



The Common Good News
Regis University Institute on the Common Good

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE



The elections are upon us! It will be easy and tempting to take strong stands around your favorite candidates and on issues that are near to your heart and core values. This is the nature of a strong democracy. I encourage you to take another stand important to a healthy community. Seek to understand the other's point of view. Instead of stating your position first, take time to inquire deeply into the opinions and ideas of your fellow citizens. Enter into deeper dialogue. Find out what led them to believe the things they do. Learn what values guide their decisions. Then start by sharing your own similar values and how they led you to think the way you do. Finally, when it comes time to vote, do so from a stance for the common good – what ultimately is the right decision for the good of all people and for the good of the earth.

~ Paul Alexander, Ph.D.

See last month's newsletter on the ICG website for some good tips on engaging in political dialogue and practical guides on how to vote for the common good.

ICG HIGHLIGHTS

What is happening at the Institute on the Common Good?

Regis University Institute on the Common Good receives grant to operate restorative justice program

Regis University Institute on the Common Good (ICG) is initiating a restorative justice program funded by the Colorado Judicial Department Office of Dispute Resolution. The Community Conflict Resolution-Restorative Justice (CCR-RJ) Mini-Grants program is intended to support the development of local community conflict resolution and restorative justice services throughout the state. The grants target unserved or underserved populations.

Restorative justice fits the Institute's mission of promoting dialogue. In his book, *Punishment and Retribution* (Ashgate Publishing 2006), Leo Zaibert states that "Restorative justice takes many different forms, but all systems have some aspects in common. In criminal cases, victims have an opportunity to express the full impact of the crime upon their lives, to receive answers to any lingering questions about the incident, and to participate in holding the offender accountable for his or her actions. Offenders can tell their story of why the crime occurred and how it has affected their lives. They are given an opportunity to make things right with the victim – to the degree possible – through some form of compensation."

The ICG is partnering with two local schools that have implemented and one school that will be implementing Restorative Justice (North High School, Lake Middle School and East High School, respectively) as part of their discipline policies through the Denver Public Schools' Violence Prevention and Intervention

initiative. The administration in each of the schools indicated a desire to partner with Regis University's Mediators Beyond Borders proposed school-community partnership for the purpose of providing peer mediation training to students and involving Regis University students as a community member and/or facilitator in the restorative justice discipline conferences. The schools also see the benefit of students in their schools being mentored by the Regis University students.

A history of restorative justice work at Institute on the Common Good

In 2000, the ICG hosted and facilitated a gathering that included members of all three branches of Colorado state government, including the chief justice of the Colorado Supreme Court, the attorney general and the Denver district attorney, as well as numerous community groups. As a result, a full-time position was created in Colorado's Office of Probation Services and an educational video entitled, "Restorative Justice: Beyond Just Us" was produced.

In 1999, the ICG facilitated a private forum on criminal justice for the U.S. Bishop's Committee on Domestic Policy. This resulted in grounding restorative justice in Catholic social teaching and its inclusion in the draft of the U.S. Bishop's Pastoral Statement on Criminal Justice.

To get involved with the initiative, contact TJ Bowen at tbowen@regis.edu

DIALOGUE TIP OF THE MONTH

Ignatian Discernment at heart of ICG dialogue:

At the roots of the work of the Regis University Institute on the Common Good are the discernment practices found within the Jesuit Catholic tradition.

Discernment is defined as a process of discovering God's direction and guidance in the concrete reality of our day-to-day lives. Discernment is a prayerful "pondering" or "mulling over" of the options facing you. Your goal is to understand them in your heart: to see them, as it were, as God might see them. As you continue the process, some options should of their own account fall by the wayside while others should gain clarity and focus. It is a process that should move inexorably toward a decision. (Brother Charles J. Jackson, S.J.)

