

JustSouth Monthly

JSRI Perspectives on FAITH DOING JUSTICE

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Son of Immigrants Provides Hopeful Message on Immigration

Pope Francis' Visit to U.S.

by Sue Weishar, Ph.D.

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JSRI Upcoming Events

October 18-20

Fr. Kammer will give two addresses on social analysis for the East Coast Jesuit Social Ministries Convocation in NJ.

October 23

Fr. Kammer will address Catholic Social Thought at the University of Dallas Ministry Conference.

November 2

Fr. Kammer will lead a day of reflection for staff of Catholic Charities in Yakima, WA.

November 5

Fr. Kammer will chair the Ignatian Solidarity Network board meeting in Crystal City, VA.

November 13-14

The JSRI Advisory Board will meet on the Loyola campus.

JSRI Recent Activities

October 7

Ms. Donovan presented JSRI's "Too Much for Too Many" report

After the "Summer of Trump," when the immigration debate reached new lows for rancor and resentment, Pope Francis' remarks on immigration during his six day visit last month to the U.S. were a welcomed call to compassion and solidarity.

He began [his first speech in the United States](#), held at the White House on Wednesday morning, September 23, by immediately identifying himself with our nation's immigrant past: "As the son of an immigrant family I am happy to be a guest in this country, which was largely built by such families," adding that, "American Catholics are committed to building a society which is truly tolerant and inclusive, to safeguarding the rights of individuals and communities, and to rejecting every form of unjust discrimination."

During the motorcade on Constitution Avenue following his White House visit the pope was reminded how urgent the need for a just resolution to our nation's immigration crisis is to millions of American families. Seeing a five-year-old girl trying to get his attention, he waved her over. When she was lifted up to receive his kiss, Sophie Cruz handed the pontiff a letter she had written asking him to urge the President and Congress to pass immigration reform so her undocumented parents could remain in the U.S.

October 5

Dr. Weishar spoke to Dr. Liv Newman's freshman classes about the refugee crisis and the Church's teachings on migration.

October 3

Dr. Mikulich addressed mass incarceration at the annual meeting of Pax Christi Illinois.

October 2

Ms. Baudouin and Dr. Weishar participated in a faith-based shareholder's meeting on human rights at the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility in NYC.



Photo Credit: Win McNamee/Getty Images

September 25-26

Dr. Weishar and Dr. Mikulich were interviewed by WDSU about Pope Francis' U.S. visit.

September 24

Dr. Weishar presented a talk on *Our Nation's Broken Immigration System* at the Louisiana State Museum/Cultural Alliance of the South.

September 20

Dr. Weishar trained eight Loyola Service Learning volunteers who will teach ESL to adult immigrants at [Café con Ingles](#).

On Thursday morning, September 24, Pope Francis addressed a joint meeting of Congress, the first pontiff ever to do so. Throughout his speech he appealed to the better angles of the American character, and with his characteristic gentleness and humility, urged Congress to live up to such American ideals as equality, cooperation, compassion, and tolerance. Four Americans who embody the best of our cultural heritage and spirit were cited by the pope: Abraham Lincoln; Martin Luther King Jr.; the Catholic social justice activist Dorothy Day; and Trappist monk and mystic Thomas Merton.

The pope spoke of Martin Luther King Jr.'s march from Selma to Montgomery to "fulfill his 'dream' of full civil and political rights for African-Americans." He segued from the dream that Dr. King had for America — "a dream that continues to inspire us all" — to how America has been a land where immigrants have pursued their dreams for centuries.

In the national legislative body of the United States, Pope Francis did not propose a legislative solution to our nation's impasse on immigration or the world's growing refugee crisis. Instead, he offered sound moral advice, the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," (Mt 7:12). "Let us treat others with the same compassion with which we want to be treated. Let us seek for others the same possibilities with which we seek for ourselves... The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us."

In a word count of the Pope's address to Congress, the word "dialog" is most frequently mentioned — 12 times. Meaningful dialog requires putting aside one's agenda and listening with openness and presence to the concerns of others. Is this Congress capable of the kind of dialog needed to address such urgent matters as immigration reform, climate change, and persistent poverty? Pope Francis, for one, believes so.