

NETWORK EDUCATION PROGRAM

Partners with NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, providing faith-based resources related to public policy.

The Pope and Politics: Messaging Francis's Hope and Justice

Part of NETWORK's Year of Living *Joy of the Gospel*: www.network-education.org/JoyoftheGospel



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"I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society, the people, the lives of the poor!"

Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel

A Brief Biography of Pope Francis

Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born in 1936 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the son of Italian immigrants. After graduating as a chemical technician, he entered the novitiate in 1958. He continued to study philosophy and theology, as well as teach literature and psychology, until he was ordained a Jesuit priest in 1969.

After making his final profession with the Society of Jesus in 1973, he served as Jesuit Provincial for six years and then as a university rector and parish priest. After completing his doctoral work, he served as a spiritual director and confessor.

In 1992, he was appointed Bishop of Auca and Auxiliary of Buenos Aires by Pope John Paul II. He was named Archbishop in 1998 and Cardinal in 2001. He became president of the Argentine Bishop's Conference in 2005.

As Archbishop of Buenos Aires, he had a four-point plan: open and familial communities; an informed laity playing a lead role; evangelization efforts targeting everyone in the city; and assistance to those who are poor and sick. When he was elected pope on March 13, 2013, newly named Pope Francis brought that same agenda to the global Church.

You can find Pope Francis's official Vatican biography on the Vatican website, www.vatican.va.

A Few Reasons Pope Francis Is So Popular

Exciting firsts:

Pope Francis is the first Jesuit pope, the first pope of the Americas, and the first pope from the Global South.

Humble servant:

While the Catholic Church is known for elaborate pomp and circumstance, Pope Francis has eschewed many of the luxuries of the papacy. After his election, it was widely reported that Pope Francis paid his own hotel bill and Vatican employees have relayed stories of the pope waiting in the coffee line during breaks from meetings.

Setting an example of reform:

Pope Francis is calling for a conversion of all individuals and institutions in order to build a more just world, but he is starting with his own office. He has already established a number of investigative committees to look into a variety of areas, including the Vatican bank.

Mr. Congeniality:

Pope Francis is warm, friendly, and very approachable. His magnetic personality, which makes each person with whom he interacts feel valued, draws thousands of Catholics and non-Catholics alike to his appearances.

Accessible speaker:

Though a highly educated man, Pope Francis uses simple words that all audiences can connect with and employs fresh, creative examples to give ages-old values new life.

A Glossary of Relevant Terms

Apostolic exhortation

A document, authored by the pope, telling people how they can live out a particular aspect of Church teaching.

Bishop

An ordained member of the clergy with responsibilities including ordaining priests and other bishops, governing a segment of the Church community, and teaching Church doctrine to the Catholic community.

Cardinal

A priest appointed to the College of Cardinals. Cardinals advise the pope and hold positions of authority within the hierarchy. Members of the College of Cardinals who are younger than 80 years old elect new popes.

Common good

The common good is the set of social conditions that allow people, both individually and as a group, to reach their potential fully and more easily. In the Catholic tradition, it is understood that a person cannot find fulfillment alone, but must pursue the common good.

Ecclesial

Broadly, it means anything of or relating to a church. Pope Francis often writes of “ecclesial structures,” meaning the Catholic Church at various levels (parishes, dioceses, the Vatican, etc).

Evangelii Gaudium

Latin for “Joy of the Gospel,” it is Pope Francis’s first apostolic exhortation, which calls for joyful proclamation of the Gospel to the entire world.

Evangelization

While broadly referring to sharing one’s religious message with new communities, the Catholic Church has recently embarked on a “New Evangelization,” encouraging Catholics to renew their relationship with Jesus and the Church and then go forth to share that renewed faith to everyone they encounter.

Jesuit

A member of the Catholic religious order the Society of Jesus.

Missionary

A general definition would be a person sent forth by a church to evangelize or provide other services. Pope Francis refers to the missionary spirit of the Catholic Church, meaning the relationship and community building that is organically inspired by the Holy Spirit and renewed in the joy of a relationship with Jesus.

Novitiate

The period of training and preparation for religious life.

