ABOUT THE INITIATIVE ON CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT AND PUBLIC LIFE

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 an asset in pursuing the common good.

ABOUT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Established in 1789, Georgetown is the oldest Catholic and Jesuit university in the United States. One of the world’s leading academic and research institutions, Georgetown enrolls more than 17,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students across nine schools. A global institution, Georgetown provides a unique educational experience that prepares the next generation of global citizens to lead and make a difference in the world. The university’s educational mission and international partnerships seek to advance the global common good.
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The 2019-2020 academic year was a time of testing, new challenges, and growing participation. The Initiative brought thousands of people together at Georgetown University for principled dialogue. When COVID-19 made that impossible, we quickly pivoted to organize online dialogues on issues related to the pandemic, racism, and environmental justice. We organized online sessions for young leaders and Latino leaders on how faith and Catholic social thought can enrich their lives.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, the Initiative:

• Organized 21 in-person and online gatherings, reaching over 39,200 people.
• Hosted 12 in-person dialogues focused on faith and politics, the “Francis Factor,” racism, migration, and the clergy sex abuse crisis.
• Offered nine conversations on COVID-19, economic crisis, racism, environmental justice, and the presidential election, which drew over 31,500 viewers and strong media coverage.
• Convened young and Latino leaders in Washington and beyond to explore racism, nationalism, and how to keep faith in demoralizing times.
• Welcomed 60 respected leaders, diverse voices, and people on the front lines to speak at the intersection of Catholic social thought and public life.
• Hosted the Washington premiere of a documentary on Dorothy Day, *Revolution of the Heart*.
• Developed a strategic review and future directions plan, examining what we have done, what we have learned, and what are strategic directions for the future.

The Initiative’s mission of civil dialogue, encouraging young leaders, and bringing Catholic social thought to public life is more important than ever. In a recent survey, with over 1,000 responses:

• Nine out of 10 said the Initiative’s work was “extremely” or “very” important, and nine out of 10 said the quality of the Initiative’s work was “excellent” or “very good.”
• Many participants said the Initiative has helped them become better informed, take action, and find solidarity and hope.

Since 2013, the Initiative has organized 100 gatherings, drawing 40,000 in-person attendees and 85,000 online viewers and providing a powerful example of Georgetown’s Catholic and Jesuit identity in action. We are very grateful for your participation, encouragement, and support.

Sincerely,

John L. Carr, Director
Kim Daniels, Associate Director
How would you assess the quality of the Initiative’s work?

JULY 2020 SURVEY, 1050 RESPONDENTS

- Excellent: 31.32%
- Good: 63.33%
- Average: 5.16%
The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a global health calamity, but an unprecedented economic, governmental, political, and moral crisis, raising fundamental questions about who we are and what we believe. In mid-March 2020, the Initiative moved online to offer virtual dialogues that addressed how we should act to protect human life and dignity and promote the common good in a time of fear, challenge, and loss.

- The Initiative’s first online dialogue was held on March 26, 2020, just a few days after the United States implemented stay-at-home orders. Catholic Social Thought and the Coronavirus Crisis: Moral Principles for Terrible Times drew an audience of over 1,875 people and focused on the health and community impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. It featured Reyna Guardado, Salvadoran immigrant and co-owner of a family restaurant in Bethesda, Maryland; Sr. Carol Keenan, D.C., nurse and former president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association; Fr. Myles Sheehan, S.J., M.D., Jesuit priest and physician; and John Monahan, J.D., senior advisor for global health to the president of Georgetown University.
• Life and Dignity, Justice and Solidarity: Moral Principles for Responding to the COVID-19 Economic Crisis on April 6, 2020 focused on the moral and human costs of the economic collapse related to the coronavirus. Over 1,750 people tuned in to hear from Maru Bautista of the Center for Family Life—working with domestic workers in Brooklyn—who focused on the dignity of work; David Brooks, columnist at the New York Times and commentator for PBS NewsHour who focused on solidarity; E.J. Dionne, University Professor at Georgetown University and columnist for the Washington Post who focused on human dignity; and Michael Strain, director of economic policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute and columnist at Bloomberg who focused on the common good and solidarity.

• Moving Beyond a Life on Hold: Young Catholics in a Time of Crisis on April 27, 2020 was the first online Salt and Light Gathering and had an audience of 525. The panel included Tara Isabella Burton, author of Strange Rites: New Religions for a Godless Age (May 2020) and columnist for Religion News Service; Kimberly Mazyck, the senior manager for engagement and educational outreach at Catholic Charities USA; Ashley McKinless, an associate editor at America Magazine; and Darius Villalobos, the director of diversity and inclusion at the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.

