

JustSouth Monthly

JSRI Perspectives on FAITH DOING JUSTICE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS



Connect with JSRI on [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#)

Number 93

March 2019

Trump Administration Serves Thyestean Banquets to Americans

By Sue Weishar, Ph.D.

JSRI Future Activities

April 5-6
The JSRI Advisory Board will meet at the Holy Name Parish Center.

April 8-9
Fr. Fred Kammer, SJ, will participate in the Ignatian Solidarity Board meeting in Chicago.

April 29-30
Fr. Kammer will direct a workshop on Jesuit justice for the second year Jesuit novices.

JSRI Recent Activities

February 26
Dr. Sue Weishar presented an overview of how immigration impacts the American economy to students and faculty visiting the U.S. from De Montfort University, Leicester, England.

March 9
Dr. Weishar attended a Steering Committee meeting of the Gillespie-Senter Community Memorial Breakfast at the First Unitarian Universalist Church.

March 11
Dr. Dennis Kalob attended, in Baton Rouge, the launch of the Unleash Local campaign, which advocates for the repeal of the state law that forbids local communities from establishing their own minimum wage rates or mandatory sick/vacation days.

March 12
Dr. Nik Mitchell testified to the Louisiana House Committee of The Administration of Criminal Justice on the status of the death penalty.

March 12
As a Guest Speaker at the Forty-Ninth Annual Assembly of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference in Lafayette, Dr. Sue Weishar addressed the topic of "Immigration to Louisiana" and how faith communities can encounter and welcome immigrants. Later that day, LIC leaders unanimously approved a resolution Dr. Weishar helped draft on reforming the use of solitary confinement in Louisiana.

March 13
Fr. Kammer delivered a lecture on the Jesuit theme of faith-doing-justice as part of the Loyola Lenten series.

March 14
Fr. Kammer and Dr. Kalob met with Clayton Sinyai, Executive Director of the Catholic Labor Network.

March 14
Dr. Kalob attended a meeting of the Step Up Louisiana Membership Committee.

March 14
Dr. Mitchell testified to the Louisiana Bullying Awareness and Treatment Task Force.

March 18
Dr. Kalob attended a meeting of the coalition working on the Unleash Local campaign in New Orleans.

March 19
Dr. Kalob gave a talk on food insecurity before the Loyola University Community Action Program (LUCAP) assembly.

CLICK TO JOIN OUR ADVOCACY NETWORK

"Thyestean banquet" is a term used to describe a horrific act. It is an allusion to the Greek myth about Thyestes, king of Olympia, and his brother, Artreus. After Thyestes seduced the wife of his brother, Artreus then murdered Thyestes' sons and served them to him at a feast.



Children in immigration detention.

It feels like the Trump Administration has been serving the American people one Thyestean banquet after another since taking office, with vulnerable immigrants the main item on the menu. From terminating DACA, to making all undocumented immigrants "priorities" for deportation regardless of background, to separating children from their parents at the border, to decimating the U.S. refugee program, the assault on immigrants seeking peace and freedom in our country has been relentless.

The fight over building an additional 500 miles of border fencing to respond to a fake national emergency at the U.S./Mexico border is the latest iteration of the Trump Administration's obsession with blaming undocumented immigrants for the nation's ills.

The constant attack on immigrants is taking a tremendous emotional toll on immigrant families. Here is how New Orleans immigrant leader Leticia Casindo described her concerns at [a prayer service last March](#)

"Our lives have never been easy... but especially since Donald Trump became president, our community has fallen into a nightmare... Our families are being separated, our children are suffering—they are not being allowed their right to a family because this administration has decided to make us a scapegoat to distract from the true problems that plague this country. ..It is sad to leave for work in the morning with fear in your heart, sad when every day your children ask if they will see you again that afternoon..."

The fears Ms. Casindo is experiencing are very real. From Fiscal Year 2016 to Fiscal Year 2017 ICE arrests of immigrants with no criminal records increased a shocking 252 percent in the New Orleans ICE District [1]

Ginette Arguello, a counselor with Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans who works with immigrant children and families, noted in a 2017 interview the impact families' fears about their immigration status has had on the immigrant children she serves: Increased tardiness or absences from school; difficulty concentrating; getting in fights at school; recurring nightmares; and eating too much or too little. One child simply told her, "My body aches."

[Although social science research since the turn of the last century](#) has consistently shown that immigration, including undocumented immigration, does not lead to an increase in crime, the Trump Administration insists on perpetuating that canard. Another one of nativists' favorite anti-immigrant talking points is that undocumented immigrants undermine the rule of law by working without authorization. As usual, when this argument is raised, left unsaid is that a major reason eight million undocumented immigrants are working in our country today is because many more millions of Americans illegally hired them to work, often to do difficult, dangerous jobs—like rebuilding communities after a natural disaster. We can again look to the Greek language to express this deliberate blindness: hypocrisy.

[A January 2019 Gallup poll](#) found that 60 percent of Americans oppose significantly expanding the construction of walls along the U.S.-Mexico border and 81 percent support a path to citizenship for immigrants in the U.S. without authorization. I continue to hope and pray that democracy (another Greek invention) will soon hold sway on how our country responds to our real immigration crisis—nearly 11 million undocumented immigrants ([over two thirds of whom have lived in the U.S. for more than ten years](#)) with almost no way to regularize their status.

[1]The New Orleans ICE District Area of Responsibility includes Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

Monthly articles reflect the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of Loyola University New Orleans.

Please send feedback to jsri@loyno.edu

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

As our number of enrolled students continues to rise, we need to make sure that each and every one has access to an exceptional educational experience. We can't do it without your help. [Give today!](#)

Published by the Jesuit Social Research Institute
Office Phone: 504- 864-7746 | E-mail: jsri@loyno.edu | Website: www.loyno.edu/jsri
Mailing Address: 6363 St. Charles Avenue, Campus Box 94, New Orleans, LA 70118

6363 St. Charles Avenue | New Orleans, LA 70118

This email was sent to .
To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

[manage](#) your preferences | [opt out](#) of all Loyola e-newsletters

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.