Popular piety

Pope Francis desires a faith that is infused in all parts of a person’s life, and popular piety is the expression of that faith through cultural activities or prayers outside of the liturgy.

Provincial

Religious orders are divided into geographic areas, provinces, the lead member of which is the provincial.

Relevant Political Themes

Pope Francis wrote in his papal exhortation, *Joy of the Gospel*, on a number of themes which are especially relevant to the U.S. political conversation and about which the president and the pope share concern.



Affirming the positive role of government

Themes:

- government must act on behalf of those living on the margins
- government is responsible for structural changes that build up the common good
- working in government is a lofty vocation, but comes with responsibility to create justice

Citations:

“I ask God to give us more politicians capable of sincere and effective dialogue aimed at healing the deepest roots – and not simply the appearances – of the evils in our world! Politics, though often denigrated, remains a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 205)

“It is the responsibility of the State to safeguard and promote the common good of society. Based on the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, and fully committed to political dialogue and consensus building, it plays a fundamental role, one which cannot be delegated, in working for the integral development of all. This role, at present, calls for profound social humility.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 240)

Rhetoric and proposals must give way to collaboration and solutions

Themes:

- it is critical for politicians to engage constituents, most importantly people living on the margins, to listen to and be moved by their stories
- political work must be grounded in practical ideas, which cannot be supplanted by rhetoric
- civility, bipartisanship, and dialogue are desperately needed for peacebuilding

Citations:

“There also exists a constant tension between ideas and realities. Realities simply are, whereas ideas are worked out. There has to be continuous dialogue between the two, lest ideas become detached from realities. It is dangerous to dwell in the realm of words alone, of images and rhetoric. So a third principle comes into play: realities are greater than ideas.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 231)

“We have politicians – and even religious leaders – who wonder why people do not understand and follow them, since their proposals are so clear and logical. Perhaps it is because they are stuck in the realm of pure ideas and end up reducing politics or faith to rhetoric. Others have left simplicity behind and have imported a rationality foreign to most people.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 232)

“In a culture which privileges dialogue as a form of encounter, it is time to devise a means for building consensus and agreement while seeking the goal of a just, responsive and inclusive society.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 239)

Calling every person to work for justice:

Themes:

-Pope Francis is calling to each individual to engage with those experiencing poverty

-this concept of “encounter” is especially relevant to politicians, who are responsible for knowing people living on the margins and being transformed by interactions with them in order to work on their behalf

-the pope’s challenge is a practical one: what are you doing in your work and personal life to make the lives of those on the margins better?

Citations:

“No one must say that they cannot be close to the poor because their own lifestyle demands more attention to other areas. This is an excuse commonly heard in academic, business or professional, and even ecclesial circles...None of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 201)

"It becomes possible to build communion amid disagreement, but this can only be achieved by those great persons who are willing to go beyond the surface of the conflict and to see others in their deepest dignity."(*Joy of Gospel* 228)



Pope Francis on the Issues

Pope Francis has also frequently commented on political issues. Below are just a few examples from his papal exhortation, Joy of the Gospel.

Altering the social structures that cause poverty

“The Church, guided by the Gospel of mercy and by love for mankind, hears the cry for justice and intends to respond to it with all her might.’ In this context we can understand Jesus’ command to his disciples: ‘You yourselves give them something to eat!’(Mk 6:37): it means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity in meeting the real needs which we encounter.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 188)

“Welfare projects, which meet certain urgent needs, should be considered merely temporary responses. As long as the problems of the poor are not radically resolved by rejecting the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation and by attacking the structural causes of inequality, no solution will be found for the world’s problems or, for that matter, to any problems.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 202)

Labor and wages

“A just wage enables [human beings] to have adequate access to all the other goods which are destined for our common use.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 192)

“We are not simply talking about ensuring nourishment or a ‘dignified sustenance’ for all people, but also their ‘general temporal welfare and prosperity.’ This means education, access to health care, and above all employment, for it is through free, creative, participatory and mutually supportive labour that human beings express and enhance the dignity of their lives.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 192)

“I am far from proposing an irresponsible populism, but the economy can no longer turn to remedies that are a new poison, such as attempting to increase profits by reducing the work force and thereby adding to the ranks of the excluded.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 204)

