



# INITIATIVE REPORT

## CATHOLIC COMMON GROUND INITIATIVE

September 2011

### CCGI Honors Rev. J. Bryan Hehir with its 2011 Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Award

Each year the Catholic Common Ground Initiative, in conjunction with the Murnion Lecture, presents the Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Award to a Catholic whose life and service reflect the values and mission of the Initiative. This past June, Father J. Bryan Hehir, a priest of the Archdiocese of Boston and one of the most distinguished and effective Catholic voices in the American public square, was the tenth recipient of the Bernardin Award.

Bishop Daniel Pilarczyk, the Initiative's advisory committee chair, presented Father Hehir with the award and shared with those gathered to honor him these remarks:

*"Never one to back away from a thorny issue or a controversial topic, Father Hehir always exemplifies the principles of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative in his framing of issues and his dealings with opposing viewpoints and opinions. He was a trusted advisor of Cardinal Bernardin, not only in the inception of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative, but also in the development of the 1983 Pastoral on War and Peace and the groundbreaking work on the consistent ethic of life.*

*Father Hehir is always first and foremost the priest with a deep pastoral concern for each individual. Prestigious and wide-reaching though his company and accomplishments may be, Father Hehir is a priest whose heart is always in the parish, in the pulpit and at the altar."*



2011 Bernardin Award Recipient Father J. Bryan Hehir with CCGI Director Sheila McLaughlin and CCGI Advisory Board Chair Emeritus, Bishop Daniel Pilarczyk.

Father Hehir, in accepting the award, shared these words:

*"I think the significance of the award is captured perhaps in the answer to two questions. Whence does it come, and to whom is it dedicated? The significance of the award is not the persons who receive it, (rather) it is the way in which the award reminds us all of what the initial animating vision of the Common Ground Initiative was: a vision that was the project of many people, some of them in this hall tonight and associated with it from the beginning. But at the heart of the many people who developed this vision there always stood Joseph Bernardin, his conception of the life of the Church, his conviction that the Church should be in the midst of the world to remind us of the document of Vatican II, The Church in the World. And the award in a sense mandates us to continue the original inspiring vision. The Cardinal was worried about polarization in the life of the Church and he sought to create a center around which the Church could gather. A realist, if there ever was one, Cardinal Bernardin had no illusions that that meant everyone would do the same thing, sing the same song, walk the same road. But he did believe that you could walk more than one road and stay within the capacious framework of the Catholic vision of life."*

## 2011 Murnion Lecture, “Communion Across Generations”

Father Donald Senior, C.P., President of Catholic Theological Union, offered the official welcome to the 2011 Murnion Lecture, which followed the Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Award presentation (see page one). The Murnion Lecture, named in honor of the late Monsignor Philip Murnion, founder and former Director of the National Pastoral Life Center, is an annual event of the Initiative. To begin this year’s lecture, Fr. Senior stated:

*“It has been a tremendous honor for CTU to have CCGI here in Chicago as its home base. It had a wonderful home for many years in New York with Monsignor Phil Murnion, whose lecture we commemorate tonight, and the National Pastoral Life Center. We are grateful for the home that was given to it and for the encouragement to the work of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative. We are proud to have CCGI here at CTU in Chicago, the home of Cardinal Bernardin, and we are committed to keeping faith with the very spirit and purpose of the Initiative.”*



*Sister Patricia Wittberg shares her research and wisdom on generational cultures and their impact on communion in the Church.*

This year’s Murnion Lecture, entitled “Communion Across Generations,” was given by Sister Patricia Wittberg, S.C., noted sociologist and professor at Indiana University. Her presentation described the “cultures” of the various generations and cohorts in the U.S. Catholic Church. The particular focus was on young people, those characterized as Millennials and Generation X and their characteristics and values. In her talk, Sister Patricia described how each generation is its own *culture* – a specific way of looking at the world, a set of unquestioned assumptions, values, ways of talking, material artifacts such as dress, communication devices, etc. We can think of generational cultures as similar to ethnic cultures such as the cultures of African Americans, Latinos, or Appalachian whites. She argued that just as there are workshops to help Church people become more sensitive to the



*Murnion Lecture participants actively engaged in rich dialogue following the evening’s lecture.*



cultures of various *ethnic groups* – to learn their language, to appreciate their values, to look at American society through their eyes – so must the Church make similar efforts to learn about generational cultures.

She is convinced that in order for Catholic Millennials and Gen Xers to lead the Church to new unity and reconciliation that is a source of life for the Church in the future, they need the help of those in the Church who are older, who soon will be passing the leadership on to them. To do this, she suggested that parishes and religious communities arrange regular times and places where the various generations can engage in the kind of story-telling they need in order to understand each other, and that Gen X and Millennial Catholics should be given positions of leadership and responsibility in parishes and religious institutes.

## 2012 Cardinal Bernardin Conference

### *“Ecclesial Communion in Light of Generational Diversity”*

Utilizing the Catholic Common Ground Initiative principles for ecclesial dialogue, the 2012 Cardinal Bernardin Conference will explore what can be done to enhance a vibrant sense of ecclesial communion that celebrates intra and inter generational diversity and unity. The Conference will ask how individually and collectively we can hold together and promote the life and mission of the Church.