The process goes through five general stages:

- Awareness: Becoming present to the external reality and the internal reality (those places inside us that keep us from making wise decisions). There is also an awareness of something larger at work than us (God or the living universe).
- Understanding: A deeper look at the facts, weighing the pros and cons of an issue; finding out where one feels led and what one desires.
- Action: A movement into action through love.
- Confirmation: Determining that the action taken was a good one. This is measured not only by results, but also through an internal sense of peace and joy.
- Thanksgiving: To reflect on the process with a sense of celebration and gratitude.

Try it for yourself using these practical steps of communal Ignatian Discernment:

1. Gather all relevant information.
2. Begin with an explicit attitude and atmosphere of faith — a prayer to the Divine or a simple openness to the fullness of life.
3. Intentionally become aware and set aside as much as possible those things that keep you from acting in a state of interior freedom (limitations, false assumptions, lack of self awareness).
4. Formulate the various options and separate them out into the various cons and pros of the situation, the reasons against and the reasons for a certain action.
5. Attempt to reach unity or consensus (not unanimity from an individualistic perspective).
6. Listen for a confirmation:
 - a. Internal — a sense of joy and peace in the Spirit
 - b. External:
 - i. How does the decision work out over time?
 - ii. Is the decision congruent with legitimate authority?
7. End with a prayer of Thanksgiving.



DIALOGUE RESOURCE OF THE MONTH

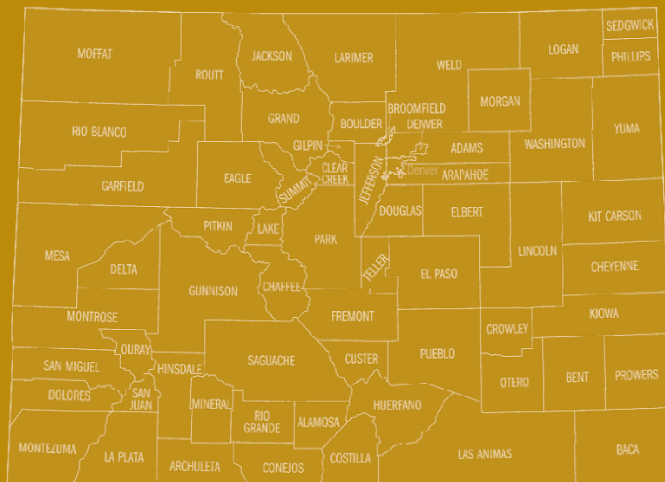
Voting for the Common Good: A Practical Guide for Conscientious Catholics: www.catholicsinalliance.org/files/Voting-for-the-Common-Good.pdf

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: The U.S. Bishops' Reflection on Catholic Teaching and Political Life: www.usccb.org/bishops/FCStatement.pdf

Read Full-Text Documents collected on Restorative Justice Online: www.restorativejustice.org/resources/docs/

AROUND THE STATE

COMMON GOOD CAUCUS



The Common Good Caucus, convened by State Representatives John Kefalas and Rafael Lorenzo Gallegos, was created to serve as a bi-partisan forum for legislators interested in addressing poverty through public policy and private-sector solutions that promote self-sufficiency, family well-being, community development, and the common good.

The Caucus conducts regular meetings to hear the concerns of people struggling to make ends meet and to engage legislators and citizens in solutions.

In February and March, Paul Alexander, director of the Institute on the Common Good, spoke on the philosophical and religious origins of the term "Common Good" and facilitated a National Issues Forum dialogue on poverty (Making Ends Meet).

A goal of the discussions was to educate people that poverty affects everyone, not just the homeless, the uneducated, and the unemployed. Families who have the means to pay their monthly bills and who have received an education live within the same community as those who cannot pay even the smallest bills and who are not able to continue with school. One of the goals of the Common Good Caucus is to assist communities so they can work better to help themselves.

Forum on Religion & Community

Learning Series on Pilgrimage

Earlier this year, the Forum on Religion & Community, a program of the Regis University Institute on the Common Good, allowed attendees to participate in a learning series that examined the pilgrimages, or spiritual journeys, of five of the world's religious traditions: Christian Pilgrimage, Jewish Pilgrimage, Pilgrimage in India, Native American Pilgrimage and Muslim Pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage is a key step in the religious experience. This learning series was designed to help express the religious experience and allow speakers to help the audience gain a better understanding of a particular religion and its unique traditions.