• Nearly 900 people tuned in for The Papacy Confronts the Coronavirus on May 5, 2020, a conversation co-hosted by the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs. Paul Elie, author and senior fellow at the Berkley Center, led a conversation on Pope Francis’ challenges and leadership in the coronavirus crisis with Austen Ivereigh, a leading biographer of Pope Francis who writes for the Tablet and Commonweal, and Kim Daniels, the Initiative’s associate director and member of the Vatican Dicastery for Communication.

• Global Dimensions of the Coronavirus Crisis: Responsibility and Solidarity, Policies and Priorities on May 12, 2020 had over 1,350 people join and included Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and leader of the new Vatican COVID-19 Commission; David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, a Lutheran minister, and author of Exodus from Hunger (2010); and Haydee Diaz, program director in Uganda for Catholic Relief Services.
This last year has been a time of testing, new challenges, and growing participation in our efforts. The onset of the COVID-19 crisis in the United States prevented gathering in person at Georgetown, while at the same time demonstrating the importance of Catholic social principles in our public life. We immediately organized online dialogues, not only on the moral and human dimensions of the pandemic, but also on other topics like environmental justice, confronting racism in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, and lifting up young Latino leaders.

- Over 1,925 people viewed *Laudato Si After Five Years: Hearing the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor* on May 29, 2020, a dialogue held in cooperation with the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. The dialogue included Cardinal Peter Turkson of the Vatican; Dan Misleh, founder and director of Catholic Climate Covenant; Kim Wasserman, executive director of the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization in Chicago, Illinois; and Christiana Zenner, associate professor of theology, science, and ethics in the department of theology at Fordham University.
• Ten days after the killing of George Floyd, the Initiative organized **Racism in Our Streets and Structures: A Test of Faith, A Crisis for Our Nation** on June 5, 2020 with **Washington Archbishop Wilton Gregory; Dr. Marcia Chatelain**, a provost’s distinguished associate professor of history and African-American studies at Georgetown and organizer of the #FergusonSyllabus; **Ralph McCloud**, the director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development; and **Gloria Purvis**, a host of the EWTN radio show *Morning Glory*. **Cardinal Peter Turkson** of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development made a surprise appearance towards the end of the dialogue. This dialogue has been viewed over 18,525 times, including views from the live C-SPAN broadcast. The *Washington Post* and many other media outlets and wire services covered the dialogue.

• **Faith and the Faithful in the 2020 Elections: Religion, Racism, and the COVID-19 Crisis** on July 10, 2020 had over 4,000 views and included **Michael Gerson**, a *Washington Post* columnist and a policy fellow with the ONE Campaign; **Justin Giboney**, an attorney, political strategist, and the president and co-founder of the AND Campaign; **Jeanné Lewis**, a board member of Faith in Public Life and a member of St. Augustine Catholic Church in Washington, DC; and **Gabby Orr**, a White House reporter for *POLITICO* covering President Donald Trump. **Gregory Smith**, an associate director of research at Pew Research Center, opened the dialogue with data from their recent report on religious voters and the 2020 U.S. presidential election.
In this last year, the Initiative continued to focus on topics like immigration, poverty, social witness, and the mission and message of Pope Francis.

• **The U.S. Response to the Global Migration Crisis: Human Costs, Moral Implications, and Policy Choices** on September 11, 2019 was the first Initiative dialogue co-sponsored with the University of Notre Dame’s Keough School of Global Affairs and had an overwhelming response with nearly 900 RSVPs that filled Gaston Hall. This outstanding panel included Denis McDonough, former chief of staff to President Barack Obama; Carlos Curbelo, former member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Miami, Florida; Aryah Somers Landsberger, vice president of programs at Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees; and Mizraim Belman Guerrero (SFS’20), a DACA recipient at Georgetown University.

• The Initiative co-sponsored **A Conversation with Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ** on September 16, 2019, which filled Gaston Hall with over 775 RSVPs. Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, leading American advocate for the abolition of the death penalty and author of *Dead Man Walking* (1993) and *River of Fire* (2019), was joined in conversation by Cheryllyn Branche, president of the GU272 Descendants Association, and Paul Elie, senior fellow at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs.
• The Initiative held The Francis Factor Today, a Dahlgren Dialogue co-sponsored with the Office of Mission and Ministry, on November 21, 2019. Archbishop of Washington Wilton Gregory, a former president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, was the centerpiece of the evening. He spoke to over 300 people—a full house in the chapel at the heart of Georgetown’s campus—and was joined in conversation by Helen Alvare, professor at the Scalia Law School of George Mason University and a member of the Vatican Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, and John Carr, director of the Initiative and former leader of the U.S. bishops’ efforts on justice and peace.

