The first three years of our Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life have demonstrated a hunger for civil and substantive dialogue, renewed interest in the principles of Catholic social teaching, and enthusiasm for the leadership of Pope Francis at Georgetown, in Washington, and beyond. The Initiative's third year was a time of opportunity, dialogue, outreach, and integration as it shared Catholic Social Thought more broadly and deeply and encouraged a new generation of leaders to become “salt, light, and leaven” in public life.

- Pope Francis’ visit to Washington offered a unique opportunity for the Initiative to advance his vision and share the message of Catholic social teaching. The Initiative’s media briefing brought together the Pope’s Washington hosts to help journalists report and interpret the Holy Father’s words and actions. Before his visit, a lively dialogue examined connections between family and economic life. Only 24 hours after he left, a major Initiative dialogue reviewed, analyzed, and discussed the impact of his visit.

- The Initiative continued to promote civil dialogue in a divided nation and Church. Among the additional topics covered were two well-attended sessions on Pope Francis’ environmental encyclical, the role of women in the Church and its social ministries, protecting human life and dignity from the “throwaway culture,” and the religious and moral dimensions of the 2016 campaign.

- The Initiative continued its unique outreach to young leaders in Washington through its Salt and Light Gatherings and Latino Leaders program with discussions of 2016 politics, terrorism, immigration, and Pope Francis’ leadership.

The Initiative also focused on integrating its mission and activities deeply in Georgetown’s academic and community life, launching a CST Fellows program for talented undergraduates and working with the Institute of Politics and Public Service’s new Baker Center and the Center for Social Justice. Our progress was made possible by the leadership of President DeGioia and his office, Vice President for Global Engagement Tom Banchoff; our colleagues at the Berkeley Center, and other allies at Georgetown. The Initiative is a powerful example of Georgetown’s Catholic and Jesuit identity in action.

We appreciate very much the active support and participation of Cardinal Donald Wuerl and Cardinal Theodore McCarrick. We are deeply grateful to our donors and supporters recognized in this report, led by W. Shepherdson Abell, Msgr. John Enzler, Maury Devine, and Chris Dorment.

Over its first three years, the Initiative has become more than its widely covered discussions with President Obama and the Pope’s key advisor Cardinal Rodriguez, and more than dialogues with respected journalists and policymakers. It is also the sharing of Catholic Social Teaching with young leaders, integrating these values more deeply at Georgetown, and advancing Pope Francis’ vision in less visible ways in Washington, our nation, and the Church. In three years, the Initiative has moved from a promising idea to a respected center for dialogue, crossing ideological, political, and religious lines and exploring the principles of Catholic Social Thought and the priorities of Pope Francis.

“This Initiative is playing a significant role in advancing Pope Francis’ vision of a Church ‘for the poor’ and our Holy Father’s call for leaders in public life to defend the weak and advance the common good.”

—Cardinal Donald Wuerl
When Pope Francis made his historic visit to the United States in September, the Initiative seized this opportunity to help communicate his message, share Catholic social teaching and reach out to media, policymakers, and young leaders in Washington, D.C. On September 10, the Initiative hosted a media briefing for journalists covering the upcoming visit of Pope Francis. The Initiative gathered the organizational hosts for Pope Francis’ visit, including the White House, Speaker’s Office, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the Archdiocese of Washington, and Catholic Charities. John Allen of Crux and local Pastor Fr. Evelio Menjivar helped preview the Pope’s message.


In 2015, more than 150 Catholic, evangelical and other leaders attended an unprecedented Catholic-Evangelical Leadership Summit on Overcoming Poverty which drew President Obama, Robert Putnam, Republican and Democratic policymakers, and religious leaders to Georgetown. They brought unprecedented range of affiliations, perspectives, and positions of influence within the Catholic and evangelical community and on poverty issues and public policy. The Initiative organized and hosted a strategy discussion and dinner for leaders of major Christian organizations to follow up and cement policy outcomes and relationships, bringing together leaders from the National Association of Evangelicals, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities USA, Sojourners, PICO National Network, and Bread for the World.
POPE FRANCIS’ ENCYCLICAL ON THE ENVIRONMENT: A DIALOGUE ON ITS MORAL AND POLICY CHALLENGES

Shortly after the release of Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si*, a panel of diverse leaders examined and responded to Pope Francis’ message. Participants included Gina McCarthy, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Anne Thompson, chief environmental affairs and Vatican correspondent for NBC News; Christiana Peppard, professor of moral theology at Fordham University; and Ralph Izzo, CEO of Public Service Enterprise Group Inc.

