

What is Catholic Social Innovation?

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ABSTRACT

In 2017, a team at Boston College School of Social Work's Center for Social Innovation conducted research for Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities (FADICA) that sought to create a working definition of Catholic social innovation, catalogue it in action in response to the global refugee and migrant crisis, and complete write-ups on several dozen Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led Catholic social innovations. FADICA released a public report based on the research in early 2018. This paper describes that research and offers a working definition of Catholic social innovation.

The Catholic social innovation research examined socially innovative Catholic-led, and secular programmatic responses to the refugee and migrant crisis in 35 countries with above average flows of migrants when Catholic-led innovations, and socially innovative Catholic sister-led responses globally. The team used dual sampling to identify more than 180 nominations of programs that met ten social innovation criteria and ten Catholic criteria. Social innovation criteria included efficient, effective, new service/organization/product, new structure/paradigm, a new approach to resource development, transforms the problem, is sustainable and enhances social justice, foments social capital and repurposes existing resources. Catholic criteria included human dignity, common good, rights and responsibilities, a preferential option for the marginalized and vulnerable, the dignity of work, solidarity, subsidiarity, care of the earth, integral human development and new ways of welcoming the stranger. After codifying the programs, the team created a working definition of Catholic social innovation. Similarities between responses, combined with parallels between the Catholic and secular social innovation criteria suggested a conceptual overlap between social innovation and Catholic Social Teaching.

INTRODUCTION

In 2017, Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities (FADICA) began a three-year project to define Catholic social innovation and highlight its practice across a number of social issues and Catholic vocational practices. In the project's first year, FADICA sought to derive a working definition of Catholic social innovation from an examination of on-the-ground practices by Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led organizations in response to a specific social issue. FADICA offered its members the opportunity to select the social issue on which it would focus on at the membership's February 2017 annual meeting. The membership chose the refugee and migrant crisis from a list of options. Subsequently, FADICA made a grant to a research team from

the Center for Social Innovation at Boston College to examine Catholic and Catholic sister-led responses to the global refugee and migrant crisis, and to create a working definition of Catholic social innovation that could be tested and refined in later years, and profile several dozen projects representing Catholic social innovation for FADICA to highlight with its membership and broader audiences. This project was called “Unleashing the Power of Catholic Social Innovation for Refugees and Migrants.” Research and a working definition of Catholic social innovation were conducted over the summer of 2017. FADICA released a public report based on the research in early 2018.¹ This paper describes that research and its findings and further advances the working definition of Catholic social innovation.

METHODOLOGY

To conduct the research and create an initial, working definition of Catholic social innovation, the research team had to begin with a) a representative definition of social innovation itself; b) a set of criteria it would use to signify what was “Catholic” work; and c) some method for narrowing its focus across the overwhelming scope of the refugee and migrant crisis. The time available for the research phase was fewer than four months, and with more than 65 million refugees and migrants flowing around the globe, narrowing the scope was necessary (2).² From there, the team solicited nominations for socially innovative, Catholic responses to the refugee and migrant crisis in relevant countries from practitioners around the globe. After coding the results using the definitions described in this section, the team produced a summary report, including the working definition of Catholic social innovation, key trends in the global refugee and migrant crisis based on interviews conducted, and featured descriptions of approximately 60 Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led social innovations for FADICA’s use.

Responses to the Refugee and Migrant Crisis

The goal of this project was to derive a working definition of Catholic social innovation from observations about the Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led response to the global refugee and migrant crisis. With four months to gather data on and analyze the responses to the crisis, it became

¹ FADICA. *Catholic Social Innovation in Today’s Global Refugee Crisis*. Washington, DC: FADICA, 2018. https://www.fadica.org/images/resources/FADICA_Exec_Sum_CSI_Refugee_Migration_%204_27_18.pdf

