

<h1>Initiatives</h1> <p>In Support of Christians in the World</p>	<p>National Center for the Laity PO Box 291102 Chicago, IL 60629 www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm</p>	<p>October 2011</p> <p>Number 196</p>
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Taking the Initiative

With Investments

Fr. Seamus Finn (Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 391 Michigan Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20017) says the ethical investment movement is “a fertile new mission field.” It is spreading beyond individuals and religious institutions to include “those in the finance and asset-management sector” and more. He notes, for example, that 8,700 corporations participate in the United Nations Global Compact (UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017; www.unglobalcompact.org). They agree to invest guided by ten principles under four headings: human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption.

Finn, who is involved with Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (475 Riverside Dr. #1842, New York, NY 10115; www.iccr.org), also points to similar “Catholic Sullivan Principles” (University of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105; www.stthomas.edu/cathstudies). (*Origins* [5/12/11], 3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017)

INITIATIVES previously discussed cautions about ethical investing. For example, investors, even while applying both positive and negative *screens*, must abandon the notion of a single fund or product that is totally ethical. For that reason INITIATIVES is uncomfortable with funds labeled “Catholic.” Is there, for example, an investment fund that screens for both the Catholic doctrine on labor relations and on abortion? Let INITIATIVES know.

During a recession, some economists say, people search for the cheapest products and highest yielding investments, giving no thought to ethics. Yet during the current downturn, purchase of fair trade products has increased. The same should happen with investment products. (*The Tablet* [8/6/11], 1 King St. Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London, W60QZ England)

Taking the Initiative

In Business

Catholics in Commerce Networking Association (www.ccnaz.org) is a support system for small business owners in the Phoenix area. There are three regional meetings each month, each in a restaurant. Dues are \$75 per year. Members gain business referrals from one another and potential customers can use the CCNA directory. Members say CCNA helps them adhere to Catholic values. (*Catholic Sun*, 7/21/11)

Meanwhile *The Catholic Spirit* (244 Dayton Ave., St. Paul, MN 55102; www.thecatholicspirit.com) announces its latest “Leading with Faith” award winners. Categories include small business, large business and non-profit. A dozen individuals in total were selected for 2011.

INITIATIVES recently asked readers to submit a list (short or long) of business virtues or principles. One reader points to Christian Association of Business Executives (Brook House, Ouse Walk, Huntingdon, PE29 3QW England; www.cabe-online.org) which has a set of principles. There are 31 divided into four sections: business goals, values, stakeholders and personal virtues. Under stakeholders, there are guidelines for dealing with employees, suppliers, the community, the environment and customers.

Taking the Initiative

In Advertising

“Advertising, public relations, marketing communications, news and editorial all share a common objective of truth and high ethical standards in serving the public,” says the first of eight principles developed by Donald Reynolds Journalism Institute (University of Missouri, 120 Neff Hall #Admin 300, Columbia, MO 65211; www.rjionline.org).

“This assertion struck me as ridiculous,” writes Michael Miner, an alum of that very same journalism school. On second thought and upon consideration of stylistic and technological changes in both journalism and advertising, Miner is open to the Reynolds Principles. Margaret Duffy at the university admits imperfection in the guidelines. Nonetheless, they “give us an important starting point.” (*Chicago Reader* [4/14/11], 11 E. Illinois St., Chicago, IL 60611)

Taking the Initiative *Against Trafficking*

Millennium Hotel (200 S. Fourth St., St. Louis, MO 63102) is a leader for the “Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation.” Its employees are trained to spot and report *trafficking*—moving enslaved children in and out of the hotel. Millennium visitors also get information. Other measures are stipulated in the code. The Carlson and Hilton hotels, some travel agencies and an airline have signed on.

