Opinion
Vatican



by NCR Staff

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Pope Francis on May 29 named 16 new cardinal electors, including Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego, California, along with three Vatican officials and a number of bishops from the global south. NCR political columnist Michael Sean Winters called the news "thrilling," adding that Pope Francis has now rendered an unmistakable sign of the kind of episcopal leadership he is seeking.

Congratulations to Bishop Robert McElroy and the people of God in San Diego. I'm also glad to see a couple of brothers from Africa get the red hat.

At this point it really looks like the Holy Father has no intention of ever making Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez a cardinal. That archdiocese means a lot to me and I feel for Angelenos, but I'm not at all sorry for Gomez.

I'd hoped that we'd see at least one pick from the Antilles Episcopal Conference. Maybe next time?

JEFFREY JONES

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Perhaps Pope Francis should consider naming additional cardinals around the world to counter the atavic and anachronistic clergy that block application of the Second Vatican Council.

HECTOR ALMENDRADES

Lima, Peru

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While it seems like this creates a new hope within the hierarchy and a possible attempt to renew the church, it will all end when the next elected pope is an authoritarian monarch like the last two. This is the DNA of the Catholic hierarchical governance. Adding women will not change the formula as those in service will be found acceptable because they "follow the headship" and do their bidding only.

Catholics need to understand that the church is a monarch. As a male-dominated monarchy, power is held solely at the top and this is the formation of the governing body. Each man in this appointed structure is no more than a feudal lord that maintains power till death. People who build the church in those areas are pawns of their power — if they stay in the framework. The entire constellation could shift when the next pope is chosen, but substantive renewal cannot happen because they will not re-define power, domination by male-only ordinations and most particularly will not give up access to wealth building.

This framework is one of oppression of the people of God most especially when one branch, appointed by the last two popes, align themselves with authoritarian governments seeking to gain power over people rather than represent the people they serve. Throughout history, the Catholic Church and global governments have colluded to access power together. We are living in such times in America and in many places around the world.

DIANE DOUGHERTY

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I think the elevation of Bishop Robert McElroy to a cardinal sends a strong message not only to the anti-Pope Francis members of the hierarchy in the United States, it sends a message to the right wing generally. McElroy will become a more active voice for Francis in our country and the message he will convey will be unmistakable.

NCR political columnist Michael Sean Winters conveys some sense of satisfaction that a prelate who is very much a supporter of our pope was designated to become

a member of the College of Cardinals. His metropolitan, Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez, was not elevated and neither were any of the other culture warrior bishops who are unfortunately far too often news makers and who convey the wrong message.

We have one pope at a time and the fact those prelates, who were elevated by Pope Benedict XVI, seem to have become antagonists to the idea of the church moving forward. In some sense they appear to want to revisit the era before the Second Vatican Council and negate the progress the council heralded.

I am looking forward to hearing from the new cardinals which Francis has created becoming the voices of the Catholic Church in America and championing engagement with the public, not exclusion. If the church is to grow, it needs to reflect an openness to ideas. The culture warriors only demonstrate their political prejudices and their desire for a small church which reflects their own narrow views.

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