required 'mutual purification', which at least *implies* dialogue.

For Francis, however, the culture of dialogue lies at the heart of the Church's own flourishing and of its societal contribution. At the Synod on the Family, in an unprecedented way, he encouraged rather than inhibited the exploration of stark differences of opinion among bishops. In Aachen he called dialogue 'a true apprenticeship and a discipline that enables us to view others as valid dialogue partners, to respect the foreigner, the immigrant and people from different cultures as worthy of being listened to'.¹⁷ It is a fundamental expression of intellectual generosity and hospitality.

Our powers of reason are not best employed to demonstrate the truth of our existing positions, but to learn and to confront our own temptations to intellectual self-sufficiency.

Dialogue, with all that it entails, reminds us that no one can remain a mere onlooker or bystander. Everyone, from the smallest to the greatest, has an active role to play in the creation of an integrated and reconciled society.¹⁸

In short, both John Paul and Benedict sought above all to open the world to the Church's mission, whilst defending the Church from alien

¹⁶ Pope Francis, address at the conferral of the Charlemagne Prize.

¹⁷ Pope Francis, address at the conferral of the Charlemagne Prize.

¹⁸ Pope Francis, address at the conferral of the Charlemagne Prize.

currents of thought and practice which, they believed, flowed fiercely in Europe. Francis's hope rests in *reciprocal* openness, since the Church, as well as the world, needs renewal.

As it has unfolded, Francis's papacy is seen to rest less on moral law (however 'universal' it is deemed to be) nor on the globalisation of any cultural style, but on the *theological* reality of the mercy of God, and on the manner in which the Church can and must witness to that mercy in its own life. His entire anthropology may be discerned in his repeated insistence on pastoral mercy: most vividly, he spoke of 'an unmarried mother ... who beat the temptation instilled in her by some to abort, who had the courage to bring her child into the world', and who then 'found herself on a pilgrimage, going from parish to parish, trying to find someone who would baptize her child'. He esteems that woman more than the priest who rejects her in the name of Church law.¹⁹

Frank Turner SJ is the British Jesuit Province's Delegate for the Intellectual Apostolate. His PhD, completed in 1990, explored the significance for theology of the political philosopher Eric Voegelin: between 1990 and 1997 he taught theology at the University of Manchester, then at Heythrop College, London. Between 1997 and 2004 he served as Assistant General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. From 2005 to 2014 he worked in Brussels, where he developed an interest in communicating a Christian perspective, specifically that of Catholic social teaching tradition, in a highly secular environment. In the academic year 2014–2015 he held the Lo Schiavo Chair in Catholic Studies and Social Thought at the University of San Francisco.

¹⁹ Cardinal Bergoglio (Pope Francis), quoted in 'That Neo-Clericalism which "Hijacks" the Sacraments', *La Stampa* (5 September 2012), available at <http://www.lastampa.it/2012/09/05/vaticaninsider/eng/inquiries-and-interviews/that-neoclericalism-which-hijacks-the-sacraments-F87z6qdqPG6uncjftpWRxL/pagina.html>, accessed 2 October 2016.