Voter education and participation

“People in every nation enhance the social dimension of their lives by acting as committed and responsible citizens, not as a mob swayed by the powers that be. Let us not forget that ‘responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation.’”(*Joy of the Gospel* 220)

Globalization, migration, and international relationships

“Each meaningful economic decision made in one part of the world has repercussions everywhere else; consequently, no government can act without regard for shared responsibility.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 206)

“With due respect for the autonomy and culture of every nation, we must never forget that the planet belongs to all mankind and is meant for all mankind; the mere fact that some people are born in places with fewer resources or less development does not justify the fact that they are living with less dignity.”(*Joy of the Gospel* 190)

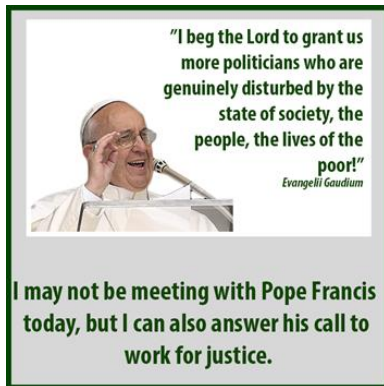
“To speak properly of our own rights, we need to broaden our perspective and to hear the plea of other people and other regions than those of our own country. We need to grow in a solidarity which ‘would allow all peoples to become the artisans of their destiny’, since ‘every person is called to self-fulfillment.’”(*Joy of the Gospel* 190)

Sample Social Media Possibilities

*You can copy these images and other samples from our website: www.network-education.org/PopeandPoliticsBriefing

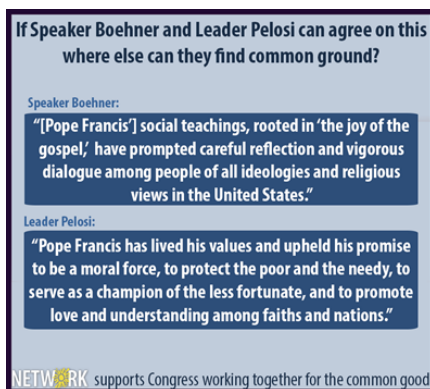
Suggestion

Make sure your congressional office doesn't miss out on buzz with the pope and president meeting:



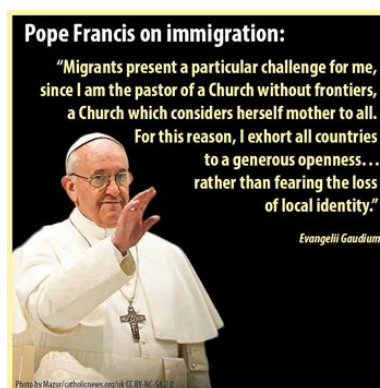
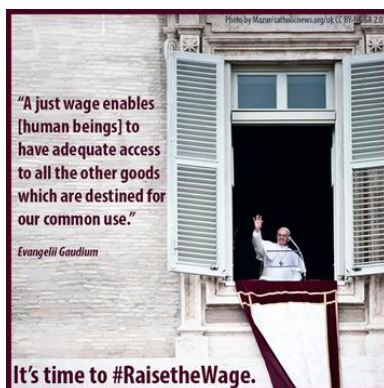
Suggestion

Take a relevant pope-related news story to speak to one of your shared values, such as bipartisanship.



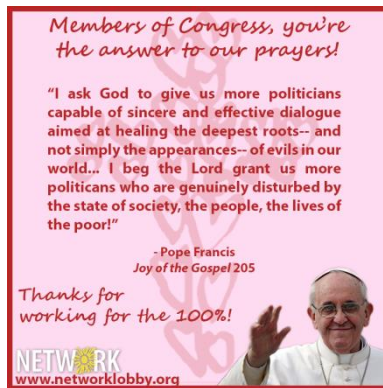
Suggestion

Create shareable images on policies you and the pope mutually support:



Suggestion

A playful pope means endless creative possibilities. NETWORK, for example, created these Valentines in February 2014 to underscore how members of Congress scored on our 2013 Voting Record. Consider how your office may do something similar for April 15 (tax day), May 1 (International Worker's Day), Labor Day, or other relevant holidays.