• On January 27, 2020, the Initiative hosted the Washington, DC, premiere of Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story and held a discussion with several of the film’s subjects, including Martha Hennessy, Dorothy Day’s granddaughter; Robert Ellsberg, editor-in-chief and publisher of Orbis Books; Carolyn Zablotny, editor of the Dorothy Day Guild’s newsletter, In Our Time; and filmmaker Martin Doblmeier, president and founder of Journey Films. The premiere and dialogue filled Gaston Hall with nearly 700 RSVPs.
The place of faith and the roles of the faithful in U.S. politics are often misunderstood or neglected, generating confusion and conflict and creating challenges for religious communities and political leaders. In the past three years, the Initiative has held seven dialogues on faith and politics with the support of the Democracy Fund and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

- Nearly 375 people came to Gaston Hall for a dialogue on Race, Faith, and Politics on October 2, 2019. The panel included Adelle Banks, a national reporter and editor for Religion News Service; Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, Texas; Justin Giboney, attorney, political strategist, and co-founder and president of the AND Campaign; and Rev. Jim Wallis, founder, president, and editor-in-chief of Sojourners and author of Christ in Crisis: Why We Need to Reclaim Jesus (2019).

- The Initiative’s last in-person dialogue before COVID-19 restrictions were put in place was on March 4, 2020. Over 400 people came to Faith and the Faithful in the 2020 Presidential Primaries with Donna Brazile, former interim national chair of the Democratic National Committee; Timothy Carney, commentary editor at the Washington Examiner and a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute; Elizabeth Podrebarac Scipio, senior researcher at Pew Research Center; Fr. Thomas Reese, S.J., columnist for Religion News Service and former editor of America; and Eugene Scott, political reporter for the Washington Post’s The Fix.
The horrific moral, human, and spiritual costs of the clergy sexual abuse crisis have undermined faith and destroyed trust in the Catholic Church. The Initiative continues to address the clergy sexual abuse crisis and discuss what must be done to protect the vulnerable, hold leaders accountable, and to reform, renew, and heal the Church.

- Over 270 people came to Gaston Hall for Where Are We Now? Where Do We Need To Go? Directions for Action on the Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis on November 4, 2019. The conversation began with John Carr and Kim Daniels sharing the 10 essential directions for reform and renewal developed at the Initiative’s National Leadership Convening held in June 2019. Carr and Daniels then led a discussion with Bishop Steven Biegler of Cheyenne, Wyoming; Juan Carlos Cruz, a survivor of clergy sexual abuse in Chile; Patricia McGuire, president of Trinity University; and Christopher White, the national correspondent for Crux and The Tablet newspaper of the diocese of Brooklyn.

- A Leadership Conversation on the Abuse Crisis: Where Are We Now and Where Do We Need to Go? on February 27, 2020 was a special gathering of over 50 senior Catholic leaders who heard from three global leaders on steps taken by the Vatican and the U.S. bishops in the last year to address the abuse crisis: Archbishop Charles Scicluna, archbishop of Malta and adjunct secretary of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; Juan Carlos Cruz, leading voice of Chilean survivors of clergy sexual abuse; and Cardinal Joseph Tobin, archbishop of Newark, New Jersey.
CONVENING AND LISTENING TO YOUNG LEADERS

The Initiative continues its efforts to shape a new generation of Catholic leaders, reaching out to young and Latino Catholics to explore the links between their faith, Catholic social thought, and their lives and work through our Salt and Light and Latino Leaders Gatherings. Among our efforts this year, we organized:

- **Keeping Faith in Demoralizing Times** on October 9, 2019 brought over 100 young leaders to this Salt and Light Gathering to hear from Michael Gerson, a *Washington Post* columnist and a policy fellow with the ONE Campaign; Jeanné Lewis, the vice president and chief engagement officer at the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy; and Montse Alvarado, the vice president and executive director at Becket Law, as well as a consultant to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee for Religious Liberty.

