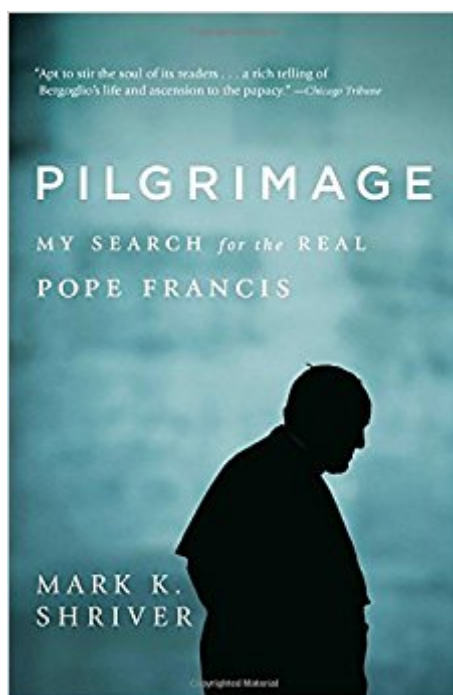


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# Pilgrimage: My Search For The Real Pope Francis



## Synopsis

A down-to-earth and deeply intimate portrait of Pope Francis and his faith, based on interviews with the men and women who knew him simply as Jorge Mario Bergoglio. Early on the evening of March 13, 2013, the newly elected Pope Francis stepped out onto the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica and did something remarkable: Before he imparted his blessing to the crowd, he asked the crowd to bless him, then bowed low to receive this grace. In the days that followed, Mark K. Shriver—along with the rest of the world—was astonished to see a pope who paid his own hotel bill, eschewed limousines, and made his home in a suite of austere rooms in a Vatican guesthouse rather than the grand papal apartment in the Apostolic Palace. By setting an example of humility and accessibility, Francis breathed new life into the Catholic Church, attracting the admiration of Catholics and non-Catholics alike. In *Pilgrimage*, Shriver retraces Francis's personal journey, revealing the origins of his open, unpretentious style and explaining how it revitalized Shriver's own faith and renewed his commitment to the Church. To help us understand how Jorge Mario Bergoglio became Pope Francis, Shriver travels to Bergoglio's native Argentina to meet with the people who knew him as a child, as a young Jesuit priest, and as a reformist bishop. Shriver visits the confessional where Bergoglio first felt called to a faith-based life and takes us to the humble parish where the future pontiff's pastoral career began: in a church created from a converted vegetable shed in an area just outside the city of Buenos Aires. In these impoverished surroundings, Bergoglio answered Christ's call to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless, following the example set by his papal namesake, St. Francis of Assisi. In this deeply reported yet highly personal book, Mark K. Shriver explores how Francis's commitment has struck a chord in the hearts of millions who long to make faith, love, humility, and mercy part of their lives as they go out into the world to serve and learn from the most marginalized. Praise for *Pilgrimage* . . . "Well-researched . . . *Pilgrimage* shines a light on [Pope Francis's] unexplored aspects. . . . A very timely and important addition to the literature on the life and person and thinking of Pope Francis. Everybody interested in Pope Francis will enjoy reading this biography." —The Washington Book Review "Apt to stir the soul of readers . . . While this is a rich telling of Bergoglio's life and ascension to the papacy, it is more movingly a spiritual memoir that draws us deep into a knowing of this at once humble and soul-stirring rekindler of faith." —Chicago Tribune "A fascinating portrait of a man and a nourishing account of spiritual yearning." —Booklist "This fast-paced and fascinating tale takes us on Jorge Mario Bergoglio's pilgrimage from his grandmother's knee in

the Italian-Argentine community, through years of success and sorrow in the tumultuous country that he loved, to his surprise election as Pope Francis. [Cokie Roberts](#), New York Times bestselling author of *Capital Dames: The Civil War and the Women of Washington*, 1848-1868 ["All people of good faith, including those whose lives are not guided by religious beliefs, will be inspired and enlightened by the compelling manner in which \*Pilgrimage\* brings us closer to the heart and mind of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Pope Francis. I highly recommend this book; it will make a difference in your life."](#) [Cardinal Sean O'Malley](#), OFM Cap.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

["Well-researched . . . \*Pilgrimage\* shines a light on \[Pope Francis's\] unexplored aspects. . . . A very timely and important addition to the literature on the life and person and thinking of Pope Francis. Everybody interested in Pope Francis will enjoy reading this biography."](#) [The Washington BookReview](#) ["Apt to stir the soul of readers . . . While this is a rich telling of Bergoglio's life and ascension to the papacy, it is more movingly a spiritual memoir that draws us deep into a knowing of this at once humble and soul-stirring rekindler of faith."](#) [Chicago Tribune](#) ["A fascinating portrait of a man and a nourishing account of spiritual yearning."](#) [Booklist](#) ["This book will especially appeal to those who want to learn more about Francis's origins. . . . While many good books have been written about Pope Francis . . . Shriver's conversations with many](#)

of the people who knew Jorge Bergoglio in Argentina and were willing to relate personal details about their relationship with him set this book apart. *Library Journal* (starred review) “This fast-paced and fascinating tale takes us on Jorge Mario Bergoglio’s pilgrimage from his grandmother’s knee in the Italian-Argentine community, through years of success and sorrow in the tumultuous country that he loved, to his surprise election as Pope Francis. Mark K. Shriver finds himself on his own pilgrimage as he comes to understand the role of the Society of Jesus and the Jesuits in shaping the charismatic pontiff. Then, with smart subtlety, Shriver shows how the fundamental fact of faith makes pilgrims of us all.”