The code is coordinated by End Child Prostitution (157 Montague St., Brooklyn, NY 11201; www.thecode.org). The Sisters of St. Joseph (637 Cambridge St., Brighton, MA 02135) held their national convention at the Millennium this summer to participate in the code-signing ceremony. (*Southeast Alaska Catholic*, 7/22/11)

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (475 Riverside Dr. #1842, New York, NY 10115; www.iccr.org) says 27 well-known companies need to do more to stop trafficking, including ending their relationship with specific suppliers who abet the slave trade. ICCR is a clearing house for stocks held by religious institutions. It uses stockholder resolutions and other tactics to improve corporate policies. (*America* [7/25/11], 106 W. 56th St., New York, NY 10019)

Taking the Initiative *On Campus*

Providence College Labor Alliance (1 Cunningham Sq., Providence, RI 02918; mgarciap@friars.providence.edu) is hosting sessions at which students get to know the school’s janitors. The alliance is not convinced that subcontracting janitorial duties to a national chain is the best way for their college to uphold Catholic labor relations values. (*Faith Works* [Summer/11], 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. #400, Chicago, IL 60660)

What Is Social Justice? by Bill Droel (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$4.25) contains a case study about students who raise questions regarding a college’s labor practices. The booklet describes virtues necessary to successful conversation and change.

Taking the Initiative *Against Gangs*

The Interrupters (1901 W. Wellington St., Chicago, IL 60657; www.interrupters.kartemquin.com) is a film chronicling a year with three gang prevention specialists from a remarkable program, Cease Fire (1603 W. Taylor St. #MC 923, Chicago, IL 60612; www.ceasefirechicago.org).

A reasonable response to urban gangs is more law enforcement—more police and tougher sentences. Cease Fire’s unusual strategy is an application of the “principles of public health to the brutality of the streets,” details Alex Kotlowitz in *N.Y. Times Magazine* (5/4/08). Gary Slutkin, founder of Cease Fire, is an epidemiologist. To go after the disease of urban violence, he says, go after the infection at its source. “For violence, we’re trying to *interrupt* the next event, the next transmission, the next violent activity,” Slutkin tells Kotlowitz. In that sense, Cease Fire is not a gang prevention program; it is not targeting drugs, per se; it is not moralizing about bad people. Its only goal is to prevent the *second* shooting; to interrupt the tribal cycle of retaliation.

Years ago Slutkin recruited and trained street-savvy outreach workers for his TB clinic in San Francisco. He used a similar approach fighting AIDS in Africa. The key to Cease Fire is a team of mediators recruited from the streets, several of whom have done time. They are so street-connected they hear of incidents quickly enough to strike up a credible relationship with a revenge-minded relative or fellow gang member, maybe in a hospital room or at the wake. Yet they are just enough street-detached that

they don't, even inadvertently, get caught up in the hysteria. Cease Fire needs workers "right there on the edge."

There is evidence that Cease Fire concentrated in specific neighborhoods is effective, writes Wesley Skogan (Northwestern University Policy Research Institute, 2040 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, IL 60208; www.skogan.org).

Cease Fire attempts to change the expectation of more lethal violence toward a culture in which there is status in not retaliating during a high stakes situation. *The Interrupters*, by Kotlowitz and Steve James, is inspiring for the general public and, if viewed by enough violence-prone young adults, contributes to that new culture. (*N.Y. Times*, 7/31/11)

Taking the Initiative

In the Liturgy

In previous issues INITIATIVES, with suggestions from its Latin-literate readers, has offered translations of the dismissal rite at Mass (*Ite, missa est*) to emphasize the church's mission to the world. With the same goal in mind the Congregation for Divine Worship (Palazzo delle Congregazioni 00193, Rome, Italy 10; www.vatican.va) approves three new dismissal phrases, including "Go and announce the gospel of the Lord."

There is an "intrinsic relationship [between] the worship of God and the world in which we live," says Msgr. Kevin Irwin in a talk about Vatican II's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. In the direction of weekday world to weekend altar, the Mass requires manufactured elements (bread not wheat and wine not grapes) from the workweek to "show the importance of human ingenuity and work in the celebration of the liturgy." In the direction of altar-to-world a celebration of the Just One whose reign extends to all creation means, for example, organizing on Monday for just wages and humane work conditions. (*Origins* [4/28/11], 3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017)

Fr. Ron Lewinski (St. Mary of the Annunciation, 22333 W. Erhart Rd., Mundelein, IL 60060) observes that "wherever there [is among Catholics] a strong and bold witness [of faith in the world,] the liturgy [is] also strong and vibrant." Lewinski's parish contains some business leaders who travel in the U.S. and overseas. The parish gathers some of them who, inspired by the liturgy and an outward-looking parish, sense that their faith connects to society and work. In the context of prayer and reflection, the businesspeople ask themselves "how their positions of power can influence the decisions that are made in boardrooms." (*Origins*, 6/2/11)

Msgr. Francis Mannion is of the opinion that generally today the connection between the liturgy of earth and the liturgy of heaven "is not adequately emphasized." (*Our Sunday Visitor* [8/28/11], 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750)

Can INITIATIVES' readers supply some examples of confluence between liturgy and work?