- The School of Continuing Studies auditorium was packed on November 20, 2019 with over 150 young people for the Salt and Light Gathering on Nationalism, Post-liberalism, and Pope Francis. The panel included Ross Douthat, a *New York Times* columnist and author of *To Change the Church: Pope Francis and the Future of Catholicism* (2018); Austen Ivereigh, a journalist and author of *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (2015); Leah Libresco Sargeant, a writer for outlets such as *First Things, America, The American Conservative,* and *Commonweal*; and Matthew Sitman, an associate editor at *Commonweal* and a co-host of *Know Your Enemy,* a podcast about the American right.
• Revolution of the Heart: Special Screening of Major Film on Dorothy Day for Young Leaders on January 28, 2020 was a Salt and Light Gathering that brought over 150 people to watch the film and then hear from Robert Ellsberg, the editor-in-chief and publisher of Orbis Books; Carolyn Zablotny, the editor of the Dorothy Day Guild’s newsletter, In Our Time; Anne Snyder (G’14), the editor-in-chief of Comment magazine; and filmmaker Martin Doblmeier, the president and founder of Journey Films. The two-night Washington film premiere led to a major story on Dorothy Day in the Washington Post.

• Moving Beyond a Life on Hold: Young Catholics in a Time of Crisis on April 27, 2020 was the first online Salt and Light Gathering and had an audience of 525. The panel included Tara Isabella Burton, author of Strange Rites: New Religions for a Godless Age (May 2020) and columnist for Religion News Service; Kimberly Mazyck, the senior manager for engagement and educational outreach at Catholic Charities USA; Ashley McKinless, an associate editor at America Magazine; and Darius Villalobos, the director of diversity and inclusion at the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.

• On June 11, 2020, the Initiative hosted its first online Latino Leader Gathering on Justice and Faith, Family and Community: Latino Leadership in a Time of Crisis. The response was overwhelming, with nearly 800 people interested in hearing from Bishop Mario Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Washington; Juan Belman Guerrero, program manager for the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor at Georgetown; Michael Okińczyc-Cruz, executive director and co-founder of the Coalition for Spiritual and Public Leadership; and Olga Segura, freelance writer and author of a forthcoming book on race, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the Catholic Church.
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Integrating Catholic social thought into the academic and community life of Georgetown University is a central dimension of the Initiative’s mission. The Initiative engages students through an academic seminar and extracurricular opportunities, and through collaboration and partnerships with a broad range of Georgetown structures and organizations, including the Office of the President; the Office of Mission and Ministry; the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs; the Institute for Politics and Public Service; and the Center for Social Justice, Research, Teaching and Service.

ACADEMIC THEOLOGY SEMINAR

Initiative Director John Carr and Associate Director Kim Daniels taught two semesters of a well-received seminar for Georgetown undergraduates on Pope Francis, Catholic Social Thought and Public Life. This upper-level seminar in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies analyzes the priorities and leadership of Pope Francis and the principal themes of Catholic social teaching, along with their applications to key issues in American public life. The seminar also examines the uses and misuses of Catholic social thought in U.S. politics.

STUDENT FELLOWS

The Initiative worked with three outstanding student fellows in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Anna Teresa (Tessa) Bloechl (G’21) is a graduate student studying global human development. In the 2019-2020 academic year, Tessa interned with FINCA Impact Finance. Before coming to Georgetown, Tessa worked at St. Peter Claver High School in Dodoma, Tanzania, as a long-term volunteer through Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

Christopher Castaldi-Moller (SFS’21) is an undergraduate student studying international politics. In the 2019-2020 academic year, Chris was part of the leadership for both the Georgetown Knights of Columbus and College Republicans.

Ana Ruiz (SFS’22) is an undergraduate student studying international affairs. In the 2019-2020 academic year, Ana was involved in the leadership of Catholic Women at Georgetown, served as an intern for the Catholic Labor Network through the Kalmanovitz Initiative, and was selected as a Figge Fellow under Georgetown’s Catholic Studies Program.

ABOVE

INITIATIVE RECOGNITION AND MEDIA COVERAGE

The Initiative and its leaders have been recognized in several key forums:

- Kim Daniels serves as a member of the Vatican Dicastery for Communication and as a consultor to the USCCB’s Committee on Religious Liberty. She was also asked to assist one of the five working groups for the Vatican’s COVID-19 Commission.
- John Carr serves as chair of Bread for the World, leading the organization’s leadership transition over the past two years. He is also a member of Georgetown’s Committee on Investments and Social Responsibility and was a leader in the university’s groundbreaking decision to divest from fossil fuels.
- Carr was the keynote speaker for two virtual conferences, one hosted by the Association of Pittsburgh Priests and one hosted by the Association of United States Catholic Priests.
- Daniels was a lead participant in a discussion at the 2020 FADICA Annual Symposium. She also spoke at the Women of the Church Conference at Saint Mary’s College in fall 2019, moderated the plenary policy discussion at the 2020 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, and moderated the opening discussion at the 2020 Catholic Partnership Summit.
- In fall 2019, Carr and Daniels jointly presented at the University of Notre Dame.

