Contents

Introduction: Pope Francis’s Proposal 1

1. The Return of the Margins 7
   The Global City and the New Margins 7
   Church of the South 12
   The Turn Taken by Francis 17
   The Church Was at the Center 20
   A World That Is Alien to the Church 23

2. The Ancient Margins of Christianity 31
   Bible and Margins 31
   The Galilean Accent 35
   The Poor, the Excluded, and the Margins 41
   The Statement of the Center 48
   A Center That Became Marginal 51
   Flight from the World for the Desert 56

3. Some Marginal Fragments of Christian Life 65
   Descending to the Depths 65

ν
Contents

Becoming a Foreigner in Your Own Country 70
The Russian Church Seen from Siberia 73
A Nun in the Camp 79
A Twentieth-Century Roman Fool for Christ 85

4. Mission on the Margins 95
The Growth of Contemporary Margins 95
Estrangement from Christianity 99
Paris and a Concerned Cardinal 104
France, a Mission Country? 110
A Brief Big Story 112
About a Failure: So Many Questions 123
A Testing Place for the Centrality of Christianity 126
The Mystique of the Margins 132
Women on the Margins 137
A Woman in the Marxist City 142
Sant’Egidio: The Poor Suburbs and the City 149

Conclusion: Gospel on the Margins 163

Notes 177