² United Nations High Commission on Refugees. *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015*. Geneva: UNHCR, 2015. <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7>

imperative to narrow the scope of the work. The research team chose to focus on refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and migrants. In the first three cases, the team used the definitions offered by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR).³ A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee their country because of persecution, war, or violence and has been found to have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. An asylum seeker is someone who flees their country and seeks sanctuary in another by applying for asylum, or the right to be recognized as a refugee and receive legal protection and material assistance. An internally displaced person (IDP) has been forced to flee their home for the same reason as a refugee, but remains in their own country and has not crossed an international border. IDPs are not protected by international law and are ineligible to receive many types of aid. The UNHCR defines a migrant as one who has chosen to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work or for other reasons. It is worth noting, however, that the International Organization on Migration (IOM), defines a migrant more broadly as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of the person's legal status, whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary, what the causes for the movement are, or what the length of the stay is.⁴

The team narrowed the scope of the research by identifying 32 countries which, using 2015 data from UNHCR, experienced higher than average flows of the “total population of concern,” and limited its data collection about Catholic-led responses to these countries. They included Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, USA, Tanzania, and Yemen. By request of FADICA, however, the team collected data on Catholic sister-led

³ UNHCR, *Global Trends*.

⁴ International Organization for Migration. “Key Migration Terms.” (n.d.) <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

responses from any country to which they were referred in interviews or via survey.

After identifying 463 organizations responding to the refugee and migrant crisis globally, the team used dual sampling to identify 190 programs nominated by respondents as being socially innovative and Catholic in nature or design. The team used a survey instrument to invite nominations from organizations operating in single, specific countries included within the boundaries established above. The team also conducted interviews with representatives from multi-national and multi-continental organizations to solicit further nominations. It was from these 190 nominations that the team created its working definition of Catholic social innovation.

Defining terms

Social Innovation

The dual sampling used interviews and surveys to invite nominations of Catholic-led, Catholic sister-led, or Catholic-like social innovations in response to the refugee and migrant crisis. The team had to offer definitions and criteria for both “social innovation” and “Catholic” in order to invite nominations via survey and interview of Catholic-led, Catholic sister-led, or Catholic-like social innovations in response to the global refugee and migrant crisis. For social innovation, the researchers used a definition from the Boston College Center for Social Innovation. The center has developed its understanding of social innovation over eight years and has published a number of books and peer-reviewed articles based on that definition.

Social innovation is a new response to social problems—problems that have been with us for some time but have been difficult to address effectively and/or efficiently. The response might take the form of a new service, organization, product, structure, paradigm or approach to resource development. It should have the potential to transform the problem, the possibility of being sustainable, and the promise of enhancing social justice.⁵

Using this definition, the project began by looking for nominations of programs that contained up to eight social innovation characteristics in Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led responses to the refugee and migrant crisis: efficient, effective, new

⁵ Stephanie Berzin and Tiziana C. Dearing. “Social Innovation at BC and SSW.” Presentation, Boston College Alumni Association, Chestnut Hill, MA, April 5, 2016

service/organization/product, new structure/paradigm, new approach to resource development, transform the problem, sustainable and enhances social justice. As the team collected data, it looked for emerging patterns of additional criteria that this definition might have missed, while continuing to search the social innovation literature for additional characteristics.

Ultimately, the team identified two additional characteristics to consider, one from the nominated programs themselves, and one from additional social innovation literature. First, as the team began to examine innovations being nominated through surveys and interviews, an additional theme appeared to emerge. Rather than organizations identifying new ways to raise resources a characteristic already included in the definition some organizations were repurposing existing resources to address new problems. For example, a group of Catholic nuns in Pennsylvania moved out of residential property to make it available as transitional housing during the resettlement process. This art of repurposing seemed to happen frequently and allowed organizations to enact responses quickly. Therefore, the team added, “repurposes existing resources to solve a new problem.” In addition, the team identified works by Osburg and Schmidpeter and TEPsIE noting a “social capital approach towards social innovation”.⁶ Some nominated programs did seem to rely on the development of social capital as part of the intervention. Therefore, the team added “foments or harnesses the power of social capital” to its social innovation criteria.