Taking the Initiative

Assisting the Unemployed

Five parishes participate in the newly-formed Networking Support Group (Kim Hayes, 1001 Penfield Rd., Rochester, NY 14625). It meets twice a month on Thursday mornings to broker job tips and to give spiritual counsel. The August Group (Tracey Aiello, 1208 Bay Shore Blvd., Rochester, NY 14609) has a presence in several parishes with training programs, career fairs and more. Every few months for the past 20 years the Employment Network (Gary Stekloff, 41 Warder Dr., Pittsford, NY 14534), a cooperative effort of several parishes, hosts sessions where workers improve their job-seeking skills. Stekloff thinks regional cooperation among the various support groups would be a plus. (*Catholic Courier*, 7/11)

Elizabeth Scalia, who blogs for *First Things* (35 E. 21st St. #600, New York, NY 10010; www.firstthings.com), has written *Employment Rosary* (Our Sunday Visitor, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750; \$14.95 or free to view on www.osv.com). Its meditations draw upon the Sorrowful Mysteries.

Lorene Hanley Duquin's pamphlet, *When Someone Is Unemployed* (Our Sunday Visitor; \$14.95 or free to view on www.osv.com), contains this prayer:

Gracious and loving God, you know our need for meaningful work. Send your Holy Spirit to guide those who are searching for employment... Shelter them from feelings of rejection. Protect them from discouragement. Give them courage to overcome fear. Shower on them the graces they need to

persevere. Let this time of searching be an opportunity to grow in faith [and] to cultivate the virtue of hope... Amen.

Work and Art

The Library of Congress (101 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20540; www.loc.gov) names Philip Levine as the new poet laureate. Levine, 83, sets many of his poems in industrial Detroit. His nouns include specific tools and types of equipment, makes of cars and even ingredients of a meal. The title poem in Levine's collection *What Work Is* (Alfred Knopf [1991], 1745 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; \$16) weaves a meditation around an unemployment line, opera and sibling friendship. (*N.Y. Times*, 8/10/11)

Edward Hopper's (1882-1967) paintings often include young workers, sometimes at their trade, sometimes in a restaurant or diner. But who are they? What are they thinking and saying?

Later the Same Evening is a one-act opera by John Musto and Mark Campbell, recently performed at Glimmerglass Festival (PO Box 191, Cooperstown, NY 13326). In it characters from five of Hopper's paintings are given names and a background story. The nearby Fenimore Art Museum (PO Box 800, Cooperstown, NY 13326; www.fenimoreartmuseum.org) had a complimentary Hooper exhibit. Its booklet, *A Window into Edward Hooper* (\$24.95), suggests plausible narratives for the workers in the paintings. (*Wall St. Journal*, 8/18/11)

Several so-called *documentary-reality* shows about work are now staples on cable TV. *Deadliest Catch* (Discovery Communications, 850 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022) about fishermen is the most popular with 5million viewers. The latest, *Coal* (Original Productions, 308 W. Verdugo Ave., Burbank, CA 91502), is set at Westchester Mine (PO Box 191, Premier, WV 24878).

INITIATIVES might be expected to applaud these shows as art forms that deal with work themes. The shows seemingly counter a romantic notion of work because they detail exertion and danger.

However, Dana Jennings raises questions about the value of these programs. "Work is one of the most intimate things we do," she writes. But TV turns the workers into quasi-actors and viewers into voyeurs. "What does it mean when an ordinary man's [or woman's] life is transmuted into entertainment? Is a life of quiet desperation somehow ennobled if it's shown on TV?"

There is really no such thing as *reality TV*. (See the item on Marshall McLuhan in this newsletter.) As Jennings notes: "The camera intrudes on the sense of normality [and] imposes a false sense of authority on these men." (*N.Y. Times*, 3/27/11)

Not only do the workers buy into the artificiality of the TV show, but interestingly so do the owners of the businesses. The website for Westchester Mine, for example, features some workers as stars of the company, complete with their shift assignments and the like. The company also has a gift shop parlaying on the show's popularity.

