

**Justice University  
Catholic Focus Project  
Georgetown University Relationship**

Pope Francis has stated that the purpose of education is to assist the student to grow “in wisdom, age, and grace” (General Audience, March 19, 2014). While nothing can replace the role of parents in education, schools, too, play an essential role. As Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Pope Francis was Grand Chancellor of the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina, and knows whereof he speaks.

Modern academia is in a shambles. The “Education Industry” — the term itself is revealing — is geared toward persuading as many students as possible to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars they don’t have to train for jobs that do not exist, and assume a lifetime of non-repayable debt to do so. A liberal arts education is often ignored when it is not ridiculed. The idea that education prepares the student to “pursue the good” (what many people regard as the meaning of life) appears to have little or no currency on university campuses, much less in high schools or grade schools. The concept of justice, while it is paid lip service on occasion, is often misunderstood, when it is understood at all.

The inevitable conclusion is that today’s educational system is not helping students grow in wisdom or teaching them how to apply basic principles of justice and the other virtues to the problems of individual and social life. Education has itself become part of the problem. Not only tremendous resources of time and money are being wasted, lives and intellects are being destroyed to support an unsustainable and unjust system.

**JUSTICE UNIVERSITY**

CESJ has developed the “Justice University” concept to address the problem of an educational system that often fails to educate people in fundamental concepts of justice and the other virtues. The goal is a holistic program that integrates all academic disciplines by building on the principles of the Just Third Way, pursuing truth within the framework dictated by the Aristotelian-Thomist concept of the natural law.

Justice University does not, however, ignore the more mundane aspects of education, and seeks additionally to reform a system of expensive education that does not prepare students for life. By striving to make education both meaningful and affordable, Justice University will serve as a model for the reform of higher education, and a guide for high school and elementary education.

Ultimately, Justice University will be an institution of higher learning that offers accredited courses primarily over the internet, but with materials available in various electronic media suitable for individual and self-directed study, as well as for presentation in traditional classroom situations. Eventually, Justice University will offer courses suitable for kindergarten through post-graduate levels.

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

An important part of the strategic plan for Justice University is to form alliances with existing institutions of higher learning. The goal is to build a global network of educational institutions at all levels that offer a consistent and rational core curriculum consistent with the classical Aristotelian-Thomist virtues, especially justice. By working with fully accredited institutions and forming a network of participants, Justice University courses can be developed and integrated into existing curricula.

Forming alliances with existing institutions will have three distinct advantages. One, it will allow for “test marketing” the unique Justice University approach within traditional academic settings. Two, consistent with the laws and characteristics of social justice, it will begin the reform of academia from within academia itself.

Three, students will not have to be “guinea pigs,” risking their academic careers and GPAs by taking non-credit or non-accredited courses. Eventually, of course, Justice University will be a discrete, “stand alone” fully accredited institution with reciprocity at all participating institutions, K through graduate, but at present we should accommodate as much as possible to the existing system without sacrificing the principles of the Just Third Way, and without requiring students to endanger whatever benefits they receive from the current system, however flawed we may believe it to be.

Georgetown University in Washington, DC, with its Catholic Studies program, its commitment to the Jesuit traditions of an integrated education and of productive research in the liberal arts, including fine arts, humanities, languages, sciences, and, especially, the social sciences, and its prestige as an established institution, is ideal as an institution of higher learning with which to build a relationship and “test market” the Justice University concept. Its close proximity to CESJ in Arlington, Virginia (CESJ being the “parent” organization of the Justice University concept), is an added advantage, as is the fact that members of the CESJ “core group” have attended, worked, and taught at Georgetown, and are thus familiar to some degree with the institution’s unique character.

#### THE PROPOSAL

The specific proposal is that CESJ and Georgetown University collaborate on creating a position at Georgetown to teach a two-semester interdisciplinary course on “Catholic Social Teaching and the Just Third Way” under the auspices of the Catholic Studies Program. The first semester would present the basics of the social doctrine Pope Pius XI presented primarily in the encyclicals *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) and *Divini Redemptoris* (1937).

