

Initiatives

In Support of Christians in the World

National Center for the Laity
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www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm

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50 Years since Vatican II

Vatican II formerly opened on October 11, 1962. "It is astonishing" that in the months of preparation for the Council "there was not one [committee] that felt it necessary to prepare a document on the church in the modern world," write Michael Lawler, Todd Salzman and Eileen Burke Sullivan, teachers at Creighton University in *The Church in the Modern World: Then and Now* (Liturgical Press [2014], PO Box 7500, Collegeville, MN 56321; \$24.95). It was only hours before the Council closed on December 8, 1965 that the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Joy and Hope)* was approved.

The National Center for the Laity exists to keep alive discussion and action regarding Vatican II, particularly its important document *Joy and Hope*, which turned a once-defensive church toward the world.

To clarify the record, NCL is not against lay people serving within their parish and in diocesan programs; only to remind them that the big challenge is off Church property. Nor is NCL trying to keep bishops and other Church employees out of the marketplace; simply to remind them that when they choose to influence business or politics, they are like any intelligent and competent citizen—nothing more.

Vatican II, the Creighton teachers write, "boldly and clearly acknowledged the autonomy of temporal and natural realities." They quote *Joy and Hope*: Tools, institutions and societies "enjoy their own laws and values which must be gradually deciphered, put to use and regulated... By the very circumstances of their having been created, all things are endowed with their own stability, truth, goodness, proper laws and order."

The ecclesial world must critically engage the secular world. Ecclesial opinion or action in specific areas of business, politics, health care, computer technology or agriculture does not, however, add an extra spiritual coating to those endeavors. Vatican II's vision is consequently premised on well-formed lay people who go about improving interactions, policies and trends in their everyday spheres.

Again to clarify the record, the word *laity* as used by NCL is not divisive or exclusionary. NCL founder Msgr. Dan Cantwell (1915-1996) was fond of reminding us that NCL did not invent the word *laity*; it was, if you will, imposed centuries ago.

The word *laity*, the Creighton teachers explain, carries "*theological* and not just a *sociological* meaning." That is, homemakers, nurses, technicians and community organizers are not engaged in "just *secular* service in the sense that it falls outside God's plan... It is also *salvation* service in the sense that it is for the sanctification and salvation of the world and its inhabitants... The theological secularity of the laity [means]...they live in the world, know the world, value the world and seek to permeate the world with the Spirit of Christ."

To read *Joy and Hope*, get *Vatican II: the Essential Texts* (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$8).

Taking the Initiative

For the Family

The marriage rate in our country is plummeting. Mostly for that reason the divorce rate is also down. Some see potential in this for positive lifestyle choices. "As marriage becomes increasingly optional," writes Heidi Stevens, people can design a relationship "to above all else foster a happier, healthier life." Marriage suits some couples, Stevens says, but it is "no longer necessary for child bearing, economic survival or social acceptance." (*Chicago Tribune*, 10/19/14)

Stevens' report leaves out what W. Bradford Wilcox (Institute for Family Studies, PO Box 7967, Charlottesville, VA 22906; www.ifstudies.org) calls "the fundamental divide in the U.S. today" or what columnist Ross Douthat calls "the most important cleavage in America." Those with a college degree overwhelmingly use the institution of marriage; those lacking a degree often forego it. Statistically, the debate over gay marriage pales against this marriage gap. (*Wall St. Journal*, 6/22/14 & *N.Y. Times*, 12/14/14)

The marriage/education gap overlaps the income gap. Since the 1880s, there has been a strong association between “the marriage gap and the earnings gap,” writes Andrew Cherlin, author of *Labor’s Love Lost* (Russell Sage Foundation [2014], 112 E. 64th St., New York, NY 10065; \$35). There is not, Cherlin warns, direct cause-effect between the lifestyle of non-married families and their poverty. Still, Cherlin admits, “cultural change is part of the story of the marriage gap.” The job market is another part: A higher marriage rate will require more family wage jobs—something the U.S. economy is not providing.

On the encouraging front, many working class men have an egalitarian approach to parenting that may help their children better succeed in our service/knowledge economy.

