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PETRVS

The FRIENDS of the
HOLY FATHER

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NEWSLETTER

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THE ROCK OF PETER

Take the early Martyr-Popes, or the Gregories and the Leos; whether they were rich or poor, in power or in persecution, they were simply detached from every earthly thing save the Rock of Peter. This was their adamantine foundation, their starting-point in every enterprise, their refuge in every calamity, the point of leverage by which they moved the world. Secure in this, they have let other things come and go, as they would; or have deliberately made light of what they had, in order that they might gain what they had not. They have known, in the fullness of a heroic faith, that, while they were true to themselves and to their divinely-appointed position, they could not but 'inherit the earth,' and that if they lost ground here, it was only to make progress elsewhere.

Old men usually get fond of old habits; they cannot imagine, understand, relish anything to which they are not accustomed. The Popes have been old men; but, wonderful to say, they have never been slow to venture out upon a new line, when it was necessary, and have ever been looking about, sounding, exploring, taking observations, reconnoitring, attempting, even when there was no immediate reason why they should not let well alone, as the world would say, or even when they were hampered with difficulties at their door, so great that you would think that they had no time or thought to spare for anything in the distance.

It is but a few years ago that a man of eighty, of humble origin, (Pius IX, 1792 -1878) the most conservative of Popes, as he was considered, with disaffection and sedition upheaving his throne, was found to be planning missions to the interior of Africa, and, when a moment's opportunity was given him, made the most autocratic of Emperors, the very hope of conservatives, the very terror of Catholics, quail beneath his glance. And, thus independent of times and places, the Popes have never found any difficulty, when the proper moment came, of following out a new and daring line of policy (as their



astonished foes have called it), of leaving the old world to shift for itself and to disappear from the scene in its due season, and of fastening on and establishing themselves in the new.

From Saint John Henry Newman's University Sketches, 1852

HUMAN FRATERNITY FOR WORLD PEACE AND LIVING TOGETHER

Earlier this year Pope Francis was in Abu Dhabi and signed *The Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*.

The signing followed the Holy Father's speech to the Global Conference on Human Fraternity in Abu Dhabi, a key element in the Holy Father's Apostolic Visit to the United Arab Emirates (3-5 February 2019).