

Connect with
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petition and send advocacy emails.**Stop Solitary
Confinement****JSRI Future Activities****June 12**

Deacon Chris Kellerman, SJ, will be ordained a priest, together with three others, in Holy Name of Jesus Church by Archbishop Gregory Aymond, DD. He will celebrate his Mass of Thanksgiving the following morning, again at Holy Name of Jesus Church.

June 14

Fr. Fred Kammer will participate in his final national board meeting for the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, where he serves as Vice-Chairperson.

JSRI staff and associates—working from their offices in Mercy Hall and from home—will continue monitoring local, state, and federal administrative, legislative, and judicial actions regarding our priority issues and the impact of Covid-19; participating in advocacy communications with authorities; recommending resources on our website and by social media; research and writing for our publications; and activating our advocacy network.

JSRI Recent Activities**April 30**

Dr. Sue Weishar co-lead an on-line retreat for staff members of El Pueblo, a non-profit organization serving vulnerable immigrants in central and coastal Mississippi.

May 3

Bidish Sarma, J.D., began working part-time at JSRI in conjunction with his work for the District Attorney on identifying cases in which excessive, illegal, or unfair sentences were imposed and redressing them in the courts under a collaborative grant with the Department of Sociology.

May 5

Dr. Weishar helped organize an on-line prayer breakfast sponsored by the LA Stop Solitary Coalition entitled *No One is Disposable: The Moral Imperative to End Solitary Confinement in Louisiana*.

May 8

Dr. Weishar was the guest speaker for the Gillespie-Senter Memorial Community Breakfast discussing criminal justice reform legislation under consideration in the current Louisiana legislative session.

May 11

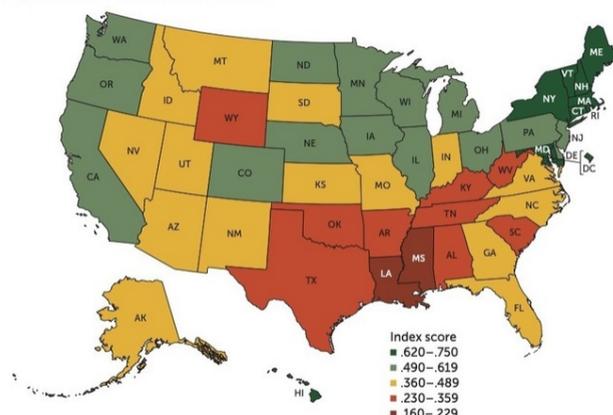
Dr. Weishar represented JSRI at a Day at the Capitol organized by the Power Coalition. Advocates discussed criminal justice reform bills with legislators.

May 14

Fr. Kammer delivered the homily at two of the four undergraduate Baccalaureate Masses— for the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Nursing and Health.

The Best and Worst U.S. States for Women
A Georgetown University Report Reveals Significant Inequities**By Dennis Kalob, Ph.D.**

This past fall, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security premiered their new index of women's well-being, rights and opportunities, measuring and ranking the 50 States and the District of Columbia on 12 specific indicators across the three dimensions of inclusion, justice and security.

FIGURE 2.2 A spectrum of index scores, 2020

Note: Possible index scores range from a low of 0 (dark red) to a high of 1 (dark green). See statistical table 1 for data sources, dates, and detailed scores. Source: Authors' estimates.

This map is republished here with permission from the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.

This report is titled, *U.S. Women, Peace, and Security Index 2020*. I very briefly summarize the *Index* in this article, but the reader can find and review the full report [here](#).

The state that ranks the highest is Massachusetts, followed by Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Vermont, and Rhode Island. In fact, Northeastern states, in general, dominate the top ten spots on the list.

In contrast, all of the Southern states can be found in the bottom half of the list, with the bottom five being Kentucky (#47), Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana.

As the Georgetown report makes clear, there is a world of difference for women in Massachusetts and Louisiana. For example, Massachusetts has the second lowest maternal mortality rate in the nation. In that state, 14 women die from pregnancy-associated causes for every 100,000 live births. In Louisiana, the state with the highest maternal mortality rate, 72 women die per 100,000 live births.

Throughout this *Index*, in fact, what stands out is how very different life and life chances are for women, depending on the state in which they live. There are significant differences between the states in terms of a woman's chances of being beaten or shot or affording health care or graduating college.

It is important to keep in mind that the obstacles, hardships, and insecurities that are identified in this *Index* do not fall equally on all women. As the authors' of this report wrote, "Gender inequalities are compounded by racial and class injustice. Black, Latinx, and Native American women are paid less than men and white women for the same work. They are less likely than white women to have a college degree. And they are more likely than white women to live in poverty, be part of the working poor, and not receive health insurance through work" (page 46).

Above, I had noted Louisiana's disturbing maternal mortality rate of 72. For Black women in Louisiana the rate is 112.

The report quotes a Hispanic man in Louisiana on why he thought his state was lagging: "This state has a long history of racism and sexism. Little has been done to bring communities together in order to understand the challenges" (page 16). Frankly, the same could be said across this nation. A history of racism and sexism—sometimes obvious and intentional and at other times subtle and unintentional—has held our states and our nation back and has kept us from coming together and working together for social justice and the common good.

I would like to conclude by urging the reader to consider the girls and women behind the statistics presented. The *U.S. Women, Peace, and Security Index* is important not simply because of the numbers it reports, but because it should remind us of the genuine and significant harm that is done to millions of our sisters and the need for urgent and collective action to address the injustices.

The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, together with the Peace Research Institute of Oslo, created the global [Women, Peace, and Security Index](#) in 2017. It was updated in 2019. Of the 167 countries studied in this global index, the United States ranked 19th.

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