On other fronts couples lacking a college degree are going in an opposite direction. “It is now commonplace for unmarried young adults to cohabit and broadly acceptable for them to have children,” Cherlin writes. This lifestyle is associated with poor outcomes for the children. The college educated, by contrast, generally do not cohabit and then only with their fiancé. (*N.Y. Times*, 12/7/14)

Further and contrary to a stereotype, the lifestyle of college-educated people more likely includes church participation. Young adults without a degree are more into self-help, subjectivity and a self-fashioned spirituality. Without the binding power of religion or some equivalent, Douhat comments, “family life ends up coming apart even faster.”

Clayton Sinyai (Catholic Labor Network, 7145 Roosevelt Ave., Falls Church, VA 22042; www.catholiclabor.org) alerts us to a fascinating study about union members.

A union card “is positively and significantly associated with marriage,” write sociologists Daniel Schneider and Adam Reich. In this case there is a cause-effect. The higher rate of marriage for union men “is largely explained by the increased income, regularity of employment and fringe benefits that come with union membership,” they document. (There is no difference in the marriage rate for union women. Some of the union men might hold a college degree.) (*America* [11/19/14]; www.americamagazine.org and *The Atlantic* [11/9/14]; www.theatlantic.com and *Social Problems* [11/14], Oxford, 198 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016)

The Bishops’ Synod on the Family has so far focused on ministry to homosexuals and

the divorced. A companion Family Congress (222 N. 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103; www.worldmeeting2015.org), in which Pope Francis will participate, will occur September 22-27, 2015. INITIATIVES suggests that the Synod and the Congress and the whole church address marriage economics in word and solid deed around two social principles: *a preferential option for college students* and our Catholic *doctrine on labor unions*.

Taking the Initiative On Tipping

Though the number of restaurant jobs is increasing, the income of restaurant workers is not. The Bureau of Labor Statistics puts the median for servers at \$8.94. This wage context is part of a debate about tipping—its culture and its laws.

In addition, says a study from Restaurant Opportunities Center (350 Seventh Ave. #1504, New York, NY 10001; www.rocunited.org), tipping is a factor in sexual harassment.

Tipping can be reformed by 1) Raising the minimum wage for tipped workers—currently \$2.13 in Federal law since 1991 and \$4 to \$4.95 in some state laws; 2) Eliminating tips and overturning laws that exclude servers from the minimum wage; 3) Convincing diners to tip more and where applicable cease bad behavior.

Rep. George Miller (3220 Blume Dr. #160, Richmond, CA 94806; www.georgemiller.house.gov) and others want to increase the minimum wage of tipped employees. Specifically, HR Bill 1010 stipulates an 85cent increase per year until the wage of servers reaches 70% of the regular minimum.

A few restaurants (mostly in the four-star category) have already eliminated tips and raised wages, including in the kitchen. In management’s opinion this improves service. The menu prices go up about 8% to 15%, an amount which in Europe and elsewhere is considered *the service charge*.

Sylvia Allegretto and David Cooper of Economic Policy Institute (1333 H St. NW #300E, Washington, DC 20005; www.epi.org) want the full regular minimum wage to apply to all restaurant servers and others, eliminating their tips. A 1966 amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act added a *subminimum wage* for tipped workers. Though many diners deny it, since 1966 tips no longer are “simply a token of

gratitude from the served to the server.” Tips are in a sense a subsidy to restaurant owners and essential to workers, the majority of whom are women.

Diners could use a thumbnail education in restaurant management, writes Kevin Pang. At a full-service restaurant 17% of diners still tip at 10% or less. At a casual restaurant 16% of diners tip about 10%; 32% don’t tip at all. And, hardly anyone tips at a fast-food restaurant. The servers, he continues, might keep the tips from their *stations* or might pool them for equal distribution. In law and culture *front of the house* servers are distinguished from *back of the house* cooks and dish washers. It is illegal for *back of the house* to receive tips. Nonetheless, servers often make a gift to them, amounting to about 10%. (*Wall St. Journal*, 8/10/14 and *Chicago Tribune*, 9/4/14 & 11/7/14)

For the time being, INITIATIVES suggests: Tip 20% or more. For bad service, complain to the manager, realizing a smaller tip changes nothing.

Taking the Initiative *For Business Ethics*

Kirk Hanson is director of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University (500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95053; www.scu.edu/ethics) and long-time friend of National Center for the Laity.