“Catholic”

For the Catholic dimension of the investigation, the research team worked with the leadership and staff at FADICA to identify the criteria for what a “Catholic” intervention meant for purposes of this project. The team sought programs developed and run by Catholic or sister-led institutions. “Catholic-led” was insufficient as a definition, however, especially since at the beginning of the project the team also sought nominations for programs from non-Catholic individuals and institutions, and programs or interventions consistent with Catholic values, even if not run by Catholic organizations. Further, because the ultimate goal was, in part, to create a working

⁶ Thomas Osburg and René Schmidpeter. *Social Innovation: Solutions for a Sustainable Future*. Heidelberg: Springer, 2013. p 65

definition of Catholic social innovation, it was important to establish a desired set of Catholic characteristics from the beginning. Initially, the team identified eight characteristics derived from Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic values, including human dignity, common good, rights and responsibilities, a preferential option for the marginalized and vulnerable, the dignity of work, solidarity, subsidiarity and care of the earth. The team also allowed survey and interview respondents to include “other” and explain.

The team further offered brief explanations for each term, both to ensure common use among respondents, and to help explain the concepts to non-Catholic responders. Human dignity refers to respect for and promotion of the dignity of every human person. The common good indicates a commitment to preserving and promoting the common good. Rights and responsibilities include promotion of both as citizens of the human community. The preferential option includes demonstrating preference with and for the marginalized and vulnerable. With dignity of work, the team sought interventions that promote the inherent dignity of work and the rights of workers. Solidarity included respecting interdependence and interconnectedness as human brothers and sisters. Lastly, subsidiarity was defined as keeping resources and solutions as local as possible, with those experiencing the problem.

For the interviews, the research team focused on Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led entities that covered more than one country or continent. Surveys were used for organizations operating in a single country. As the interviews progressed, representatives of several respected Catholic organizations raised two additional Catholic characteristics that they felt were important to the Catholic response to the refugee and migrant crisis. The first was “authentic” or “integral” human development. The second was welcoming the stranger. Integral human development, sometimes also referred to as “authentic,” was first advanced 50 years ago by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*. Integral human development calls for the the development of the whole person, emphasizing participation and self-determination, and economic development for individuals and communities that

recognize the need for social development as well.⁷ The concept of integral human development arguably runs in close parallel to the idea of transforming the problem, or creating a new paradigm, both represented in the social innovation side of the definition. Interviewees from organizations that value integral human development were taking whole-problem, whole-community, person-centered approaches that seek to integrate local capacities - economic, human, social, cultural - with organizational resources and talents. It made sense to name it explicitly.

Welcoming the stranger is a fundamental Catholic principle - harkening to the story of the birth of Jesus in a manger because there was no room at the inn. The Church has applied it explicitly to immigrants and refugees. In 2000, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops produced *Welcoming the stranger among us: Unity in diversity*, which cited the practice specifically as part of being an “immigrant church.”⁸ One interviewee referred to this practice as “walking with the unseen among us.” (Anonymous, personal communication, 2017). This tradition of welcoming the stranger is, in fact, so fundamental to the Catholic Church’s understanding of immigration and migration that the research team wondered if perhaps it would have no additional value in differentiating innovative Catholic responses to the crisis. Ultimately, however, the team determined that a narrower focus, one centered on some new way of welcoming the stranger, or on some more radical form of hospitality such as the nuns who moved a sister out of her home, could be helpful. Ultimately, then, the team added both “incorporates integral human development” and an “emphasis on hospitality or other new ways of welcoming the stranger,” to what might constitute a Catholic response.

Coding Nominated Programs against the Criteria

The research team coded each nominated program against each social innovation and Catholic criterion using a binary approach - “1” if the criterion was present, “0” if not. To code nominated programs against both the Catholic and the social innovation criteria used, the team had to work with three sources of data: survey results, interview results, and programs identified through

⁷ Edgardo Bucciarelli, Nicola Mattosco, and Tony E. Persico. “The Christian Ethics of Socio-Economic Development Promoted by the Catholic Social Teaching.” In *The Journal of Philosophical Economics* 1 (2011): p.104 (90-119).

