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My hope for the Church is that it continues to be a vital and resounding voice of love, service and inspiration in today's fast, ever-changing troubled world. Just as Jesus came as an ambassador for His Father, the Church must always follow His example of service to others while being a symbol of faith and morality that transcends the Catholic Church. "So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us." (2 Corinthians 5:20). Through the daily stewardship examples of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, a new and dynamic Catholic persona of humility and compassion is evolving.

I have had the great fortune of being raised in a multi-generation family. I heard many stories of the significant role the church played in my ancestors' lives. When my immigrant great-great grandparents arrived in this country in 1910, their first goal, after being processed at Ellis Island, was to find a church to call home. That same church would be their lifeline for spiritual and emotional guidance for 75 years. My great grandmother's church provided a home for her to pray with others for their family members who were fighting in World War II. My grandparents experienced the most dramatic change in the 1960's when the Second Vatican Council enacted the most radical changes the church had seen in centuries. This Council, convened by Pope John XXIII, forged a new set of operating principles for the church, creating a new modern home for its followers. My parents, through my Baptism, made me a part of a church that would become my home and a part of me for the rest of my life. The constant word in all these examples is *home* and my hope for the Church is that it will always have open its

doors and be a home that evolves to serve and embrace all people as it has my family over the last 100+ years.

Inside the classrooms of the Holy Cross high school I attend, I am taught that the requirement of servant leadership and how to live my life in the Spirit is necessary if I am to inherit the kingdom of God. This is a challenge since my generation is growing up trying to co-exist in an extremely materialistic world that includes racism, religious intolerance, gender bias and little regard for the sanctity of life. My hope for the church is that it will provide the desperately needed guidance and strong voice to help us break down the barriers of apathy, hatred, and intolerance. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus was asked about who is our neighbor. He replied, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:36-37). Jesus is telling us to overcome our prejudices and show kindness to all people of the world and consider them our neighbors, even if we do not agree with their beliefs and opinions. My vision for the church would be to see it emerge as a driving force behind strong leadership like Pope Francis, who is non-apologetic in the defense of those who need to be helped and protected.

My generation hopes to view through the example of the church, and its leaders, role models for us to emulate in order to become worthy ambassadors for the continuation of the work of Christ. My hope for the church is that it will always foster love and stewardship while never backing down, or remaining timid, in its voice for those who cannot speak for themselves no matter who they are or where they live. Every human is worthy of love and acceptance. My

hope for the church is that the church will become, for my generation, a bright shining star that will lead to Christ as it did in the past.