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# Let's Talk

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## Let's Talk

02.12.2013 | Hot Topics, Catholic

As Catholics enter the Lenten season, the former U.S. ambassador to the Holy See calls for "a worldwide dialogue with Catholics from every corner of the earth" about the leadership qualities desired in a new pope.

"The church needs a global leader and healer who can creatively, critically and constructively welcome the richness and catholicity of the human family and dialogue with the world concerning the great challenges it faces at this moment in human history," said Miguel Díaz, who stepped down as ambassador in November to serve as University Professor of Faith and Culture at the University of Dayton.

"Wouldn't it be great if during Lent — a period of prayer and fasting and conversion — the Catholic church entered into a dialogue with the world's one billion Catholics on who their next leader should be?"

A prominent Catholic theologian, Díaz was the first Hispanic to represent the United States at the Vatican. What leadership characteristics does this recent Vatican insider deem important?

"We need a charismatic, inclusive and thoughtful spiritual leader," Díaz said. "We need a diplomat, someone who can bridge human differences, someone who can engage with Muslims, Hindus, Jews — all religions and people of no religion."

The next pope should encourage the recognition and flourishing of human gifts at every level of the church and society, and the contribution and role of women in positions of leadership," Díaz said. "A 21st century pope should listen and respond justly regarding issues of power and privilege."

In interviews with national media, Díaz called Pope Benedict XVI's decision to retire at the end of the month "an act of great grace." The Catholic church, Díaz said, stands at a crossroads.

"Lent leads to life and resurrection," he observed. "The process of electing a new pope can lead to a transformational moment, a time of renewal for the Catholic church in service to the common good."

The University of Dayton, founded by the Society of Mary, is among the nation's top Catholic universities and the largest private university in Ohio.

***For more information, contact Teri Rizvi at 937-229-3255 or [rizvi@udayton.edu](mailto:rizvi@udayton.edu).***