Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
The Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life is a unique effort to promote dialogue on Catholic Social Thought and national and global issues; build bridges across political, religious, and ideological lines; and encourage a new generation of Catholic lay leaders to see their faith as assets in pursuing the common good.

The Initiative is located in the Office of the President and partners with other key Georgetown structures to advance the Catholic and Jesuit mission of Georgetown. Through numerous outreach activities and a fellows program, the Initiative engages Georgetown faculty and students, as well as the Washington community, on the pressing moral and ethical questions of our time. The Initiative has also played significant roles in the university’s socially responsible investment efforts and has contributed to Georgetown’s efforts to promote human life and dignity, express solidarity with immigrants and refugees, promote interfaith solidarity, and respond to the legacy of slavery.
Public Dialogues on Catholic Social Thought

Our Public Dialogues offer civil and substantive discussions on the implications of Catholic Social Thought for policy and public life.

“Salt and Light” Gatherings for Young Catholic Professionals

“Salt and Light” gatherings bring together young public policy professionals to explore links between faith, Catholic Social Thought, and their work.

Latino Leaders Program

These gatherings for young Latino leaders help them explore Catholic Social Teaching and their unique opportunities and challenges as Hispanic Americans.

Summits

These multi-day convenings use Catholic Social Thought to build bridges among policymakers, academics, and religious leaders to advance the common good and the message of Pope Francis.

“Since its founding in 2013, the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life has brought together thousands of individuals in dialogue and reflection. It has enabled our community to engage the values that animate the mission of our university and to embrace the message of Pope Francis.”

- John J. DeGioia, President, Georgetown University
Almost 15,000 people have attended more than 30 Initiative dialogues, gatherings for young leaders, and other convenings. The Initiative has demonstrated that there is a hunger for civil dialogue in a time of polarization, a search for a moral vocabulary to address contentious issues, and an openness to Catholic Social Thought and the leadership of Pope Francis as ways to bring people together in divided times.

POVERTY SUMMIT

In May 2015, the Evangelical-Catholic Leadership Summit on Overcoming Poverty brought together President Obama, Robert Putnam of Harvard, and Arthur Brooks of the American Enterprise Institute in an unprecedented panel. Diverse policymakers, researchers, and religious and community leaders came together over three days to find common ground in focusing on economic and family factors as causes and remedies for poverty.
VATICAN-U.S. CONVENING

In May 2017, Vatican leaders and directors of U.S. academic centers on Catholic Social Thought came together in a first-ever convening to share their work, objectives, lessons, and future priorities. Cardinal Peter Turkson and Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, who lead Vatican efforts on justice, peace, environment, and refugees, explored effective efforts and future collaboration to share principles of Catholic social teaching and the priorities of Pope Francis.

TIMELY TOPICS

Initiative programs have addressed a diverse range of global policy, moral, and religious issues, including:

**Public Dialogues**

- The “Francis Factor” in Politics, Economics, the U.S., and the Church
- The Moral Limits of Partisanship
- Women Leading the Way on Pope Francis’ Vision
- Welcoming the Stranger in Tough Times
- Protecting Human Life and Rejecting a “Throwaway Culture”
- Abandonment of Working Class Families and Communities

**Salt and Light Gatherings and Latino Leaders Program**

- How Not to Lose Your Faith in Washington
- Global Solidarity in an “America First” Nation
- Politics as a Vocation
- Millennials, Faith, and Campaign 2016
- Trump's Policies, Latino Priorities, and Catholic Perspectives
- Immigration Experiences: Human, Political, and Legal Dimensions
INITIATIVE SPEAKERS

Over the years, the Initiative has hosted dozens of speakers representing diverse political, religious, media, and academic communities, including:

President Barack Obama

Cory Booker (D-NJ), Tim Kaine (D-VA), and Tim Scott (R-SC)
U.S. Senate

Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), Walter Jones (R-NC), Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), Francis Rooney (R-FL), and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)
U.S. House of Representatives

Cardinals Donald Wuerl, Peter Turkson, Oscar Rodriguez, and Theodore McCarrick

Sister Simone Campbell
Network

Arthur Brooks
American Enterprise Institute

Richard Trumka
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

Rusty Reno
First Things

Michael Gerson, E.J. Dionne, Robert Costa, and Elizabeth Stoker Bruenig
The Washington Post

Elizabeth Dias
TIME Magazine

Emma Green
The Atlantic

Cokie Roberts
ABC

Mark Shields
PBS NewsHour

David Brooks and Ross Douthat
The New York Times

John Allen
Crux

Robert Putnam
Harvard University

Helen Alvare
George Mason School of Law
Journalists and policymakers look to the Initiative and its director, John Carr, as knowledgeable sources on the intersection between faith and politics and on Catholic Social Thought and key global and domestic policy issues.

The Initiative’s programs and leaders are regularly covered and quoted by top media outlets, including the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Economist, America, Politico, ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, EWTN, Catholic News Service, National Catholic Register, and National Catholic Reporter, among others.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

John Carr is the founder and director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life and an adjunct professor of theology at Georgetown University.

Carr has been a leader at the intersection of faith and public life for four decades. He served as executive director of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for more than 20 years. In 2017, he was elected chair of the board of Bread for the World. Carr was also a Washington correspondent and columnist for America Magazine in 2016 and a residential fellow at the Harvard Institute of Politics in 2012.

John Carr
Director, Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life, Georgetown University
FACULTY AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Initiative is a vital contributor to the academic and community life of Georgetown University. Students are involved as CST Fellows, Initiative researchers, and participants in a new seminar on Catholic Social Thought for undergraduates, and both faculty and students serve as panelists and participants in Initiative programs. Students and scholars also contribute blog posts on Catholic Social Thought and global and community issues like climate change, immigrants and refugees, and more.

Visit catholicsocialthought.georgetown.edu to learn more and to:

• Sign up for our email list to receive invitations to Initiative gatherings
• Gain insights from our “Catholic Social Thought Matters” blog
• Watch video recaps of our major programs
• Connect with us on social media
• Contribute to support the work of the Initiative

“...The 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. The Initiative provides an important presence here in Washington.”

– Cardinal Donald Wuerl
Archdiocese of Washington