Speakers from each of the traditions presented details of their faith and shared their personal experiences.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE PROMOTION OF COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

The Regis University Institute on the Common Good is a founding member of two important new initiatives in higher education to promote collaborative governance and instill democratic ideals and practices in students and the broader community.

The University Network for Collaborative Governance (UNCG) helps colleges and universities connect with their community through various programs to help community members and leaders, take on problems using discussions, dialogue, and conflict resolution. The network, much like ICG, promotes the way universities are able to act as neutral parties to achieve collaborative governance.

UNCG's goals are to increase the level of knowledge about public deliberation and collaborative problem solving, as well as share that knowledge among its members. UNCG also provides a link between universities and communities interested in using collaborative governance, and promotes policies that help support the use of programs designed for collaborative governance.

While UNCG is a partner of university centers and institutes, the Democracy Imperative is a national network of multidisciplinary scholars, campus leaders, and civic leaders in the fields of democratic dialogue, public deliberation, and democracy-building. The mission of the Democracy Imperative is to strengthen public life and advance deliberative democracy in and through higher education. The Democracy Imperative is concerned with improving collaborative practices within the higher ed community and furthering the understanding of deliberative democracy among our students and within the surrounding communities.

One of the tools of the Democracy Imperative is hosting regional meetings of faculty and administrators. The Institute on the Common Good hosted a meeting to discuss possibilities for members of the Colorado network to work together to promote and enhance the democratic aspects of U.S. social and political systems.

For more information about these two initiatives, visit The Democracy Imperative at www.unh.edu/democracy/ and UNCG at www.policyconsensus.org/uncg/

Other Spring Highlights:

ERICA FOX

Erica Fox facilitated a dialogue on February 18 on moving 'Beyond Yes', working with participants to gain negotiation mastery from the inside out. "In modern life, we must reconnect human spiritual intelligence with analytical intelligence so our actions will be mere expressions of what's happening inside of us," For almost a decade, Erica has been affiliated with the Harvard Negotiation Project and with Harvard Law School's Program on Negotiation. Erica's research focuses on barriers to self-advocacy in difficult negotiations, and ways to overcome these barriers.

FRANCISCO DE ROUX, S.J.

Father Francisco de Roux, S.J., who lives and works in Colombia, visited Regis University the week of March 31 to engage students, faculty and local missionaries, and gave a talk in the St. John Francis Regis Chapel. In his April 2 talk, Father de Roux spoke of the importance of human dignity, dialogue and development, beautifully articulating many of the core values of the Institute. In talking about the importance of focusing on human dignity in the midst of conflict, Father de Roux noted that "Dignity is the absolute value every man

and every woman has as a human being, as a person able to look intelligently for the truth, to become free, to be responsible, and to love and be loved. . . We understood that we had to work together," he said. "[Our region] has to be built up with all the inhabitants and the social actors or it is impossible; it has no future."

KEN CLOKE

Ken Cloke, the key founder and leader of Mediators Beyond Borders, spoke at Regis University on April 17. He encouraged trained mediators and other conflict management professionals to engage in our collective conflicts of social justice. "Is there some possibility that we could take what we have learned in . . . community disputes, marital disputes, labor management disputes. . . and turn them into some kind of transformation of the ways in which people, countries, cultures, religions interact with each other?"

INSTITUTE ON THE COMMON GOOD YOUTUBE CHANNEL

To view the video of Father de Roux or Ken Cloke's talk, and other ICG speakers, please visit the Institute's YouTube channel at: www.youtube.com/InstituteCommonGood

continued on page 4



Other Spring Highlights, continued from page 3

NEIGHBORHOOD DIALOGUES: The Institute successfully supported a four-part neighborhood dialogue series on the future of Capitol Hill United Neighborhood (CHUN) that included a special focus on affordable housing and a visioning process.