Suggestion

Never underestimate the pope's presence on Twitter:



Pope Francis @Pontifex · Mar 4

In life we all make many mistakes. Let us learn to recognize our errors and ask forgiveness.

Expand

Reply Retweet Favorite More



NETWORK
@NETWORKLobby

Follow

Reminder: @pontifex and @BarackObama both #talkpoverty & inequality. Our #sotu #bingo is another example.
pic.twitter.com/A9MKsTjMri

Reply Retweet Favorite More



NETWORK Information and Resources

NETWORK Education Program (NEP) is the 501(c)3 educational partner of NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby. Founded on December 17, 1971, by 47 Catholic Sisters engaged in ministries serving people at the economic margins, NETWORK lobbies, educates and organizes for economic justice, immigration reform, peace and healthcare for all. NETWORK is now made up of 8,000 members, including hundreds of religious congregations and faith communities, along with tens of thousands of individual activists.

Through faith-based educational resources and programs related to public policy, NETWORK Education Program engages people in envisioning and working toward a just and equitable society. Most recently, we have become well known for our NETWORK Nuns on the Bus tours. NEP facilitates nonpartisan issue analysis, skills development for responsible citizenship, and faith reflection on political ministry. The principles of Catholic Social Teaching and Tradition inform our analysis and education work.

At the end of 2013, NETWORK was awarded “Most Valuable Translation of the Pope’s Message” on The Nation’s Progressive Honor Roll. They wrote: “Pope Francis is *Time’s* ‘Person of the Year.’ Why? Mainly because he’s reminded Catholics—and everyone else—not only of a duty to the poor, but of how the “tyranny of capitalism” impedes that duty. Now the question is whether the pope’s high-minded statements will translate into action. Network, the national Catholic social justice lobby, is trying to make the connection.”

NETWORK’s *Joy of the Gospel* and Related Resources

NETWORK is exploring Gospel Joy throughout 2014 and has developed programs and resources you may want to explore, including a *Joy of the Gospel* Study and Action Guide and ways to celebrate #TaxPayerPride on April 15. You can find our *Joy of the Gospel* related material at network-education.org/JoyoftheGospel .

You can find an electronic copy of this briefing packet and sample social media images, slides displayed during the panel, and further resources from our panelists at network-education.org/PopeandPoliticsBriefing.

NETWORK Education Program has developed several economic justice curricula that compliment Pope Francis’s call to learn about and reform our economic structures. Explore our *Mind the Gap!*, *Mend the Gap!*, and *We the Taxpayers* curricula at www.network-education.org.

Catholic Resource List



Catholic Campaign for Human Development

CCHD is the domestic anti-poverty, social justice program of the U.S. Catholic bishops. Its mission is to address the root causes of poverty in America through promotion and support of community-controlled, self-help organizations and through transformative education. www.usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development



Catholic Relief Services

The official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the U.S., CRS is governed by clergy and religious and Catholic lay men and women. Our mission is to assist impoverished people overseas, working in the spirit of Catholic social teaching to promote the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person. www.crs.org



Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good promotes public policies and effective programs that enhance the inherent dignity of all, especially the poor and most vulnerable. Our work is inspired by Gospel values and the rich history of Catholic social teaching. We accomplish our goals through public policy analysis and advocacy, strategic media outreach, and engaging citizens in the service of the common good. www.catholicsinalliance.org



Catholics United

Catholics United is dedicated to promoting the message of justice and the common good found at the heart of the Catholic Social Tradition. We accomplish this mission through online advocacy and educational activities. www.catholics-united.org



Center of Concern

The Center of Concern is a faith-based organization working in collaboration with ecumenical and interfaith networks to bring a prophetic voice for social and economic justice to a global context. Through analysis, education, advocacy, and capacity building, the Center challenges structural injustice and promotes innovative economic alternatives. www.coc.org



Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach

Columban missionaries are Catholic men and women who live and work with the poor and vulnerable in 15 countries. Through advocacy, solidarity, and education, the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach is dedicated to raising awareness of the peace, social justice and ecology concerns of the people with whom we live and serve. www.columban.org



