Excerpts from Murnion Lecture:
“The spirit of Vatican II properly understood points to a set of basic orientations that are clearly expressed, not simply in one or two documents of the Council, but that run through them almost from the first to the last. In so doing, it points also to the style in which those orientations are formulated. It is therefore solidly based on “the letter” in the fullest sense, which includes both form and content. If understood in this way, the expression emerges as a key for unlocking the Council’s larger meaning...

“In comparison with other councils, Vatican II is special because its documents, considered as a single corpus, evince such orientations. As a set of issues-under-the-issues or issues-across-the-issues or even leitmotifs, the orientations imbue the Council with a coherence unique in the history of such meetings. In other words, the documents of Vatican II are not a grab-bag of discreet units. When examined not one by one, but as a single though complex corpus, the pervasiveness of certain issues clearly emerges and vindicates the intuition that the Council had a message to deliver to the Church and to the world that was bigger than any document considered in isolation...

“Among such issues was rapprochement, or reconciliation. How was the Church to deal with certain realities it had long considered anthema? Could it and should it seek reconciliation with them? Pope John XXIII placed the problem before the Council on the day it opened, October 11, 1962.
in his remarkable address to the prelates assembled in Saint Peter’s. In it he tried to provide the Council with its orientation. He distanced it from the scolding and suspicious attitude toward “the world” that had pervaded official Catholic thinking for over a century, as if everything modern was bad. The Council, according to the pope, should not simply wring its hands and deplore what was wrong, but engage with the world so as to work with it for a positive outcome. It should, more generally, ‘make use of the medicine of mercy rather than of severity’ in dealing with everyone. It should eschew as far as possible the language of condemnation.

“The shift in form required adopting a vocabulary new to councils, in which the theme of reconciliation, though expressed in a variety of terms, emerged with dominant force. Instead of words consisting primarily in anathemas and verdicts of guilty-as-charged, the Council spoke most characteristically in words of friendship, partnership, kinship, brotherhood, sisterhood, reciprocity, dialogue, collegiality, conscience, and a call to interiority - a call to holiness.

“Such words occur too frequently and too consistently in the documents of the Council to be dismissed as mere window-dressing or casual asides. They imbue Vatican II with a literary and, hence, thematic unity unique among church councils. They express an overall orientation and a coherence in outlook. They are central to understanding the Council.”

2012 Bernardin Award

The 2012 recipient of the Bernardin Award was Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Emeritus Archbishop of Cincinnati and past Chairperson of the CCGI Board. Unfortunately, the Archbishop was not able to be present to receive the award in person. Board members Sr. Doris Gottemoeller, R.S.M., and Sr. Sharon Ewart, R.S.M., presented the Archbishop with the award at a dinner in Cincinnati graciously hosted by Archbishop Dennis Schnurr. The award citation read in part:

“Before becoming the leader of the Cincinnati archdiocese, Bishop Pilarczyk served as an auxiliary bishop with then Archbishop Bernardin, the founder of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative. Since its inception he has been a wise and steady supporter of its goal of enhancing communion in the Church. With deep appreciation for his lifetime of ecclesial leadership, the Catholic Common Ground Initiative is proud to bestow its 2012 Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Award on Archbishop Daniel J. Pilarczyk.”
New Board Members

Over the years, the CCGI Board and the work of the Initiative have been greatly enhanced by the participation of bishops. Consequently, we are pleased to announce that two bishops have accepted an invitation from CCGI Chair Bishop Michael Warfel to become Board members. They are Archbishop Roger L. Schweitz of the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Alaska, and Bishop Anthony B. Taylor of the Diocese of Little Rock, Ark.

Spring Board Meeting

In conjunction with the Murnion Lecture the CCGI Board met in Arlington, Va., to plan future activities for the Initiative. The Board engaged in fruitful discussion about the significance of the recent Bernardin Conference on inter- and intragenerational dialogue.

In light of the experience of the Conference, the Board decided that the theme of inter- and intragenerational dialogue would be integrated into future Initiative projects. The Board reaffirmed its earlier decision that the three-day Bernardin Conference would be held every other year. However, it decided to initiate a one-day conference in the Chicago area on the alternate years. In 2013, the theme of the conference will be “Reconciliation.”

Sr. Sharon Euart, R.S.M., reminded the Board that 2013 would have marked the 50th anniversary of Monsignor Phil Murnion’s ordination. In light of this information, the Board decided that the 2013 Murnion Lecture would take place in New York City in June 2013. In honor of Monsignor Murnion, the topic of the Murnion Lecture will be: “The Future of Parish Life: Finding Common Ground,” presented by Sister Katarina Schuth, O.F.M.

Looking ahead, it was decided that the 2014 Bernardin Conference will be held in California and focus on the role of Catholic institutions in attaining the universal common good.

There also was a discussion about expanding the diversity of perspectives on the Board, as well as the participation of bishops.

Cardinal Bernardin Center

CCGI is fortunate to be housed in the Bernardin Center for Theology and Ministry at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. Without the support of the Center and CTU, the work of the Initiative would not continue to flourish.

One of the Center’s significant efforts is the awarding of Bernardin Scholarships, which provide graduate theological education to those inspired by, and drawn to, the vision of Cardinal Bernardin. The full-tuition scholarships are available to top students from around the world who are committed to preparing for ministry and leadership in service to the Church and the world. Each year scholarships are provided for individuals to pursue advanced studies at CTU. To date, there have been 125 Bernardin Scholars. Now that CCGI is at CTU, these Scholars are able to have first-hand experience with the Initiative.

In Gratitude

The work of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative is dependent on the generosity of its supporters. The Initiative is deeply appreciative of the significant bequest made by founding Board member Thomas E. Donnelly, Esq. The Board joins Tom’s family in giving praise to God for the gift of Tom’s life and service. May he rest in peace.

Help us go green!

Visit www.catholiccommonground.org and sign up to receive this newsletter via e-mail.
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Catholic Common Ground Initiative
of the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Center
at Catholic Theological Union

CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THE CONFESSION OF THE

AS THOSE WHO SERVE AWARD
HONORING CATHOLICS IN THE CHICAGO AREA
WHO EMBODY CARDINAL BERNARDIN’S COMMITMENT TO
"STRENGTHENING THE BONDS OF ECCLESIASTICAL COMMUNION"

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**2012 HONOREE**

**Rev. Daniel P. Coughlin**

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**NOVEMBER 13, 2012**

SHERATON CHICAGO HOTEL 501 E. NORTH WATER STREET, CHICAGO
RECEPTION 5:30-7:30 P.M., AWARD CEREMONY AT 6:15 P.M.