In a talk to business professors and students at Bentley University (175 Forest St., Waltham, MA 02452; www.bentley.edu/cbe) he condemned “business behavior today” as “worse than it was in the early 1970s.” Hanson stated that the “*business statesmen* of the 1960s and 1970s have been swept from the field by an intense focus on the bottom line.” The reason? “[T]here is much less room for ethics in business today than there once was. The discipline of the market simply won’t permit it.”

Hanson identifies several dilemmas the modern corporate worker faces. The very first is a question familiar to NCL: “What is worthwhile work?”

Hanson sharpens the question: “What is worthwhile spending the majority of my waking time on for the next year—or 30 years? Will my chosen career, company and assignment contribute to human welfare or detract from it? What would it be like to work for the hedge fund that owns the company that charges prisoners in many states \$3 to \$5 per minute

phone call—just because they can get away with it?” As one of Hanson’s students put it, “do I want to spend my life selling flowered toilet paper over plain toilet paper? Do I think the products and services of my company and industry contribute something to the improvement of the human condition?”

Hanson offers no pat answers. He raises the questions and leaves his audience to ponder them. For concrete tactics Hanson recommends the work of his colleague, Mary Gentile and her book, *Giving Voice to Values: How to Speak Your Mind When You Know What’s Right* (Yale University Press [2010], PO Box 209040, New Haven, CT 06520; \$19). It contains “a tool kit that can be used to address many of the most commonly encountered arguments for unethical business behavior.”

Meanwhile, Forum on Business and Human Rights (United Nations, 52 Rue des Paquis, Geneva, Switzerland CH 1201; www.ohchr.org) has issued *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*. Widely endorsed by international business and civic leaders, it says that corporations, “regardless of size, sector, operational context, ownership or structure,” must at a minimum uphold the rights named by the International Labor Organization (4 Rue des Morillons, Geneva, Switzerland CH 1211; www.ilo.org). Those obligations exist independently of the law or the State’s ability to enforce the law.

Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, CS, the Vatican’s permanent observer to the U.N.’s Commission for Human Rights, spoke at their December 2014 Forum. He quoted Pope Francis: “Business is a vocation, and a noble vocation, provided that those engaged in it see themselves challenged by a greater meaning in life. This will enable them truly to serve the common good by striving to increase the goods of this world and to make them more accessible to all.” (*Joy of the Gospel*, National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$8)

Taking the Initiative *In Retail*

In retail “most employees work part-time with stores changing many workers’ schedules week to week,” reports Steven Greenhouse. A retail consulting firm estimates that at least 70% are part time with fewer benefit options than full-time counterparts. Some students and retirees prefer part time or seasonal.

Many, however, are trying to raise a family and they often have a couple jobs.

The part-time trend is increasing because of technology that allows managers--almost hourly--to factor weather, anticipated sales, deliveries and more into scheduling. In some cases part-time workers are put *on call* with no pay, but with a penalty for missing the call.

Floor managers get frustrated with part-timers who seem unreliable and with the high turnover in their crew. For their part, the part-time workers can't always make the job a top priority amid their childcare, community involvement, and school duties. Additionally, part timers say that regardless of the lower pay, they don't feel their contribution to the store is uniquely valued. Yet the corporate office believes in a part-time workforce governed by complex software.

Jobs with Justice (209 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102; www.retailworkerrights.com) has campaigned for improvements in retail scheduling. Last November the Board of Supervisors (Eric Mar, 1 Goodlett Pl. #244, San Francisco, CA 94102; www.sfbos.org) enacted a Retail Workers Bill of Rights. Schedules must be set two weeks in advance; the retailer pays a bonus if there's a change without 24-hour notice. Part-timers get a fair chance at raises and new hiring. (*N.Y. Times*, 10/28/12 & *Progressive Populist* [1/15/15], PO Box 487, Storm Lake, IA 50588)

Catholic social thought does not turn first to government for improvement. To avoid so-called *government meddling*, however, retail executives need to consider the tension between technology and human dignity. Corporate leaders also have to use their trade associations to set agreeable parameters. And of course, groups like JWJ have to persevere.

