

Pastor's Column

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The Future Church—How Ten Trends Are Revolutionizing the Catholic Church

John L. Allen, Jr., is the Vatican correspondent for the National Catholic Reporter and a Vatican analyst for CNN and National Public Radio.

His weekly Internet column, "All Things Catholic," is widely considered the best source of breaking news and analysis of the Catholic Church in the English language.

He is the author of *Conclave, All the Pope's Men*, and *Opus Dei*. His latest book is *The Future Church—How Ten Trends Are Revolutionizing the Catholic Church*.

The synopsis of the book from the book jacket: "What will the Catholic Church be like in a hundred years? In *The Future Church*, John L. Allen, Jr., puts forth the ten trends he believes will transform the Church by the twenty-second century. From the influence of Catholics in Africa, Asia, and Latin America on doctrine and practices to the impact of multinational organizations on local and ethical standards, Allen delves into the impact of globalization on the Roman Catholic Church and argues that it must rethink fundamental issues, policies, and ways of doing business. Allen shows that over the next century, the Church will have to respond to changes within the institution itself and in the world as a whole, whether it is contending with biotechnical advances—including cloning and genetic enhancement—facing the reality of an aging Catholic population, or expanding roles of the laity."

As part of our Adult Faith Formation Program for this year, I will be leading and facilitating a discussion on this book. We will gather in the new year on three Wednesdays at 7:00pm—January 19, February 9, and March 2.

We will walk through the book in this fashion:

Wednesday, January 19

The Introduction; Trend One: A World Church; Trend Two: Evangelical Catholicism; Trend Three: Islam; Trend Four: The New Demography

Wednesday, February 9

Trend Five: Expanding Lay Roles; Trend Six: The Biotech Revolution; Trend Seven: Globalization; Trend Eight: Ecology

Wednesday, March 2

Trend Nine: Multipolarism; Trend Ten: Pentecostalism; Trends That Aren't; Catholicism in the Twenty-First Century

I encourage you to purchase the book if you haven't already, and begin reading. The book is available at the Information Table on the Plaza on the weekends and in the Parish Office during the week.

Our discussion of this book promises to create some lively discussion as we look to the future of our Church!

F. Mike