March 2-4, 2012  
University of St. Mary of the Lake  
Mundelein, Illinois

## As Those Who Serve Award

On October 5, 2011 the Catholic Common Ground Initiative will give the first “As Those Who Serve” awards to three exemplary Catholics in the Chicago area who embody Cardinal Bernardin’s commitment to strengthening the bonds of ecclesial communion. Out of gratitude for their dedication to this important mission within the Church, the Initiative will recognize and thank **Sr. Mary Brian Costello, R.S.M.**, **Mr. Lou Glunz**, and **Mr. Jimmy Lago** for their unwavering efforts in building communion in the Church.

## Catholic Common Ground Advisory Committee Meeting

On June 11 and 12, 2011 the Catholic Common Ground Advisory Committee met in conjunction with the 2011 Murnion Lecture and Bernardin Award. In addition to electing a new Chair, the Committee discussed the ongoing implementation of its strategic plan, *A Living Witness*. At the present time our work is focused on engaging young people, and exploring methods for ensuring the financial viability and sustainability of the Initiative. The committee decided that the June 2012 Murnion Lecture and Bernardin Award events would take place in Washington, D.C. next June.

### Catholic Common Ground Initiative Advisory Committee

#### CHAIR

**Most Rev. Michael Warfel**  
*Bishop of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings*

#### MEMBERS

**Mr. Kevin Ahern**  
*Boston College  
Chestnut Hill, MA*

**Dr. Lisa Sowle Cahill**  
*Boston College  
Chestnut Hill, MA*

**Mr. Paul Covino**  
*College of the Holy Cross  
Worcester, MA*

**Mr. Peter Denio**  
*National Leadership Roundtable  
on Church Management  
Washington, DC*

**Sr. Kathleen Dolphin, P.B.V.M.**  
*St. Mary's College  
Center for Spirituality  
Notre Dame, IN*

**Sr. Sharon A. Euart, R.S.M.**  
*Canon Law Society of America  
Silver Spring, MD*

**Sr. Doris Gottemoeller, R.S.M.**  
*Catholic Healthcare Partners  
Cincinnati, OH*

**Most Rev. Wilton D. Gregory**  
*Archbishop of Atlanta  
Atlanta, GA*

**Dr. Diana Hayes**  
*Georgetown University  
Washington, DC*

**Mr. Jerome Hickey**  
*Dearborn Partners LLC  
Chicago, IL*

**Sr. Mary Johnson, SNDdeN**  
*Emmanuel College  
Boston, MA*

**Rev. Ronald Lewinski**  
*St. Mary of the Annunciation Church  
Mundelein, IL*

**Most Rev. Oscar H. Lipscomb**  
*Archbishop Emeritus of Mobile  
Mobile, AL*

**Most Rev. Patrick J. McGrath**  
*Bishop of the Diocese of San Jose  
Santa Jose, CA*

**Ms. Sheila McLaughlin**  
*Catholic Theological Union  
Chicago, IL*

**Mr. Brian Murphy**  
*Latz & Wall Consulting  
Chicago, IL*

**Mr. Daniel R. Murray, Esq.**  
*Jenner & Block LLP  
Chicago, IL*

**Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Esq.**  
*Boston, MA*

**Rev. Michael D. Place**  
*Catholic Health Association  
Chicago, IL*

**Most Rev. Ricardo Ramirez, C.S.B.**  
*Bishop of the Diocese of Las Cruces  
Las Cruces, NM*

**Sr. Katarina Schuth, O.S.F.**  
*St. Paul Seminary School  
St. Paul, MN*

**Mr. Gerald Shea**  
*AFL-CIO  
Washington, DC*

**Rev. Msgr. Dennis F. Sheehan**  
*Our Lady Help of Christians  
Newton, MA*

**Rev. Msgr. John Strykowski**  
*St. James Cathedral Basilica  
Brooklyn, NY*

**Ms. Amy Uelmen, Esq.**  
*Fordham Univ. School of Law  
New York, NY*

**Rev. Reginald Whitt, O.P.**  
*University of St. Thomas School of Law  
Minneapolis, MN*

**Most Rev. Gabino Zavala**  
*Auxiliary Bishop of the  
Archdiocese of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA*

## CCGI Advisory Committee Chair Retires, Committee Elects New Chair

Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk, who for eight years provided remarkable service as Chair of the Catholic Common Ground Advisory Committee has retired from that position. The Archbishop was one of the first persons Cardinal Bernardin asked to join the Advisory Committee, when the Initiative was launched. Archbishop Pilarczyk is a nationally prominent churchman, educator, and author of more than a dozen books about Catholic themes. His service to the American church includes terms as vice president and president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Committee presented the Archbishop with a small token of its appreciation for his dedicated leadership and wished him well in his many retirement activities.

Bishop Michael Warfel of the Diocese of Great Falls/Billings, Montana was elected the new chair of the Advisory Committee of the Catholic Common Ground Initiative. Bishop Warfel was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Alaska in 1980, and served as the Bishop of the Diocese of Juneau from 1996-2007. In addition to his work with the CCGI, he is Chair of the Bishop's subcommittee for Catholic Home Missions.



*CCGI new Advisory Chair, Bishop Michael Warfel and Advisory Committee member Lisa Cahill of Boston College share a few laughs during a break of the committee meeting.*

