

JustSouth Monthly

JSRI Perspectives on FAITH DOING JUSTICE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS



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Living the Mission of Connectedness

By Ted Arroyo, SJ, Ph. D.

JSRI Future Activities

June 3

Fr. Fred Kammer, SJ, will give a talk on the role of charities in the Church to the Board of Catholic Charities Baton Rouge.

JSRI Recent Activities

April 23-25

Dr. Sue Weishar participated in a meeting of the Jesuit Migration Network in El Paso, Texas.

April 28

Ten Loyola students completed their Service Learning volunteer work with Café con Ingles, an ESL and community building program that Dr. Weishar co-leads at St. Anthony of Padua Church Parish.

April 29

Dr. Weishar joined other Loyola faculty members in a panel discussion on social justice issues for 12 Jesuit novices.

April 29-30

Fr. Kammer directed a workshop on Jesuit justice for the second year Jesuit novices.

May 1

Dr. Dennis Kalob attended the New Orleans May Day rally and march for worker justice.

May 3

Dr. Kalob was on a panel on food insecurity on college campuses. The event was held at Delgado Community College, involving representatives from all of the area colleges and universities.

May 6

Fr. Kammer participated in a board meeting of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Baltimore.

May 9

Fr. Kammer delivered the homily at the Baccalaureate Mass of the Loyola College of Law.

May 11

[A guest column](#) by Dr. Weishar urging Catholics to support the abolition of the death penalty was published in the *Clarion Herald*.

May 14

Dr. Nik Mitchtall testified in support of abolishing the death penalty in the LA House Committee on the Administration of Criminal Justice.

May 16

Dr. Weishar was [interviewed by Fox 8 News](#) about President Trump's plan to revamp the U.S. immigration system.

May 20

Dr. Weishar presented a talk entitled "Immigration to LA and the US: Present Realities and Perennial Truths" to the local chapter of the Order of Lazarus of Jerusalem and members of St. Andrew Episcopal Church.

May 20

Dr. Mitchell gave a lecture on abolishing the death penalty at St. Mary Margaret Church in Slidell, LA.

May 21

Dr. Mitchell gave a lecture on abolishing the death penalty at Mary Queen of Peace in Mandeville, LA.

May 22-24

Fr. Kammer conducted an outreach visit to advocates in Austin, TX.

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Last month in this column [1] Fred Kammer, SJ, treated the four Jesuit universal preferences for the future of our ministries, noting that "preferences" are more inclusive than that other oft-used term "priorities," which tend to exclude more than they include.



Fourteen times in his 2015 Encyclical *Laudato Si'* [2] Pope Francis emphasizes the (inter)connectedness of everything.

How can we go about growing in our living this mission of connectedness? We might first ask ourselves in a kind of Ignatian examen "How am I, how are we part of the problem of disconnects?"

1. Paradoxically, in our technological culture's obsession with "staying connected" via wireless, bluetooth, social media, etc., one personal step might involve privileged periods of disconnecting from the multiple demands upon our time and attention by deeply encountering a person, or persons, at the margins, as Francis often does in his many missions away from Rome to peripheral places. He also does this through his downward mobility to be with marginalized persons. Photos of him encountering the excluded all over the world reveal a profound smile on his face while making such personal connections. Perhaps, after we make such connections ourselves, we can connect more fully to the world, even to the cosmos, energized with a new charism for creation.
2. Even when we focus on more specific issues, we can avoid being "single-issued" by seeking the interconnectedness within our mission rather than the separation of silos. On our JSRI website we now include an ongoing exploration of these many "interconnections" [3] in our multiple JSRI projects.
3. Just as the poet John Donne exclaimed "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main," we can break down the silo walls by acknowledging that "no issue is an island," or as Pope Francis puts it, "everything is connected."
4. Pope Francis stresses this unity of connections in mission: "I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world. We have to regard ourselves as sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing and freeing." [4]
5. Connections are more effective: A recent article in the *New York Times* [5] on Canada's "Winning the War on Poverty" stressed dramatic reductions of poverty by "creating communitywide collective impact structures. But in many American communities we're mostly scattershot. That's the problem with our distrust and polarization. We often don't build structures across difference. Transformational change rarely gets done."
6. In 2 Cor 5:20, St. Paul uses a powerful Greek imperative: *Katallete!* (Get Reconciled!). Southern Baptist activist Will Campbell used this word to entitle his journal, striving to create a wondrous web, network, of reconciling creation, poverty, race, and migration, all part of the connected mission.
7. And in his *Spiritual Exercises*, from start (The First Principle and Foundation) to finish (Contemplation on love of God), St. Ignatius offers us multiple ways of "finding God in all things" by centering ourselves in the connectedness which is so much the hallmark of Pope Francis' mission and our own.

[1]http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu/jsri/files/justsouth_monthly_april_2019_kammer.pdf

[2]http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf

[3]<http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/interconnections>

[4]http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html.

[5]Canada example via David Brooks in NYT "Winning the War on Poverty: The Canadians are doing it; we're not." <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/04/opinion/canada-poverty-record.html>

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

Please send feedback to jsri@loyno.edu

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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

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