Taking the Initiative

Among Domestic Workers

Early last December INITIATIVES found a table seat with some Mercy and Dominican Sisters among about 300 guests at a breakfast in Chinatown sponsored by Arise Chicago (1436 W. Randolph St. #202, Chicago, IL 60607; www.arisechicago.org) and hosted by the Operating Engineers Union.

Arise connects religious traditions to the world of work, especially to the struggles of under-paid workers. At the breakfast it bestowed

the Prophetic Leadership Award upon Ai-jen Poo, director of National Domestic Workers Alliance (395 Hudson St. #400, New York, NY 10014; www.domesticworkers.org).

While volunteering in college, Poo was exposed to the situation of nannies and other domestic workers who are not included under normal labor protections. Even though these workers are isolated from one another, she began lobbying with them in 2000. Today there are 43 DWA affiliates in 26 cities. In New York and gradually elsewhere DWA has obtained some overtime pay, a day off per week and three days paid absence per year for the workers.

Poo's latest project is called Caring Across Generations. She is talking with home health aides, seeking better training and more predictable conditions for them.

Poo, who moved to Chicago, was also a recent recipient of a MacArthur Foundation (140 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60603; www.macfound.org) Genius Award. (*N.Y. Times*, 9/22/14 and *Solidarity Notes* [11/14], 33 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12210)

Taking the Initiative

Against Coal

If you read INITIATIVES under an electric light, chances are it is courtesy of a coal-fired power plant. Only 13% of U.S. electricity comes from renewable sources, while 39% of the country's power is still generated by coal. Much of this comes from Appalachia.

The *National Catholic Reporter* website (www.ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic) features postings on the environment. Dennis Sadowski recently contributed a well-written and well-researched series on coal in Appalachia. He documents the consistent destruction coal has wrought to environment, economy, culture, and health.

One headline in the series (presumably not written by Sadowski) is misleading. It reads: "Despite Long Mining History, Poverty Straps Many in West Virginia." A knowledgeable headline would read: "*Because of* Long Mining History, Poverty Straps Many in West Virginia." The coal companies won't admit it, but extraction industries by their nature leave behind little that is positive. They exploit the natural environment and they abuse workers. In order to do so without more than nominal government regulation, they buy up local politicians. (Exceptions include Barbara Fleischauer, a

member of WV House of Delegates, and Booth Goodwin the U.S. Attorney in Charleston, who recently indicted a well-known coal boss.) Left behind once the coal is hauled away are poverty, illness, and unemployment. It is no coincidence that counties that have the most coal are regularly the poorest counties in Appalachia.

There are some courageous Appalachian groups that have spoken against coal, including Appalachian Citizens Law Center (317 Main St., Whitesburg, KY 41858; www.appalachianlawcenter.org), Appalachian Mountain Advocates (PO Box 507, Lewisburg, WV 24901; www.appalachianmountainadvocates.org) and Coal River Mountain Watch (PO Box 303, Naoma, WV 25140; www.crmw.net). With state and local governments under the control of the industry, however, local leadership is forced to seek the assistance of the federal government, particularly the courts, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, and the EPA. While this alliance has produced welcome results, much more remains to be done to curb mountaintop removal, black lung, and other excesses associated with coal.

There will shortly be an environment encyclical by Pope Francis, Sadowski reports in an update to his *National Catholic Reporter* series. Catholic groups like Catholic Climate Covenant (415 Michigan Ave. NE #260, Washington, DC 20017; www.catholicclimatecovenant.org) feel the encyclical will give them momentum, writes Sadowski. Some Catholic institutions are making changes, he continues. Parishes in the Stockton Diocese, for example, are switching to solar power in partnership with Sungevity (66 Franklin St. #310, Oakland, CA 94607; www.sungevity.com). Last June University of Dayton (Rev. Martin Solma, SM, 300 College Park, Dayton, OH 45469) moved all its investments out of fossil fuel firms.

