

Compassion

Faith doing justice in the Central and Southern Province...and beyond

February 2018

UCS CROSS-SECTOR RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE

Registration is now open for the Reconciliation Conference to be held at **Regis University in Denver June 18-21, 2018**. Make plans now to join Jesuit colleagues working in higher education, secondary and pre-secondary education, pastoral ministry and social ministries as we explore God's invitation to reconciliation and come together to respond to God, commit to justice, and care for our environment. We will . . .

- Discern how God is inviting us to see, think, and act in new and different ways to open the way for change and reconciliation in our ministries,
- Collaborate and network across and among various sectors and ministries within the province,
- Share ideas, strategies, and best practices about reconciliation through an Ignatian lens,
- Spend time in individual and group prayer centered around reconciliation with God, with others, and with our environment, and
- Support the work of the province.

The cost of the conference is \$425/participant, staying in a Regis University dormitory and \$315 for commuters. All meals and materials are included in this fee, but travel to Denver is not. The informational flyer can be found [here](#). You can register [here](#).

2018 SOCIAL GRANTS APPLICATION

Each year, the Jesuits of the USA Central and Southern (UCS) Province offer small social grants for projects that directly engage UCS Jesuits or organizations that they support in serving the poor or working for social justice. The primary purpose of a Social Grant is to encourage Jesuit solidarity with poor and marginalized people. The provincial will consider grants that meet the following criteria:

- The Jesuit has inaugurated or is directly involved in programs that benefit poor and marginalized people.
- The Jesuit is directly involved as a leader, volunteer or staff person in a social ministry organization or program.
- The Jesuit is working for social change on behalf of poor and marginalized people.

- The project has a high likelihood of increasing Jesuit concern for poor and marginalized people.

Every grant application must be sponsored and signed by a Jesuit of the UCS province. Grants will be modest, most often ranging from \$1,000 - \$6,000. Any Jesuit or organization that received a grant in 2017 must complete a report on how that money was used before they will be considered for funding in 2018. The grant report form is available at the link below.

The deadline for applications for Social Grants is **March 30, 2018**. Grant guidelines and applications can be found online: <https://connect.jesuitscentralsouthern.org/socialgrants>.

If you have *any* questions about eligible projects or difficulty accessing the online social grants materials, please call or e-mail Mary Baudouin mbaudouin@jesuits.org or 504-655-6574.

US JESUIT PRO-LIFE STATEMENT

January 22 marked 45 years since the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision made abortion legal in the United States. On that anniversary, the Society of Jesus in the U.S. asked Jesuits and their collaborators to con-



tinue to stand in solidarity with the unborn and with mothers in difficult situations. **“Protecting the Least Among Us: A Statement of the Society of Jesus in the United States on Abortion”** reiterates the Jesuits' support for the unborn, calling abortion “part of the massive injustices in our society.” The statement stresses that “a spirit of callous disregard for life shows itself in direct assaults on human life such as abortion and capital punishment. ... We also seek justice in ensuring that pregnant women and mothers have the resources they need to care for their children and live full lives.”

In addition to calling for Jesuits to stand in solidarity with the unborn — the “least of our brothers and sisters” (Matthew 25:40) — through prayer and political activism, the statement asks Jesuits to deepen their accompaniment with women who have had an abortion. Jesuits and their colleagues must “find ever new and creative ways to bring the protection of the unborn and solidarity with mothers in difficult situations into whatever mission they serve.” To read the full statement, available in English and Spanish, [click here](#).

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR CAMPAIGN

As part of the Campaign for Hospitality, the Ignatian Solidarity Network is sponsoring an exciting new initiative linked to Valentine's Day. From February 11-18, 2018, the [Love Your Neighbor Campaign](#) is inviting individuals and institutions to support, advocate with, and affirm the dignity of their neighbor, regardless of immigration status. The campaign offers several possibilities for participation:



1. *Sending Valentines to Your Congresspersons* to encourage them to "love their neighbor." The Love Your Neighbor website offers templates to create cards; you can mail or fax the cards or plan a visit to deliver the Valentines (just a bit late) to your Congressperson's local office during the February 19-23 Congressional recess.
2. *Share the Love via Social Media.* Share a photo of you and your colleagues with a printable "Love Your Neighbor #migrantswelcome" sign. Put it on Twitter, Instagram and/or Facebook, and compose a personal message about why you love your neighbor.
3. *Wear a Love Your Neighbor Sticker.* Anyone who signs up for this campaign will receive two free Love Your Neighbor stickers, and institutions will receive 10 stickers. Additional stickers can be ordered, but you'll need to do that soon to receive them by Valentine's Day!
4. *Organize Fair Trade Chocolategrams.* Raise funds for organizations offering immigration-related legal aid with Valentine's Day Fair Trade Chocolategrams! Order chocolate bars wholesale from Equal Exchange, use the Campaign template to create tags, set a selling price, advertise at your organization, and donate proceeds!

JOB OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

St. Francis Xavier Parish in Kansas City is seeking a full-time Pastoral Associate for Justice and Life. The job description and qualifications can be found at <http://www.sfx-kc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/SFX-Justice-and-Life-posting-v5-2018.pdf>.

Applications are due February 28.

SOCIAL GRANT HIGHLIGHT YOUTH FORMATION ENCOUNTERS, NICARAGUA



Presentation from Yanet González on breaking the cycle of violence and cultivating values

Brian Strassburger, SJ, a UCS regent working in Nicaragua, used a province social grant to organize and sponsor a cultural immersion leadership development program for 28 students, aged 12 -18, from the Carlos Fonseca Amador School in Leon. The students at the school come from low-income families; some must work in the morning before attending school in the afternoon to help support their families. The school, which is in a low-income neighborhood, suffers from a lack of basic resources, including school supplies and teaching materials. Some of the classrooms have as many as 50 students with just one teacher. The school does not have the means to provide field trips or cultural immersions.

This project offered students the opportunity to visit local historical and cultural sites where they received presentations on different social themes, including the cycle of violence, art appreciation, teen pregnancy, and social networking. After the encounters, students gave in-class presentations to other students about the site they visited and the talks they heard, so that the entire secondary school population was able to benefit from the project. Students also organized a closing event for their family and friends, extending the project's impact to an even larger community.

Brian, who works out of the Roncalli Association – John XXIII, did the organizing, planning and execution of all of the events, which took about 500 hours total! He is now immersed in organizing the second phase of the project in a different municipality of Nicaragua for the spring of 2018. In addition to organizing Phase II, Brian raised the funds needed. Brian wants us to know that "the beneficiaries of the project, especially the participating students, offer a big 'thank you' to the UCS Province for funding the Youth Encounters Project."