Cokie Roberts, New York Times bestselling author of *Capital Dames: The Civil War and the Women of Washington, 1848–1868* “Pilgrimage provides a new and important perspective on Pope Francis, garnered from extensive interviews with the people who have been closest to the Holy Father throughout the course of his life. All people of good faith, including those whose lives are not guided by religious beliefs, will be inspired and enlightened by the compelling manner in which Pilgrimage brings us closer to the heart and mind of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Pope Francis. I highly recommend this book; it will make a difference in your life.”

Cardinal Sean O’Malley, OFM Cap. “One American’s quest to grasp the essence of what makes Pope Francis tick becomes a compelling journey into new depths within the author’s soul. In Argentina, Shriver meets all the right people, and as they open up to him, Francis gradually shifts into focus. Funny, wise, insightful, and skillfully penned, Pilgrimage deserves to be ranked among the best books on the greatest leader of our age. I really enjoyed it.”

Austen Ivereigh, author of *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* “This is a book for the man in the street who wants to know, ‘Who is this pope? Where did he come from?’ And who wants to learn this not from a theologian writing for other theologians, but in everyday language from an everyday point of view. Moved by his own burning curiosity, Mark K. Shriver travels to Argentina, Rome, and elsewhere to talk with the pope’s family, former students, parishioners, and longtime associates. This book lets you travel with him.”

Michael Novak, author of *The Open Church and Writing from Left to Right*

Mark K. Shriver is president of Save the Children Action Network in Washington, D.C. Shriver created the Choice Program and is a former Maryland state legislator. His New York Times and Washington Post bestselling memoir, *A Good Man: Rediscovering My Father, Sargent Shriver*, was published in June 2012 and received a 2013 Christopher Award. Shriver lives with his wife, Jeanne,

and their three children, Molly, Tommy and Emma, in Maryland. From the Hardcover edition.

The remarkable personality and impact of Pope Francis is such that even a Jewish reader -- such as I -- instantly was intrigued by the prospect of learning more about what shaped this man and how he emerged from Argentina to become the Pope that he is. With an exemplary combination of in-depth reporting and personal reflection, Mark K. Shriver has done an outstanding job exploring the origins, influences, conflicts, and spiritual evolution that transformed Jorge Mario Bergoglio from a stern, pedantic Argentinian priest into the extraordinarily loving and inclusive Pope Francis who has captivated the world -- and also enriched and rejuvenated Shriver's own Catholic faith, which had faltered in the wake of the scandals that engulfed the Catholic Church in recent years. Shriver provides fascinating insights into the factors and experiences that have made Pope Francis a spiritual leader whose message leaps across religious, national and cultural boundaries in ways that seem as unprecedented as they are inspiring. As a veteran reporter and author myself (most recently of "The Special Field: A History of Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins"), I was impressed by how Shriver conducted more than 100 interviews with people who have known the Pope over the past half-century, from clergymen to trash collectors. The interviews elicit anecdotes and observations that enable Shriver to unravel the mystery of how this pontiff came to be who he is. This book should be of interest to and prompt reflection by readers of any faith -- and even those with no religious affiliation.

Loved it! As a lifelong Catholic, I totally related to the author's disillusionment with the Church and desire for change. Pope Francis is like a breath of fresh air and I enjoyed learning more about him. Pilgrimage really gets at who he is as a person, not just the facts of his life. I enjoyed the interviews with his friends in Argentina, especially the two rabbis, the priests who work in the slums, and the garbage collector. The book is a journey and the author writes it in a way that allows the reader to come along with him. By the end, I too felt my faith in the Church had been restored. I highly recommend it!

This book is the fourth biography of Pope Francis that I have read. The key to me to understand Pope Francis was found on page 62. This chapter is on Bergoglio as a Jesuit novice. One of his students, Father Paredes said: "We got the sense that Zaragozi (the Jesuit novice master) awoke in Bergoglio not just the habit but the rage for prayer that he has to this day." Bingo, so that's his secret. Much of the rest of the book covered materials I had read before, but Mark Shriver gives this

material his own take. I found some other keen insights, but the one about Bergoglio, now Pope Francis, unlocked the Pope in a very profound way.

Was worried that this would be another book purchase I'd have a hard time wading through, given the "gravitas" of the subject. It's an easy, enlightening and enjoyable read. SO glad I bought it! Would recommend this for Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Mark Shriver not only came to understand what Popular Religiosity means to simple people in Latin America, but captured it brilliantly in this book. A must read for anyone who wishes to understand what makes Pope Francis tick. Hope he writes more.

The humility and the humanity of a genuinely charismatic figure (in both the literal and figurative sense) is revealed in the exploration of the life of Mario Bergoglio, now Pope Francis. In this work the humanity of the author is revealed as well. Rather than a recitation of the human flaws of the subject or the author, it is a narrative of the struggle that Bergoglio endured just as each of us endures as we attempt to negotiate our way through each day, serve ourselves and each other with a little grace, and try to leave our flock or our family or our world in a little better place. It is a book about the Catholic pope but not meant only for Catholics. Rather, in this time when social justice is at such a premium, it is a compelling description of how perhaps its chief proponent, now residing in Vatican City, came by such a circuitous route to this station. Mark Shriver's first book, *A Good Man*, was about his father, Sargent Shriver. The author has a superb voice to describe these fine men, cut from the same cloth.

Well written! Wonderful insight on the life of Pope Francis.

I highly recommend this biography of Pope Francis. Mark Shriver's research and interviews with those who grew up with him and knew him as a young priest and then Bishop show the person of great mercy and compassion in his role as Pope for the world community! He is expansive and inclusive and particularly concerned for the poor, the immigrant, those most in need of a loving and caring community. I found it a great read.

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