WOMEN TAKING THE LEAD: ACTING ON POPE FRANCIS’ MESSAGE

An enthusiastically-received Dialogue with Sr. Carol Keehan of the Catholic Health Association, Dr. Carolyn Woo of Catholic Relief Services, and Sr. Donna Markham of Catholic Charities USA discussed the role of women in Church and society, the identity and challenges of Catholic social ministries, and advancing the message of Pope Francis. This session was attended by delegations of students from Catholic all-girls high schools.

FRANCIS FACTOR REVISITED: ASSESSING POPE FRANCIS’ VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

The day after Pope Francis left the United States after his historic visit, the Initiative hosted a major Dialogue to assess the trip, analyze Pope Francis’ message, and discuss its impact. Kim Daniels, former spokesperson for the president of the USCCB; Alexia Kelley, CEO of Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities; Cokie Roberts, political commentator for ABC News; Mark Shields, national columnist and commentator on PBS NewsHour; and Michael Steele, former chairman of the Republican National Committee, were featured.
POPE FRANCIS’ ENVIRONMENTAL ENCYCLICAL: PROTECTING THE PLANET AND THE POOR

The first Initiative Dialogue, hosted at the Georgetown Law Center, discussed the environmental encyclical, climate change, and the poor and featured Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez, Chair of Pope Francis’ Council of Cardinals; John Podesta, former environmental advisor in the Obama administration and chair of the Clinton presidential campaign; and Professor Edith Brown Weiss. The well-attended session was co-sponsored with the Environmental Law Center.

FAITH, FRANCIS, AND THE 2016 CAMPAIGN


IT’S THE ECONOMY, SYNOD!: A DIALOGUE ON ECONOMIC PRESSURES AND FAMILY LIFE IN ADVANCE OF POPE FRANCIS’ U.S. VISIT AND THE SYNOD ON THE FAMILY

Ahead of the Synod on the Family and Pope Francis’ visit, the Initiative co-sponsored a panel with Crux on the impact of economic pressures on family life. Panelists included Richard Trumka, president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations; Maryann Cusimano Love, professor at the Catholic University of America; Tarshea Smith, a former employee at Georgetown’s dining services and organizer for UNITE HERE; and Michael Strain, deputy director of economic policy studies of the American Enterprise Institute.

RESISTING THE “THROWAWAY CULTURE”: PROTECTING HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY

The Initiative offered a timely, life-affirming discussion which brought together respected pro-life legal expert Helen Alvare, Fordham ethicist and Religion News Service columnist Charles Camosy, and “the Pope’s favorite nun” and immigration leader Sr. Norma Pimentel, M.J. President DeGioia opened the event.
The Initiative continues to bring together young Catholic leaders involved in public policy in our nation’s capital to explore connections between faith, Catholic social teaching, and their professional lives. These **Salt and Light Gatherings** are for Catholics under 40 who work on Capitol Hill, in the administration, government, or other public policy organizations. These gatherings are held at and supported by the Georgetown School of Continuing Studies and include discussion on a critical topic, networking, and a reception with the featured speakers.

- **POPE FRANCIS’ VISIT AND THE 2016 CAMPAIGN:**
  The day after the Iowa Caucus, the Initiative convened a panel of three respected young journalists—Elizabeth Dias of *TIME*, Kirsten Powers of Fox News, and Luke Russert of NBC News—to examine the timeless topic of religion and politics and their experiences at the intersection of media, faith, and public life.