This would be combined with the economic justice principles developed by ESOP inventor Louis O. Kelso and Great Books philosopher Mortimer J. Adler, and presented in their two collaborations, *The Capitalist Manifesto* (1958) and *The New Capitalists* (1961).

The Just Third Way uses the interpretation of Pius XI’s social doctrine found in the analysis of CESJ co-founder, the late Father William J. Ferree, S.M., Ph.D. Father Ferree was eulogized after his death as “America’s greatest social philosopher.”

Pius XI’s completed doctrine of social justice is integrated into the economic justice principles developed by Kelso and Adler, with special emphasis on how Kelso and Adler’s “Proposal to Free Economic Growth from the Slavery of Savings” (as the subtitle of *The New Capitalists* has it) allows for practical implementation of Catholic social teaching without the modernist distortions of, e.g., Monsignor John A. Ryan and his redefinitions of distributive justice, social justice, liberty (free association/contract), and private property.

CESJ has access to a number of experts in the Just Third Way who are among the world’s leading authorities in their particular fields, including Dr. Norman G. Kurland, who taught elements of the Just Third Way at the International Law Institute. Dr. Kurland has expressed a willingness to be a guest speaker at both undergraduate and graduate classes.

The second semester would apply the principles of the Just Third Way in a manner consistent with Catholic social teaching to particular situations that are of immediate concern in the present

day. Given the current global situation, we anticipate that for the foreseeable future the second semester will focus on CESJ's "Capital Homesteading" proposal, as well as the various ways in which elements of the Just Third Way can be implemented under existing law, *e.g.*, what CESJ calls the "JBM S-Corp ESOP," the potential of kenaf for revitalizing a local economy, innovative new energy technologies, healthcare reform, and so on.

#### FUNDING

To begin the program as soon as possible, Georgetown would commit the funding and hire the appropriate member of the CESJ core group as an interdisciplinary professor with the capacity to propose courses under any field of study. The position would qualify the incumbent as a regular member of the faculty. Whether the position would be an endowed chair or some other arrangement can be discussed.

At the same time, CESJ will commit itself to make a "best effort" to obtain funding for the program from foundations and individuals. CESJ recently contracted with a group that specializes in assisting non-profits such as CESJ in obtaining grants.

We anticipate that with the "imprimatur" of Georgetown and other institutions of higher learning that we believe will commit to a written expression of interest in the program, adequate funding will be forthcoming. For this first test of the concept, all are Catholic. Among the initial colleges and universities, or where CESJ has contacts with individuals affiliated with those institutions, that we believe may be interested are:

- University of Notre Dame du Lac-South Bend, Indiana
- University of Notre Dame-Perth, New South Wales
- Pontifical Catholic University of America, Washington, DC
- Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina, Buenos Aires
- John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio
- Marymount University, Arlington, Virginia
- Canisius College, Buffalo, New York
- Gannon University, Erie, Pennsylvania
- Christendom College, Front Royal, Virginia

Other organizations and individuals have indicated interest in the Just Third Way approach, and may want to give written endorsements or indications of interest as well. Among the organizations are:

- The Confraternity of Catholic Clergy
- The Ancient Order of Hibernians
- The Knights of Columbus
- The Central Bureau of the Catholic Central Union of America
- Tradition, Family, and Property
- Heat and Light Ministries, Inc.
- The Sacred Heart Abolitionist Society

- Center for the Study of the Great Ideas
- The Kelso Institute

Among the individuals who may want to express interest or support are:

