

# living City

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# Letter From the Editor



Perhaps you remember the old advertisement, “*I’m not a doctor, but I play one on TV*”? I have felt that way in the last weeks since joining Focolare Media. I’m delighted to be the new editor of this fine magazine, but as I’ve said apologetically to my new colleagues: I’ve never been a magazine editor before. I’ve been writing for magazines for a long time. Does that count?

I am also somewhat new to the Focolare, having admired the charisma from afar. So I have a lot of learning to do.

The first twenty years of my religious journey were spent in the heart of Protestant Evangelicalism. I wanted to be a great preacher. I attended Moody Bible Institute in Chicago for one year, before transferring to Wheaton College. While at Wheaton, I became more interested in my philosophy and history studies than in old-school evangelism, and I began to write. Graduating a semester early, I started seminary early, in Chicago, with the intention of becoming an Episcopal priest. But then I came to see my vocation was about the words of faith—books, writing, and publishing—and I didn’t pursue ordination.

I married young. We had two children. And I was working in book publishing. I became an active Episcopalian layperson, even serving on our bishop’s discernment committee. But I was also falling in love with Roman Catholicism. I began to write books about Francis and Clare of Assisi. By early 2009, then divorced, I was in Rome with a Catholic friend—he was helping me research a book I was preparing on the medieval Pope Celestine V—and he said, “Why don’t you just become a Catholic?” Returning home, I did that, and was welcomed into the Church on the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi in 2009. (My priest let me pick the day!)

To confuse things further, it was also precisely at that time when I was falling in love with a wonderful Jewish woman. We married in January 2010. Studies have shown that Catholics and Jews often make good marriages, but to complicate ours further, Michal is not simply Jewish; she is a rabbi. So I am a Catholic writer married to a congregational rabbi. Together, Michal and I are raising our daughter Sima, who is now twelve. We also serve as codirectors of The Lux Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology in Franklin, Wisconsin.

Life is rich. I’m glad to be here.

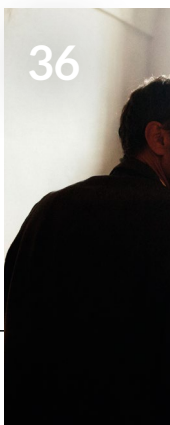
Look for our new website, [FocolareMedia.com](http://FocolareMedia.com), to launch by the end of June. When that happens, we will have new and interesting opportunities to connect with you between issues of the magazine. We will follow-up articles with online updates, and begin to preview the theme of the next issue with various forms of content. We also look forward to offering you audio versions of some of the articles from each issue.

I hope you’ll keep in touch. As a magazine dedicated to promoting dialogue, we greatly value your feedback and input.

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Art by Maria Oswald





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