

## A Rabbi Who "Gets" Pope Francis - and Us

Michael Sean Winters | Jan. 2, 2014 Distinctly Catholic

I was very struck by [this essay at HuffPost](#) [1] by Rabbi Eric Yoffie about Pope Francis. Rabbi Yoffie correctly points out that part of the Pope Francis effect has to do with the man, but a big part of it has to do with us, with the yearnings of our hearts. Too many Catholic leaders have previously bought into a gloomy prognosis for the future of the faith, and not without reason: The rise of the "nones," those with no religious affiliation being the most obvious, the seemingly ineradicable materialism of the culture being the most pervasive, and the aggressive secularity of the modern academy among the most pernicious. But, I have long felt that even the most secular, materialistic "none" in the world can't actually live the way they champion with their words. They, too, want more, that more that we believe corresponds to the deeper yearnings of the human heart, that yearning that corresponds to God. Rabbi Yoffie encourages all people of faith, and those of no faith, to ask - why has Francis caught the imagination of the world as he has? The answer tells us a lot about this wonderful man who is our pope, and it tells us a lot as well about the state of our culture which might not be as gloomy as some have thought.

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### Links:

[1] [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-eric-h-yoffie/the-frances-phenomenon-and-americas-yearning-for-values-leadership-and-god\\_b\\_4521504.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-eric-h-yoffie/the-frances-phenomenon-and-americas-yearning-for-values-leadership-and-god_b_4521504.html)