His Eminence Achille Cardinal Silvestrini	Dr. Norman Bailey
Msgr. Sal Pilato	Dr. Robert H. A. Ashford
Father Edward Krause	Dr. Stephen Chanderbhan
Father Matthew Habiger	Dr. Robert Crane
Father John Trigilio	Mr. Andrew R. Tavss
Father Thomas Schubeck	Mr. Michael Keeling
Father Bertram Buby	Mr. Corey Rosen
Father Robert Begin	Ron Ludwig, Esq.
Deacon Joseph Gorini	George Horton, Esq.
Brother John Samaha	Mr. Steven Young
Dr. María Teresa Rosón de Pérez Lozano	Dr. Max Weisman
Rabbi Herzel Kranz	Dr. Charles E. Rice
Dr. Ahmed Subhy Mansour	Ms. Patricia Hetter-Kelso
	Mr. Martin Smith

#### THE JUST THIRD WAY

The Justice University concept is unique in that it integrates Aristotelian-Thomist principles of the natural law into a social and economic program that is politically feasible and embodies sound business practice. Its practicality is demonstrated by the success of the “ESOP Revolution,” which today benefits more than 11 million workers in more than 10 thousand companies in the United States alone. Dr. Norman G. Kurland, a member of the CESJ core group, who was Kelso’s Washington Counsel, was instrumental in helping persuade the late Senator Russell Long of Louisiana to champion the initial enabling legislation for the ESOP.

The Just Third Way is best summarized by the Kelso-Adler three principles of economic justice as applied in the four pillars of an economically just society, and implemented in a manner consistent with the laws and characteristics of social justice.

The three principles of economic justice are:

- **Participation or “Participative Justice.”** “Participation” is the input principle that all people have a right to live in a culture that offers them equality of dignity and opportunity to contribute their labor as well as their capital, to the production of marketable goods and services. This requires equal access to the means of acquiring property in income-producing capital. As technology displaces or replaces labor, the ownership of capital becomes essential for a person in the modern world to earn a living. Such social means are necessary for all members of a society or wealth-producing institution to exercise their fundamental rights to become empowered to contribute to the success of the whole and to their personal success.

- **Distribution or “Distributive Justice.”** “Distribution” is the out-take principle — based on the exchange value of one’s economic contributions — that all people have a right to receive a proportionate, market-determined share of the value of the marketable goods and services they produce with their labor, their capital, or both. Under Kelso’s binary theory of economics, every person is entitled to earn both from their human or “labor” contributions and from their capital contributions (non-human things in the form of productive land and humanly-created capital assets) that combine to produce all goods and services sold in the market. Kelso rejected the “Labor Theory of Value,” which ignores the reality of ever-advancing technologies that continue to eliminate many jobs throughout the world. Further, distribution based on need, rather than on contribution, is valid for charity. Charity, however, should never be a substitute for justice that could reduce the need for charity.
- **Feedback or “Social Justice”** (formerly “Limitation”). “Social justice” is the feedback principle that balances “participation” and “distribution” when either essential principle is violated by the system. Social justice includes a concept of limitation that discourages personal greed and prevents social monopolies. It holds that every person has a personal responsibility to organize with others to correct their organizations, institutions, laws and the social order itself at every level whenever the principles of “participation” or “distribution” are violated or not operating properly.

The four pillars of an economically just society are:

- **A limited economic role for the State** (“There is no need to bring in the State. Man precedes the State, and possesses, prior to the formation of any State, the right of providing for the substance of his body.” — *Rerum Novarum*, § 7),
- **Free and open markets** within an understandable and fair system of laws as the most objective and democratic means for determining just prices, just wages and just profits — the residual after all goods or services are sold (“It would appear that, on the level of individual nations and of international relations, the *free market* is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs.” — *Centesimus Annus*, § 34),
- **Restoration of private property**, especially in corporate equity and other forms of business organization. It is important to note that “property” is not the thing that is owned. It is the set of rights, powers, privileges, and limitations that belongs to an owner. Typically, shareholders do not receive the full stream of income attributable to their share ownership, and, when dividends are paid, are subject to double, sometimes triple taxation. (“A working man’s little estate thus purchased should be as completely at his full disposal as are the wages he receives for his labor. But it is precisely in such power of disposal [*i.e.*, control and enjoyment of the fruits] that ownership obtains, whether the property consist of land or chattels.” — *Rerum Novarum*, § 5), and
- **Widespread capital ownership**, individually or in free association with others, achieved through universal access to capital credit repayable with “future savings” (profits) from the future goods and services for which each new growth investment is reasonably expected to produce, in addition to whatever savings they accumulate, or wealth they inherit. Thus, the poor and middle class without past savings are enabled to acquire direct ownership of capital in an advanced economy. (“We have seen that