⁸ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. “Welcoming the Stranger among Us: Unity in Diversity.”

written materials throughout the research. It was necessary to treat all three equally, but to rate them in a way that took advantage of the more robust information usually available through interviews or detailed written documentation. Given the subjectivity in the definitions of the criteria, it also was important to employ multiple perspectives in rating each program. Lastly, the rating process had to account for the fact that a) the research team added two social innovation and two Catholic criteria that did not appear on the survey; and b) survey respondents were limited to choosing up to four of the Catholic criteria when making their nominations, while interviewees sometimes offered more in their free-flowing discussions.

The team worked in two groups. Group One worked with programs identified through interviews and written materials. Group Two worked with programs identified through the surveys. Each group coded its programs in three rounds. In the first round, each group coded all projects across the three data sets using only the criteria originally listed in the survey that was distributed to in-country organizations. For the surveys, respondents did that coding themselves, so Group Two had no additional work to do. Note that the survey also capped the number of selections under Catholic values at four. Therefore, in the first round, Group One coded each program identified through interviews or written materials against all the social innovation criteria offered in the survey and up to four of the Catholic criteria. Where an interviewee expressed an opinion directly about which criteria applied to the program, those were chosen first. Then, Group One conducted a second round of coding in which they selected up to two additional Catholic criteria they felt applied based on additional information available. Finally, in round three, both teams coded each program against the four additional Catholic and social innovation criteria identified. With the coding work done, the groups calculated both a Catholic and a social innovation summary rating for each program.

Group Two worked with only 59 programs via the surveys and used discretion in applying only four criteria (see multi-round method described below). Therefore, they did all three rounds of rating in a single meeting and achieved a unified rating for each program. Group One, however, worked with more than 120 programs and had to rate across all twenty final criteria. Therefore, reconciliation happened in two stages. First, the team individually identified all programs for which the difference in their Catholic or social innovation rating

was greater than a score of 2. The team met and reconciled ratings for those programs until the difference between their separate ratings was 2 or less. Then, the team calculated the average score for all its programs based on both sets of ratings and used the total average score as the final, reconciled rating for each program.

FINDINGS

What Is Catholic Social Innovation?

In its report to FADICA, the research team offered a two-part working definition of Catholic social innovation.

Catholic Social Innovation is the engagement in social innovation as a result of being motivated by Catholic social justice values, and the act of employing programmatic choices that specifically embody those values.

Catholic Social Innovation in action uses methods of developing more effective approaches to the refugee and migrant crisis that are welcoming, demonstrate good stewardship, strengthen the bonds between human brothers and sisters, empower the poor and vulnerable - including giving them dignified work - and/or promote authentic human flourishing, while seeking to eliminate the root causes of the problem.

FADICA further simplified that definition in its report to “Catholic Social Innovation is the engagement in social innovation as a result of being motivated by the Catholic Social Tradition and values, and the act of employing programmatic choices that specifically embody those values” (2)⁹ In the original definition offered, part one frames Catholic social innovation as the practice of social innovation as animated by Catholic values. Part two is more prescriptive, suggesting specific traits of Catholic social innovation desirable in Catholic social innovation responses to the refugee and migrant crisis.

While the definition is simple, defining Catholic social innovation is important. First, it establishes that social innovation can be properly located in the realm of Catholic activities. The Catholic faith is more than 2000 years old. While it has evolved - as evidenced by the fact that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, for example, weren’t articulated until nearly 2000 years had passed - the faith and its institutions often are associated with age and

⁹ FADICA, *Catholic Social Innovation in Today’s Global Refugee Crisis*, 2.

with slow-moving change.