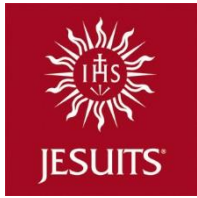
Conference of Major Superiors of Men

CMSM serves the leadership of the Catholic orders and congregations of the more than 17,000 vowed religious priests and brothers of the U.S. CMSM provides a voice for these communities in U.S. church and society. CMSM also collaborates with the U.S. bishops and other key groups and organizations that serve church and society. www.cmsm.org



Franciscan Action Network

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus and the example of Saints Francis and Clare, FAN is a collective Franciscan voices seeking to transform U.S. public policy related to peace making, care for creation, poverty, and human rights. We are a grassroots organization amplifying justice efforts of Franciscans and Franciscan-hearted people around the country. www.franciscanaction.org



Jesuit Conference USA

With close to 17,000-plus priests and brothers worldwide, we are the largest male religious order in the Catholic Church. We are pastors, teachers, and chaplains. We are also doctors, lawyers, and astronomers, among many other roles in Church and society. Especially in our education ministries, we seek to nurture "men and women for others." That includes our work on behalf of global justice, peace, and dialogue. The Jesuit Conference has four focus areas: Africa, domestic poverty, immigration, and war and violence. www.jesuit.org

Justice for Immigrants



Sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Justice for Immigrants aims to unite and mobilize a growing network of Catholic institutions, individuals, and other persons of good faith in support of a broad legalization program and comprehensive immigration reform. Its goal is to maximize the Church's influence on this issue, consistent with the immigration reform principles enunciated in the bishops' pastoral letter on migration. www.justiceforimmigrants.org

Leadership Conference of Women Religious



The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) is an association of the leaders of congregations of Catholic women religious in the United States. The conference has more than 1400 members, who represent more than 80 percent of the approximately 51,600 women religious in the United States. Founded in 1956, the conference assists its members to collaboratively carry out their service of leadership to further the mission of the Gospel in today's world. www.lcwr.org



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns collaborates with various institutions and organizations working for peace, social justice, and the integrity of creation on strategy for advocacy, public statements to policymakers, education materials, conferences, meetings, and public witness. Our office works regularly with other Catholic and faith-based organizations and communities working for peace, social justice and the integrity of creation. www.maryknollogc.org

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate: Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation



The Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation coordinates the advocacy efforts in the United States of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on behalf of the interests of the poor and abandoned in the U.S. and 65 countries where the Oblates are in mission. Based in Washington, D.C., the staff collaborates with other NGOs to promote peace, justice, an ethic of consistent life, and the integrity of creation through our educational outreach. We also share concerns about the impact of policies on the poor with the US government and international institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and the United Nations. www.omiusajpic.org

The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd



The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd offers education through processes and strategies that address social justice issues and advocates for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people. The center reflects the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, working in solidarity with the disenfranchised - particularly families, women, and children. www.gsadvocacy.org

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

and NETWORK Education Program

A Catholic leader in the global movement for justice and peace, NETWORK educates, lobbies, and organizes for economic and social transformation. NETWORK is a progressive voice within the Catholic community that has been influencing Congress in favor of peace and justice for more than 40 years. Through lobbying and legislative advocacy, we strive to close the gap between rich and poor and to dismantle policies rooted in racism, greed, and violence. Most recently, we have become well known for our “Nuns on the Bus” tours. www.networklobby.org



NETWORK Education Program is the 501(c)(3) educational partner of NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby. Through faith-based educational resources and programs related to public policy, NETWORK Education Program engages people in envisioning and working toward a just and equitable society. NEP facilitates nonpartisan issues analysis, skills development for responsible citizenship, and faith reflection on political ministry. We incorporate Catholic Social Teaching in all of our education work. www.network-education.org

Pax Christi USA: National Catholic Peace Movement

Pax Christi USA strives to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ by exploring, articulating, and witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence. Pax Christi USA commits itself to peace education and, with the help of its bishop members, promotes the gospel imperative of peacemaking as a priority in the Catholic Church in the United States. It advocates primacy of conscience, economic and social justice, and respect for creation. www.paxchristiusa.org