this great labor question cannot be solved save by assuming as a principle that private ownership must be held sacred and inviolable. The law, therefore, should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the people to become owners.” — *Rerum Novarum*, § 46).

The “laws” of social justice are:

- **That the Common Good Be Kept Inviolable.** In all private dealings, in all exercise of individual justice, the common good must be a primary object of solicitude. To attack or to endanger the common good in order to attain some private end, no matter how good or how necessary this latter may be in its own order, is social injustice and is wrong.
- **Cooperation, Not Conflict.** Given the uniqueness of each human person, the particular good of each individual is different. Any particular good that is falsely made into an ultimate principle must necessarily be *in conflict* with every other particular good. Only cooperation, organization for the common good, can make a real society. This does not mean overriding or ignoring individual goods, but it does mean integrating them into the whole effort.
- **One’s First Particular Good is One’s Own Place in the Common Good.** The *first* particular good of every individual or group is that that individual or group find its proper place in the common good. As Father Ferree put it, “It must be admitted that this is not the way most of us think at the present time, but that is because we have been badly educated. It must be admitted also that to carry out such a principle in practice looks like too big a job for human nature as we know it; but that is because we are individualists and have missed the point. Of course it is too big a job if each one of us and each of our groups is individually and separately responsible for the welfare of the human race as a whole. But the point is that the human race as a whole is *social*.”
- **Each Directly Responsible.** Every individual, regardless of his age or occupation or state of life, is *directly* responsible for the common good, because *the common good is built up in a hierarchical order*. That is, every great human institution consists of subordinate institutions, which themselves consist of subordinate institutions, on down to the individuals who compose the lowest and most fleeting of human institutions. Since every one of these institutions is directly responsible for the general welfare of the one above it, it follows that every individual is directly responsible for the lower institutions which immediately surround his life, and indirectly responsible for the general welfare of his whole country and the whole world. (This is the principle of subsidiarity.)
- **Higher Institutions Must Never Displace Lower Ones.** No institution in the vast hierarchy that we have seen can take over the particular actions of an institution or person below it. (This, too, comes under the principle of subsidiarity, although this is the aspect most often ignored.)
- **Freedom of Association** (liberty/contract). If every natural group of individuals has a right to its own part of the common good and a duty towards the next highest common good, it is evident that such a group has the right to organize itself formally in view of the common good. (Yet another aspect of the principle of subsidiarity.)

- **All Vital Interests Should be Organized.** All real and vital interests of life should be deliberately made to conform to the requirements of the common good.

The characteristics of social justice are:

- **First Characteristic: Only By Members of Groups.** The first mark of social justice is that it cannot be performed by individuals as individuals, but only by individuals as members of groups. That is extremely important, because virtually everyone misunderstands it. The “efficient cause” (the “actor” or “agent” who carries out the act) of *all* social virtue is the individual as a member of a group, *not* an individual on his own ticket. Father Ferree considered this so important that he spent four full pages in a brief pamphlet on getting the idea across. As a college professor for more than forty years, he found that this was the single largest hurdle to understanding the natural law applied in Catholic social teaching. It is *not* collectivism, nor is it any individual act of virtue carried out with a vague intention to benefit the common good indirectly.
- **Second Characteristic: It Takes Time.** Social justice moves slowly and gradually. It requires organization, consensus building, more organization, solidarity, attention to the principle of subsidiarity — all the troublesome little details of working with actual human beings rather than abstract concepts. We have found that this characteristic often causes the most frustration to people, particularly those activists who demand immediate results. It is easy to argue that society is unjustly structured, and instant results are not only desired, but absolutely necessary. The temptation in the face of social injustice is to demand that “they” (usually the State or a power elite of any institution) Do Something — and Do It Now! One problem with this approach is obvious. The activist is absolved from all responsibility! Once he has condemned those in power and everybody else in the immediate vicinity for failing to correct the situation, his job is done. He can go home and comfort himself with a feeling of enormous virtue. He has “raised consciousness,” and can leave the dirty, tiresome and frustrating work of actually reforming the system to Somebody Else. There is another problem. Those in power are comfortable with the operational habits of the *status quo*, and those not in power are powerless by definition. The former have a built-in resistance to change, while the latter do not think they can change “the system.” The problem is that the State cannot “act” (in a philosophical sense) directly on anything; it must always act through human agents. Unless laws are designed carefully and in such a way as to respect fundamental human rights, it becomes pure chance whether the desired results will be obtained by passing laws — *unless* the passage of laws has been preceded by acts of social justice — which is *our* responsibility, not the State’s.
- **Third Characteristic: Nothing is Impossible.** In social justice there is *never any such thing as helplessness*. As Father Ferree stated, “No problem is ever too big or too complex, no field is ever too vast, for the methods of this social justice. Problems that were agonizing in the past and were simply dodged, even by serious and virtuous people, can now be solved with ease by any school child.”
- **Fourth Characteristic: Eternal Vigilance.** The work of social justice is *never* finished. This is not the same as saying that social justice takes a long time! It refers to what Pius XI called “the radical instability of society.” This means that human

beings change, conditions change, and our institutions — our human response to the task of being what Aristotle called “political animals” — must be restructured and reformed to meet the new conditions. This change is *always* happening, therefore the work of social justice is continuous.

- **Fifth Characteristic: Effectiveness.** Work for the common good — the material cause of social justice — must be effective. You cannot just do something and hope it works, or go about chanting that it *would* work if only people were more (or less) than human. A mere “good intention” that the common good be benefited is simply not good enough.
- **Sixth Characteristic: You Can’t “Take it or Leave It Alone”.** As Father Ferree stated, “Another corollary of this characteristic of social justice (that it is never finished) is that it embraces a *rigid obligation*.” That means that each of us is directly and individually responsible for the common good — and we must organize with others for the common good.

#### CONCLUSION

The “Catholic Focus Project” of Justice University may be the quickest and most effective way to introduce current and future leaders and policymakers to a paradigm that offers the potential of effecting rapid social and economic change in a manner consistent with traditional Aristotelian-Thomist virtues and values. As Pope Francis has pointed out, at this turning point in history, it is essential that effective and sustainable social, economic, and political action be taken immediately. We can no longer pass the task on to future generations.

Fortunately, the task is far from impossible. The unique combination of the principles of economic and social justice found in the Just Third Way and applied in Capital Homesteading offer an opportunity that may never occur again. As Father Ferree closed his pamphlet, *Introduction to Social Justice* (1948) in words that apply equally well to economic justice and to the overall Just Third Way,

None of the elements of this theory are new. Institutions, and institutional action, the idea of the Common Good, the relationship of individual to Common Good — all these things are as old as the human race itself. There is nothing more new in those things than in the school boy’s discovery that what he has been speaking is prose; nor must we ever believe that God made man a two-legged creature, and then waited for Aristotle to make him rational. Moreover, much of the actual application of these principles to practical life is to be found in older writers under the heading “political prudence.”

When all that is admitted, there is still something tremendously new and tremendously important in this work of Pope Pius XI. The power that we have now to change any institution of life, the grip that we have on the social order as a whole, was always there but we did not know it and we did not know how to use it.

Now we know.

That is the difference.