On the other hand, historically, definitions of social innovation relied heavily on the concept of “newness” (9).¹⁰ It is arguable that, for a significant period, social innovation was nearly synonymous with the concept of the “startup” (8).¹¹ Offering a legitimate definition of Catholic social innovation and then illustrating its existence with case examples stretches perceptions of the Catholic faith in action to include innovation. It helps underscore a speed of response, creativity, and adaptability of Catholic action that run counter to perceptions of calcification, and tradition as the highest order value. Locating Catholic action within the boundaries of Catholic social innovation can broaden the perception of Catholic work and its value for the better, and invites further investigation of Catholic programming from a social change perspective. Given the size and scope of Catholic social services in America, inviting and creating the opportunity to consider Catholic interventions as innovative, and studying them for what they might offer secular or other faith-based practitioners improves field-level learning and enhances the possibility that truly new, impactful, efficient or revolutionary approaches are replicated.

Second, considering Catholic social innovation specifically offers a lens into how Catholic values might animate Catholic responses to a particular kind of crisis. If the Catholic faith tradition particularly believes that “welcoming the stranger” is a moral imperative in response to migration, for example, or that the whole person must be considered when responding to any smaller need of that whole person, then Catholic responses to the global refugee and migrant crisis, including the most innovative of them, might embody such Catholic values. Table 1 demonstrates the average rating of all Catholic versus secular programs against the Catholic criteria used in the study, broken out by nomination source. Table 2 compares the average rating of all Catholic versus secular programs against the social

¹⁰ Julie Caulier-Grice, Anna Davies, Robert Patrick, and Will Norman. *Defining Social Innovation*. Brussels: The Young Foundation, 2012. <https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/TEPSIE.D1.1.Report.DefiningSocialInnovation.Part-1-defining-social-innovation.pdf>

¹¹ Stephanie Berzin and Humberto Camarena. *Innovation from Within: Redefining How Nonprofits Solve Problems*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

innovation criteria used in the study, broken out by source.

Table 1. Average Rating against Catholic Criteria by Nomination Source – Catholic v. Secular

		Human Dignity	Comm. Good	Rights/ Resp.	Pref. Option	Dignity of Work	Solidarity	Subsidiarity	Care of Earth	Int. Human Dvpt.	Welcome Stranger
All Catholic											
	<i>Interview /print</i>	0.64	0.12	0.16	0.40	0.17	0.35	0.23	0.01	0.07	0.15
	<i>Survey</i>	0.93	0.5	0.48	0.59	0.13	0.74	0.33	0.04	0.43	0.22
Secular											
	<i>Interview /print</i>	0.67	0.00	0.33	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<i>Survey</i>	0.71	0.36	0.43	0.29	0.29	0.43	0.36	0.14	0.64	0.00

Table 2. Average Rating against SI Criteria by Nomination Source - Catholic v. Secular

		Efficient	Effective	New Service	New Paradigm	New Rsrc Dvpt.	Trans-forms Problem	Sustain-able	Enhances Social Justice	Foments Social Capital	Re-purposes Rsracs
All Catholic											
	<i>Intervie w/print</i>	0.28	0.35	0.19	0.22	0.05	0.20	0.27	0.89	0.19	0.05
	<i>Survey</i>	0.48	0.72	0.37	0.5	0.3	0.43	0.5	0.78	0.46	0.09
Secular											
	<i>Intervie w/print</i>	0.33	0.67	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.33	1.00	0.00	0.00
	<i>Survey</i>	0.5	0.71	0.43	0.36	0.43	0.43	0.57	0.64	0.5	0.07

In general, survey respondents were more generous in attributing any of the criteria to their nominees than the coding teams were in combination with their interviewees. Catholic-led programs scored somewhat higher across all nomination sources on the Catholic criteria of the common good, preferential option for the marginalized and vulnerable, solidarity, and welcoming the stranger. Secular programs did not score higher on any of the Catholic criteria. Secular programs scored somewhat higher across all nomination sources on the social innovation criteria of efficient, new service and sustainable. Catholic-led programs scored somewhat higher across all nomination sources on the social innovation criteria of the new paradigm and repurposed existing resources. This preliminarily suggests that Catholic social

innovations in response to the refugee and migrant crisis are more animated by Catholic values than secular responses to the same crisis. Additional analysis is necessary, however. It is also necessary to acknowledge that while not all members of the research team were themselves Catholic, the team did pursue the project with a Catholic lens, which could have led to a more “Catholic” view of all programs, secular, Catholic-led and Catholic sister-led.