Sisters of Mercy

Sisters of Mercy are an international community of Roman Catholic women who dedicate our lives to the Gospel of Jesus and take vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and service. Inspired by the life of Jesus and by our founder Catherine McAuley, we envision a just world for people who are poor, sick and uneducated. We commit our lives to God and our resources to serve, advocate and pray for those in need around the world. www.sistersofmercy.org



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is an assembly of the hierarchy of the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands who jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States. The purpose of the Conference is to promote the greater good which the Church offers humankind, especially through forms and programs of the apostolate fittingly adapted to the circumstances of time and place. www.usccb.org



Voice of the Poor

Voice of the Poor (VOP) is the advocacy arm of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. With members representing every section and demographic of the nation, we identify those issues that are critical to those living in poverty and need, and help bring attention to them so communities and our elected representatives can help develop strategies and tactics that will provide the most effective and efficient means to reduce or eliminate poverty. www.svdpusa.org/Resources/VoiceofthePoor.aspx



Leaders in DC

These Catholic leaders, all based in DC, can offer insight into the current realities of our church and our political landscape. In March 2014, they offered insight into Pope Francis and the political implications of his work *Joy of the Gospel* during a briefing on Capitol Hill.



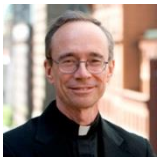
@sr_simone

Sister Simone Campbell has served as Executive Director of NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Lobby since 2004. She is a religious leader, attorney and poet with extensive experience in public policy and advocacy for systemic change. Among her many accomplishments while at NETWORK was the writing of the famous "Nuns' Letter," considered by many as critically important in convincing Congress to support the Affordable Care Act, and leading the "Nuns on the Bus" trips across the country to support economic justice and immigration reform. She has received numerous awards and has been the keynote or featured speaker at numerous large gatherings, including the 2012 Democratic National Convention. She has also often appeared in the national and international media, including recent appearances on *60 Minutes*, *The Colbert Report*, and *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*. She is the author of *A Nun on the Bus: How All of Us Can Create Hope, Change, and Community*.



@emccarthy3

Eli McCarthy, PhD is the Director of Justice and Peace for the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, which is the leadership conference of all the U.S. Catholic men's religious orders. He also teaches at Georgetown University in Justice and Peace Studies. Eli has published a book called "Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers: A Virtue Ethic for Catholic Social Teaching and U.S. Policy," (2012) along with numerous journal articles such as "A Justpeace Response to Syria" and "Will You Really Protect Us Without a Gun?: Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping in the U.S." He has been formed by multiple trips to Haiti working with people experiencing poverty, working with people who are homeless in Boston and DC, monitoring the Palestinian Elections in 2006 with the Nonviolent Peaceforce, and participating in the DC Peace Team.



@ThomasReeseSJ

Jesuit Fr. Thomas J. Reese is senior analyst for *National Catholic Reporter*. Reese entered the Jesuits in 1962 and was ordained in 1974. He was educated at St. Louis University, the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, and at the University of California Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in political science. He worked in Washington as a writer and lobbyist for tax reform from 1975 to 1978. He was an associate editor of *America* magazine from 1978 to 1985 and editor-in-chief from 1998 to 2005. He was a senior fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center from 1985 to 1998 and 2006 to 2013. While at Woodstock, he wrote the trilogy on the organization and politics of the church: *Archbishop: Inside the Power Structure of the American Catholic Church* (1989), *A Flock of Shepherds: The National Conference of Catholic Bishops* (1992), and *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church* (1996). He also edited *The Universal Catechism Reader* (1990), an analysis of the first draft of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and *Episcopal Conferences: Historical, Canonical and Theological Studies* (1989). Father Reese is based in Washington, DC.



@LCWRjpic

Ann Scholz, SSND, PhD is a member of the School Sister of Notre Dame and Associate Director for Social Mission at the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Prior to her ministry at LCWR, Sister Ann served as the representative of her religious congregation at the United Nations in New York. A former secondary social studies teacher, she earned her MA and PhD in International Education from the American University in Washington, DC and served as an Associate Professor of Education and Director of Study Abroad at Notre Dame of Maryland University.

NETWORK

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