- **FAITH, HOPE, AND COURAGE IN A TIME OF FEAR:**
  At a time of growing fear, harsh rhetoric, and polarizing proposals, the Initiative brought together a panel of leaders working among Catholic and Muslim interfaith coalitions, including Maryann Cusimano Love, professor of international politics at the Catholic University of America; Jordan Denari Duffner of Georgetown’s Bridge Initiative; and Hedieh Mirahmadi, president of World Organization for Resource Development and Education.

The Initiative also convenes young Latino leaders as part of the **Catholic Latino Leadership Initiative/Iniciativa de Liderazgo Católico**. These sessions are held at St. Matthew’s Cathedral and explore the particular challenges and assets of Catholic Social Thought as it applies to their work, service, and leadership.

- **A CONVERSATION WITH CARDINAL RODRÍGUEZ:**
  The Initiative offered several dozen young Latino leaders a unique opportunity to speak with Cardinal Rodriguez about service and leadership and about faith and major environmental, economic, and immigration issues of our day.

- **MISERICORDIA Y PAZ: FRANCIS’ MESSAGE IN THE AMERICAS FOR YOUNG LATINO LEADERS:**
  A panel with Interfaith Worker Justice leader Rudy Lopez, Catholic News Service editor Rhina Guidos, and USCCB advisor for the Church in Latin America Fr. Juan Molina focused on Pope Francis’ historic visits to Cuba, Mexico, and the United States. Bishop Ricardo Ramirez, OSB, offered closing remarks.

- **IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCES: HUMAN, POLITICAL, AND LEGAL:**
  Following the Supreme Court’s ruling in *United States v. Texas*, a panel focused on the personal, policy, and moral elements of immigration with Luis Cardona, director of Street Outreach Network of Montgomery County; Ashley Feasley of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC); and Antonio Tijerino, president and CEO of the Hispanic Heritage Foundation.

The Initiative also launched the **Catholic Social Thought (CST) Fellows program**, supporting talented undergraduates to better understand and communicate the message of Catholic Social Teaching.

> “The relationships being formed by this program are laying the foundation for a unique network of young Latino Catholic professionals inspired to live our faith in the world.”

—Sara Benitez
SHARING CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT


John has spoken on behalf of the Initiative and Georgetown to the Catholic Theological Society of America, Fordham University, University of St. Thomas, the Franciscan Mission Service, the American Enterprise Institute, the Ethics and Public Policy Center’s Faith Angle Forum, National Association of Evangelicals, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. He also delivered the Catholic Common Ground Initiative lecture in Chicago.

The Initiative is integrating its mission and work more deeply in Georgetown academic and community life. These efforts include: service on the Committee on Investments and Social Responsibility; our first CST Fellow; participation in programs of the Center for Social Justice, Institute of Politics and Public Service Baker Center, and the Georgetown Board of Directors; advising pro-life student groups; and hosting a reception for graduating Catholic student leaders. The Initiative is a clear sign and ongoing example that Georgetown takes seriously its Catholic mission and Jesuit identity. John will lead a new seminar in the fall semester of 2016.

FUNDRAISING

A distinguished group led by Shepherdson Abell, Msgr. John Enzler, Maury Devine, and Chris Dorment have helped to raise essential financial resources to fund the Initiative’s important work. We are particularly thankful to Maury Devine and Cardinal McCarrick for their organization of and participation in a valuable fundraising event at 1789 restaurant. The Initiative is making steady progress in raising funds, with a special thanks to Georgetown University, but more donors and resources are needed to continue and expand our work. If you have questions, ideas, or wish to support the work of the Initiative, please contact John Carr.

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“Georgetown University’s Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life enables our community to engage ever more deeply the values that animate the mission of our University—strengthening our collective commitment to the common good. I am grateful to John Carr for his outstanding leadership in sharing the message of Catholic Social Teaching and the vision of Pope Francis and for his role in finding new ways to bring the extraordinary resources of our faith tradition to the forefront of public dialogue and to young people across our community.”

—President John J. DeGioia
“Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples. We must move forward together, as one, in a renewed spirit of fraternity and solidarity, cooperating generously for the common good.”

—Pope Francis addressing the U.S. Congress

Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life

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