Francis' encyclical will not be the first ecclesial statement on the environment. The bishops from coal states collectively published statements in 1975 and 1995; available from Catholic Committee of Appalachia (885 Orchard Run, Spencer, WV 25276; www.ccappal.org). Last December an ad hoc international group of bishops lobbied against fossil fuels in Lima during a U.N. Climate Change Conference of 196 nations. The bishops' statement, titled *COP20*, is available as a free download from Catholic Ecology (www.catholicecology.net). (*BBC News*, 12/10/14 and *The Guardian*, 5/36

Broadway #600, New York, NY 10012; 12/27/14)

Taking the Initiative *Against Hunger*

INITIATIVES once interviewed Fr. William Ferree, SM (1905-1985), who was influential in Catholic social thought. "Social justice is a new virtue in a sense," Ferree said. For most of history Christians rarely had timely knowledge of issues outside their village and/or they lacked wherewithal to do anything. But the situation in our interconnected global village is different, he explained. Nowadays, Ferree concluded, "ordinary Christians have opportunities to act and so have great responsibility."

Phfeast (Venture Development, 100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02125; www.phfeast.com) is a sophisticated response to hunger that allows diners at participating restaurants to earn points that are redeemed by food pantries. Although tweets, gift cards, pooled points and more are involved, the process moves seamlessly. So far 11 restaurants are on board, benefitting several pantries, including Paulist Center (5 Park St., Boston, MA 02108; www.paulistboston.com). (*Our Sunday Visitor* [10/14/14], 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750)

INITIATIVES, though techno deficient, feels Phfeast's approach could be replicated elsewhere.

Obtain Ferree's classic 1948 pamphlet *Introduction to Social Justice* from Center for Economic and Social Justice (PO Box 40711, Washington, DC 20016; www.cesj.org; free download) and NCL's counterpart, *What Is Social Justice?* (NCL, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$5.50).

Taking the Initiative *Making Saints*

About 60% of the official U.S. saints are New Yorkers. The New York dominance is "remarkable, even astounding [and] the official A-list, as in *among the angels*, just keeps growing," writes Lawrence Downes. (*NY Times*, 10/13/12)

The official New Yorkers are St. Frances Cabrini, MSC (1850-1917), St. Rene Goupil, SJ (1607-1642), St. Isaac Jogues, SJ (1607-1646), St. Jean de Lalande (d. 1646), St.

Elizabeth Ann Seton, SC (1774-1821), and St. Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680). Add to the list St. Marianne Cope, OSF (1838-1918) of Utica, though she served in Hawaii and St. John Neumann, CSSR (1811-1860), who served in the Niagara region but later was bishop of Philadelphia.

New York Catholics: Faith, Attitude and the Works by Patrick McNamara (Orbis Books [2014], PO Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545; \$24) profiles many lower-case saints, each given a little more than a page. In addition to the canonized, McNamara found 40 deceased and 34 living; some of whom came to the Big Apple from elsewhere and some who later moved away. Several are among INITIATIVES' favorites.

Fr. John Corridan, SJ (1911-1984) tried to rid the shipping docks of communist and mob influence. There's a famous movie based on his efforts and a full book about it all: *On the Irish Waterfront* by James Fisher (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$9).

Sr. Irene Fitzgibbon, SC (1823-1896) campaigned against child neglect and is the founder of New York Foundling (590 Ave. of Americas, New York, NY 10011; www.nyfoundling.org). INITIATIVES is campaigning to include her in the National Women's Hall of Fame (PO Box 335, Seneca Falls, NY 13148; www.greatwomen.org); to join St. Marianne Cope, OSF and Dorothy Day (1897-1980) there. By the way, the Dorothy Day Guild (1011 First Ave. #787, New York, NY 10022), a group promoting her official sainthood, has a new director, the well-qualified Jeff Korgen. INITIATIVES also wants Fitzgibbon added to the Wall of Honor at 1872 Café (431 W. Main St., Rochester, NY 14608; www.1872cafe.com), located on the spot where Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) voted in 1872, albeit illegally.

George Shuster (1894-1977) was an early editor of *Commonweal* (475 Riverside Dr. #405, New York, NY 10115), now celebrating 90 years of publication. He was later president of Hunter College (695 Park Ave., New York, NY 10065).

And to pick just one more: Al Smith (1873-1944) was long involved in politics, including several years as governor and a 1928 campaign for U.S. president that brought out our country's anti-Catholicism.

Because McNamara is focused on NYC, INITIATIVES is eager to hear from its Up

State readers: Who are your saints? And from any other state that thinks it can compete in holiness with NY.