Are there any TV shows that contribute to a spirituality of work? *Undercover Boss*, for example?

120 Years

Of Catholic Social Thought

A pastor asked Dan Finn (St. John's University, Simons Hall, Collegeville, MN 56321) for advice about a situation in which bank vice-presidents say they want early retirement so that they can "do something worthwhile." The bank CEO wants to know if "work as a senior executive at a bank [can] be *worthwhile enough*, meaningful enough for a fulfilling Christian life?"

A job does contribute to a meaningful vocation—but the dynamic goes beyond the positive attitude of one or another worker. Individuals in the bank must be ethical and its leaders weed out the violators. Further, the bank itself, along with its related entities, must adhere to the law. Additionally, says Finn, the bank must foster "a vibrant civil society." That means its business plan appreciates unions, consumer groups, arts associations, neighborhood groups and more—not in a vague way but in the same way the bank pursues its other goals.

Drawing upon *Love in Truth* by Pope Benedict XVI (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, 60629; \$6), Finn suggests how an institution like a bank can add *gratitude* to its mission.

Many moves in the marketplace are quid pro quo. Gratuitousness is not quid pro quo. It does, however, set up reciprocal cultural expectations.

Let's say, a manager asks the teller foreman if workers can stay an extra hour to complete an urgent audit matter. The contract does not require it and there is no stipulation that the manager will give the tellers Friday afternoon off in return. The tellers' *gift* to management, however, "builds trust over time."

There is, of course, a proper pace to gratitude which if not respected, as in this example of the bank tellers, deteriorates into slavish long hours. But gratuitous behavior, which builds "a strong culture of mutual trust," is an economic advantage to the firm, to the entire economy and to a meaningful life for bank vice presidents and other workers. (*Origins* [7/21/11], 3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017 and *Catholic News Service*, 6/17/11)

North American Spirituality

Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980)

The McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology (University of Toronto, 27 Kings College Cr. #Coach House, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5S 1A1; www.mcluhan100.ca) celebrates the 100th anniversary of McLuhan's birth with publications, film and conferences, including a recent event in Washington. (*N.Y. Times*, 7/26/11)

Once upon a time, every college student knew something about McLuhan or thought they did. By the time he died, McLuhan was dismissed as a crank, a flake and even an academic fraud. But now, says B.W. Powe, one of the leaders in the centennial celebration, McLuhan is of interest because he predicted and understood globalization and the Internet.

The earliest date for the invention of the Internet is October 1969 when the Pentagon linked some buildings. A better date is 1990 when the Internet went public. Yet even before all this, McLuhan, who uses terms like *global village* and phrases like *the medium is the message*, explains current technology. Just one example of McLuhan's foresight: Telecommunication satellites create, in his terminology, a *proscenium arch* or a large mirror across the sky to "transform the global village into a global theater." Consequently, public space becomes "a stage for *doing one's thing*... *Snooping with intent to creep or case everybody else's joint*."

"Each new technology creates a new environment," he preaches. "The media are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered." The media of each time and place, irrespective of the message they bring, are the reality. Or in McLuhan's tag line: "The medium is the message."

McLuhan was a Canadian who taught briefly at St. Louis University and, most notably, at St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto. His official department was literature, but his interests were wide. He read 35 books a week during his academic career.

McLuhan loved old-time Catholicism and was uncomfortable with Vatican II changes. However, this did not entail a duality between his faith and research. McLuhan was influenced by Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ (1881-1955) and other Catholics who advanced a dialogue between modernity and faith.

"McLuhan's pioneering studies of popular culture were part of a sea change in Catholic intellectualism, as the Church gave up the siege mentality of earlier decades and tried to offer a more nuanced and positive account of modern life," writes Jeet Heer. In fact, it was because of his Catholicism that McLuhan had a framework and the security "to understand the world [rather] than to condemn it." In a letter, McLuhan writes: "One of the advantages of being a Catholic is that it confers a complete intellectual freedom to examine any and all phenomena with the absolute assurance of their intelligibility." (*The Walrus* [8/11], 19 Duncan St. #101, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5H 3H1)

McLuhan's task was to explain, not to promote the latest technology. In fact, says Douglas Coupland in *Marshall McLuhan: You Know Nothing of My Work* (Atlas & Co. [2009], 15 W. 26th St. #200, New York, NY 10010; \$24), McLuhan "hated, loathed [and] abhorred" most of it. "How the man ever came to be perceived as technology's cheerleader is a mystery."