The Institute also facilitated a dialogue on the Centennial Uranium mine. Participants from local environmental groups, the mining company, and more than 100 citizens participated. The initial public dialogue was filmed and aired several times on local cable channel in Fort Collins. The dialogue is accessible at: <http://atlas.fcgov.com/uranium/index.html#>

FIVE TWO EIGHT O: Funded by a grant from the Case Foundation and sponsored by the City of Denver, ICG, and by the Colorado Theatre Guild, Five Two Eight O was developed by Regis University faculty member Janna Goodwin. The project brought to the stage stories told by Denver's residents. These were then interpreted by Denver visual and performing artists. The public was invited to the neighborhood performances. Artists, playwrights, choreographers, poets, photographers and performers watched and listened, then developed art work that reflected the stories.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS Upcoming Events

Tenth Anniversary Celebration!

Regis University's Institute on the Common Good (ICG) will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year with a series of special events and workshops.

Among the many activities planned to help the Institute kick off the next decade are:

- An exciting Mediators Beyond Borders speaker series in cooperation with The Conflict Center.
- A special series of community dialogues.
- A new and improved ICG website with enhanced dialogue resources and social networking capabilities.
- Launching a special program devoted to bringing the 450 years of Ignatian Communal discernment practices more systematically into our work and the work of the broader community.
- Workshops to share what we have learned during the past 10 years.
- Special research to improve the quality of dialogue practices in the community.
- The launching of a \$1 million endowment campaign.

For more information regarding any of the upcoming events or for a list of other future events, visit our website at www.icgregis.org or contact Fredricka Brown at (303) 458-4967.

IMMIGRATION CONFERENCE: In March, the Institute visited Loyola High School in Los Angeles and presented two workshops on how to develop dialogues on immigration to the Ignatian Family Teach-in on Immigration. The conference, along with presenters and participants, viewed immigration rights along side of human dignity and personal experiences to further understand immigrants' experiences. The conference also looked at legislation advances and advocacy efforts that could improve the quality of life of an immigrant within the United States. The Ignation Solidarity Network's website hosts a number of post-conference resources: www.ignationsolidarity.net.

JESUIT SOCIAL MINISTRIES CONFERENCE: In June, about 300 social ministers from the United States, South America and Europe attended a Jesuit Social Ministries Conference at Regis University. The "Solidarity in Christ's Mission: Reflecting, Renewing and Responding" conference included various workshops and lecture sessions on spirituality, building communities, working with other cultures and social and political issues. The ICG supported this conference through the design of the discernment processes for the break out groups, which is based on the Ignatian discernment tradition and that of the Christian Base Communities in Latin America.



Michael J. Sheeran, S.J.

In October 1998, Regis University President Father Michael J. Sheeran, S.J.'s dream to form an outreach arm of the University that would create a safe place for dialogue in the community became a reality – the Institute on the Common Good.

Father David Hollenbach, S.J. and Archbishop Desmond Tutu both spoke at the University to help commemorate the Institute's inception. Since then, the Institute has hosted speakers including Jose Ramos-Horta, Oscar Arias, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Elie Wiesel, Jody Williams, John Hume, Lech Walesa, and David Trimble.

The ICG has also conducted many workshops, and hosted dialogues and forums on issues related to the common good. These projects resulted in shifts in public policy, enhanced understanding among citizens, and engaged more citizens in their communities.

Help ICG continue Father Sheeran's dream. Visit us at www.icgregis.org to keep on top of the many special happenings and to make a donation to the future. And join us on Facebook and Youtube!

Need Help?

If you believe you may be in need of the collaborative dialogue resources of the Institute please do not hesitate to give Fredricka Brown a call at (303) 458-4967, e-mail us at icg@regis.edu, or visit our website at www.icgregis.org.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE INSTITUTE ON THE COMMON GOOD

The Institute on the Common Good at Regis University serves the community at-large by promoting the common good and providing a safe and effective space for community dialogue, communal discernment, and public deliberation.



Institute on the
Common Good

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