Rest in Peace

Mario Cuomo (1932-2015)

Cuomo is an example of our North American liberation practice. His parents from Salerno, Italy arrived in Jersey City with hardly anything. They opened a grocery store. Cuomo made his way through Catholic schools and used other local institutions to eventually serve three terms as New York governor. The liberation continues because he and Matilda, his wife of over 60 years, raised five successful children.

Cuomo's 1984 attempt to reconcile his public office, his personal convictions and Catholic teaching on abortion was not satisfactory.

In 1983 Cuomo gave a remarkable sermon at St. John the Divine (1047 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10025) in which he explained his faith formation and Catholicism's embrace of the world after Vatican II (1962-1965): I was "raised in the pre-Vatican II American church, an immigrant church of ethnic loyalties and theological certainties that were rarely questioned. Ours was a Catholicism closer to the peasant roots of its participants than to the high intellectual traditions... We perceived the world then as a sort of cosmic basic training course, filled by God with obstacles and traps to weed out the recruits unfit for eventual service in the Heavenly Host... The obstacles were everywhere. Our fate on earth was to be *the poor banished children of Eve, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears* until by some combination of luck and grace and good works we escaped final damnation.

"I don't mean to belittle the church of that time... Our faith reflected the collective experience of people who through most of their history had little chance to concern themselves with helping the poor... They *were* the poor..."

"But what I now understand is that in those days, in our preoccupation with evil and temptation, we often put guilt before responsibility and we obscured a central part of Christian truth: that God did not intend this world only as a test of our purity, but rather as an expression of his love. That we are meant to live actively, intensely, totally in this world and in so doing to make it better for all... Many of us in the church had to learn that lesson..."

“The whole universe—even the pain and imperfection we see—is sacred, every part of it is touched by the Incarnation. [Thus our faith] is not a call to escape the world but to

embrace it. Creation isn’t an elaborate testing ground but an invitation to join in the work of restoration and completion.”

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Thanks to Fr. Sinclair Oubre (Catholic Labor Network, 1500 Jefferson Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77624) for hosting NCL’s website (www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm).

The National Center for the Laity’s board is Chuck DiSalvo, Tom Donnelly, Bill Droel, John Hazard, Caroline Hopkinson, Frosty Pipal, Terry Mambu Rasch and Lauren Sukal.

Visit the *Working Catholic* blog on *Catholic Labor Network* (www.catholiclabor.com) hosted by John O’Grady or on *Faith and Labor Movement* (www.faithandlabor.blogspot.com) hosted by Bill Lange or on *Church Chicago Style* (www.quarterpastgeorge.com) hosted by Mark Piper or on *Patheos* (www.patheos.com/blogs/workingcatholic) hosted by Kathleen Mulhern.

The Winter 2015 issue of *Notre Dame Magazine* (500 Grace Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556) is loaded with lists, several contributed by editor Kerry Temple, others from one or another teacher.

Management professor J.S. O’Rourke lists “Things a CEO Should Always Remember”

- The men and women whose labor has created the opportunity, wealth and prosperity for so many are your most valuable asset.
- Culture eats strategy for lunch.

Tim Judge, also from the management school, lists “Workplace Realities”

- We see ourselves as more moral than we are.
- One of the most effective ways of influencing people is asking them what *they* think.

John O’Callaghan of the philosophy department has “Things a Thomist Thinks Every N.D. Graduate Should Know”

- Knowledge of the world advances our understanding of what God has revealed. [Therefore] science and philosophy matter.
- What God has revealed fulfills and transforms everything we know about the world, surpassing understanding. [Therefore] theology matters.

And David Shribman includes an INITIATIVES’ favorite among “Top Ten American Places”

- Frank and Teresa Bellissimo’s Anchor Bar (1047 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14209) is the 1964 birthplace, so to speak, of chicken wings. It now also has locations in the Buffalo-Niagara Airport and in Hamilton. In INITIATIVES’ opinion there are nowadays a few other equally tasty spots for wings in the Lake Ontario area of Up State NY. But elsewhere, like in Chicago, the sauce is slobbered on like gravy, not cooked right into the bone. Plus the blue cheese is out of a salad jar, not homemade. To get Buffalo Chicken Wings, go to Buffalo. When in Chicago? It’s Deep Dish Pizza.