

Francis 'Gentle Revolution' subject of Rolling Stone cover

Thomas C. Fox | Jan. 28, 2014 NCR Today

Pope Francis continues to take the world by storm.

His latest media triumph, a cover story on, yes, the *Rolling Stone* this week.

[?The Times They Are A-Changin': \[1\]?Inside the Pope's gentle revolution \[1\]](#)," is a 7,700-word profile by contributing editor Mark Binelli, who writes, "In less than a year since his papacy began, Pope Francis has done much to separate himself from past popes and establish himself as a people's pope.?"

In the last few months Francis has appeared on the covers of *Time* (?Person of the Year?), *The New Yorker*, *The Advocate* (?The Person of the Year?), and *Vanity Fair* (Italian issue), among a dozen or more others -- to say nothing about Catholic publications such as *America* and the *National Catholic Reporter* (Of course).

And the press has been almost to the last word, very supportive. Our church has not had a run on this kind of good press for close to four decades, if ever.

Binelli writes:

After the disastrous papacy of Benedict, a staunch traditionalist who looked like he should be wearing a striped shirt with knife-fingered gloves and menacing teenagers in their nightmares, Francis' basic mastery of skills like smiling in public seemed a small miracle to the average Catholic. But he had far more radical changes in mind. By eschewing the papal palace for a modest two-room apartment, by publicly scolding church leaders for being "obsessed" with divisive social issues like gay marriage, birth control and abortion ("Who am I to judge?" Francis famously replied when asked his views on homosexual priests) and ? perhaps most astonishingly of all ? by devoting much of his first major written teaching to a scathing critique of unchecked free-market capitalism, the pope revealed his own obsessions to be more in line with the boss' son.

Francis, meanwhile, is the first pope to ever gain *Rolling Stone* cover story status.

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[1] <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/pope-francis-the-times-they-are-a-changin-20140128>