McLuhan's books (often written with a coauthor) are a mix of text in various fonts and pictures, including hundreds of ads clipped from magazines. Coupland uses a touch of that layout in his biography (in a way that INITIATIVES' budget does not allow). Here though are a few of INITIATIVES' favorite McLuhan quotes:

- Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which humans communicate than by the content of the communication.
- The meaning of an experience is typically one generation behind the experience.
- The content of new situations, both private and corporate, is typically the preceding situation.
- The guy who drives on an interstate highway (a technology) thinks he is the same man who used a dirt road leaving his small town. He doesn't notice that the highway has changed his relation to his family and other people.

McLuhan is critical of some trends, but he is not pessimistic. Coupland describes him as a person of hope. McLuhan believes that people "are social creatures first, and that our ability to express intelligence and build civilizations stems from our inherent social needs." The human spirit, not technology, draws us together.

Happenings

The annual meeting of the Maritain Association (Gannon University, 109 University Sq. #PMB 3121, Erie, PA 16541; haggerty002@gannon.edu) will be held October 13-15, 2011 at Notre Dame University.

Our National Center for the Laity is a co-sponsor of a November 19, 2011 Conference on the Kingdom of God, to be held at University of Illinois Student Center (750 S. Halsted, Chicago, IL 60607). For more information contact Vesper Society (115 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104; www.kingdomofGodonline.com).

CHRISM (198 Marlborough Rd., Oxford, OX1 4LT England; www.chrism.org.uk) is a network for those "who see their secular employment as their primary Christian ministry." Several of its members are ordained or educated in theology, but they are not Church employees. Its Reflective Weekend will be February 17-19, 2012. Its journal, *Ministers at Work*, is loaded with resource information and inspiring accounts.

Consistent Life (PO Box 9295, Silver Spring, MD 20916; www.consistent-life.org) celebrates its 25th anniversary on March 9-11, 2012 with a conference in Washington, DC. The organization is clearly inspired by Catholic doctrine, but its events and supporters are not exclusively Catholic. Its motto says, "Pro-lifers for peace; Peace workers for life." A tip of the hat to Consistent Life for their attempt at consistency.

A conference on Catholic Social Thought and Management Education will be held June 18-20, 2012 in Dayton. The John A. Ryan Institute (2115 Summit Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105; www.stthomas.edu/dayton) is a sponsor.

Websites, Blogs and Resources

INITIATIVES recently toured The Women and Leadership Archives (Mundelein College, 6525 N. Sheridan Rd. #Piper 300, Chicago, IL 60626; www.luc.edu/wla). It includes the papers of Peggy Roach (1927-2006), Patty Crowley (1913-2005), Sr. Anne Carr, BVM (1934-2008) and more. Beth Myers and her crew at the Archives maintain a quiet, comfortable atmosphere. They seek more contributions to their collection.

Meanwhile, our National Center for the Laity recently obtained a CD containing publications edited by Ed Marciniak (1917-2004); specifically *Chicago Catholic Worker* and *Work* newspaper, dating from June 1933 to December 1961.

NCL donated a copy of this CD to Calumet College of St. Joseph (2400 New York Ave., Whiting, IN 46394; www.ccsj.edu). A faculty and staff committee there is assembling a social justice collection. Calumet College (archives@ccsj.edu) now also has the research material associated with *Go To the Worker* by Kimball Baker (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$25). This fascinating book profiles several U.S. Catholics, including NCL founder Ed Marciniak and others who made careers out of connecting workers to Catholicism and connecting our faith to the world of work.

Bob Senser, longtime friend of National Center for the Laity, edits an informative blog about global labor relations, Human Rights for Workers (<http://humanrightsforworkers.blogspot.com>).

To appreciate Senser's range of information and his wisdom, get *Justice at Work: Globalization and the Human Rights of Workers* (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$12).