Carr and Daniels were quoted dozens of times in a variety of leading national and international outlets, including the Washington Post, New York Times, Associated Press, Baltimore Sun, Economist, America, National Catholic Reporter, Crux, National Catholic Register, Catholic News Service, Catholic Standard, and numerous other publications.

This past year, the Initiative received coverage in more than 85 news stories. Among the most read and quoted pieces about the Initiative were:

- At ballot box, let Gospel, not a political party, guide your vote (Catholic News Service)
- Our response to the coronavirus pandemic reveals who we truly are (America Media)
- Dorothy Day was a radical. Now many want the Vatican to make her a saint. (Washington Post)
- Panelists say from day one, pope showed world he’d be a pastor (National Catholic Reporter)
- Georgetown initiative spotlights work that remains on abuse crisis (Crux)

What difference has your participation in the Initiative made?

JULY 2020 SURVEY, 1050 RESPONDENTS

- Better informed
- Learned new perspectives
- Part of something bigger, sense of solidarity
- Take action in personal, professional, or community life
- Attitudes, assumptions challenged
"What does Catholicism/CST bring to us? It is the primary moral and intellectual system to oppose autonomy. It’s basically all we got. It is the ethos of community in this country and the dominant and most developed intellectual tradition of community."

– David Brooks at the Initiative’s April 6, 2020 Public Dialogue
INVESTING IN THE INITIATIVE

The Initiative’s remarkable progress in its first seven years has been due to the leadership of President John DeGioia and the assistance of Chief of Staff Joe Ferrara and Vice President for Global Engagement Thomas Banchoff, along with many others in the Office of the President; at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs; and in the Office of the Vice President for Global Engagement. None of this would have been possible without the investment, support, and leadership of Msgr. John Enzler, W. Shep Abell, Chris Dortment, Maury Devine, and so many other friends, supporters, and allies, including:

INDIVIDUALS

Charles and Siobhan Abell
Christopher and Patricia Abell
Kathryn and Shep Abell
Joseph Anderson
Kathy Baczko
Kevin and Thayer Baine
Janet Baran and Mark LeVota
David Beckmann
David Bonior
John and Marianne Borelli
Anthony and Irma Bormannkemeyer
Kathleen Brown
Mary Catherine Bunting
Frank and Fran Butler
Robert Cahill, Jr.
John and Linda Carr
George and Mary Anne Clancy
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Rosemary and Dan Collopy
Jean and Robert Comstock
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Francis and Julia Creighton
P. J. Crowley and Paula Kougeas
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Mike and Kathleen Curtin
David and Kim Daniels
C. Maury Devine
Caitlin Devine and Jonathan Masserano
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Cardinal Timothy Dolan and
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Jules Vierling
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Rufus Whitley, OMI

ORGANIZATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Kathryn and Shep Abell Foundation, Inc.
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Archdiocese of Washington
Mary Catherine Bunting Foundation
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Catholic Campaign for Human Development,
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese
of Washington
Catholic Health Association
Catholic Healthcare Partners
Catholic Community Foundation
A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation
Connelly Foundation
Cushman Foundation
Democracy Fund
GHR Foundation
Green Foundation
Healey Family Foundation
Holy Trinity Church
Knights of Columbus,
Georgetown University Council
Janet Baran and Mark LeVota Charitable Fund
LRW Charitable Trust
Malek Family Charitable Trust
Order of Malta, Federal Association
Patrick and Vicki Malone Fund
David and Carol Meyers Foundation
Dennis Meyer Foundation
PICO National Network
Porticus North America
John A. Quinn Foundation
Raskob Foundation
Joseph E. Robert, Jr. Charitable Trust

SUPPORT THE INITIATIVE

To support the unique work of the Initiative, please visit catholicosocialthought.georgetown.edu and click “Support Us.”
On June 30, 2020, Pope Francis called on American Catholics to be:

“capable of building bridges, defending life and breaking down the walls, visible and invisible, that prevent sincere dialogue and truthful communication. . . . We need [to] help people, especially the young, to distinguish good from evil, to develop sound judgments . . . and to understand the importance of working for justice, social concord and respect for our common home.”