Catholic Social Innovation in Action

The programmatic responses nominated by respondents represent a truly wide range of innovations - from social enterprises to volunteer-led peer mentoring programs, to parishes actively helping resettle families, to NGOs offering integrated centers where children receive child care or school readiness support in situ while adults receive their own skills development.

They include nuns who are converting one of their own homes into a shelter and an international NGO that has teamed up with a for-profit company to train refugees to work as home health aids and then place them in countries in Europe. They also include college students serving as mentors to migrant youth, and a puppet company teaming up with an NGO to help children deal with the distress caused by displacement. Models for economic self-sufficiency surfaced from Chad to Poland to Louisville, KY, and across the continents, the innovations touch every stage of responding to and supporting the needs of refugees and migrants. The following are examples of these innovations.

Little Ripples

Serving Chad, Little Ripples is a partnership between Jesuit Refugee Services and i-ACT, an NGO that works with those affected by mass atrocities. Little Ripples focuses on a critical gap in early childhood education for refugee children. The program uses a participatory, train-the-trainer approach to build the capacity of refugee women to serve as teachers and leaders in providing quality preschool education. The curriculum, created and tested by experts in early childhood development and trauma recovery, is structured around mindfulness and adapted by the refugee teachers and infused with their cultural songs, stories, experiences, and traditions. The curriculum’s modules emphasize social-emotional learning, peacebuilding, language and mathematics literacy, and physical development of the child. Little Ripples has a school as well as in-home education centers which will eventually become independent organizations run by the

community. Little Ripples embodies some CST principles, including subsidiarity and the dignity of work – local refugee women are trained to provide the services themselves, the curriculum is adapted by the community itself, and people’s homes are utilized as learning centers. Integral human development is also key, as the program recognizes that each child’s development is multifaceted and thus tailors the curriculum to include social-emotional learning, physical development, and trauma recovery.

Resettlement Support Center (RSC)

RSC is a program of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and operates in Turkey and Lebanon. ICMC is one of only four non-governmental organizations (NGOs) selected by the U.S. Government to operate RSCs abroad. While an RSC is not necessarily unique in itself, ICMC has the only RSC in which the US government has completely contracted the facilitation of U.S. entry to an NGO. Thus, they represent a new paradigm in resettlement for the US Government. ICMC’s RSC prepares the cases of refugees by conducting prescreening interviews, including screening for vulnerable cases in need of special attention and gathering biographic data and key documents and accounts of refugees concerning their experience of persecution, threats on their lives and other protection needs. If the U.S. Government approves the resettlement application, the RSC assists to complete the additional requirements for admission and provides a range of other services linked with resettlement. ICMC’s RSC demonstrates some CST principles, including a preferential option for the most vulnerable refugee populations - those facing severe protection risks and unable to return to their countries of origin or to be integrated into their countries of first asylum. Further, the cultural orientation classes specifically are in line with welcoming the stranger, as they are designed to inform refugees about American society as well as facilitate their integration within their new communities.

Good Shepherd Sisters Projects for Peace

The Good Shepherd Sisters in Lebanon work in several locations to provide services that cultivate peaceful integration of migrants into Lebanese society. They are working to transform the problem of violence and lack of cohesion in Lebanon by cultivating peace in a variety of ways, with a focus on youth and family systems. The significant influx of refugees, first from Iraq and then Syria has

threatened social cohesion in Lebanon, and tensions have developed from the pressures placed on already fragile public systems. The Good Shepherd project has situated its services in several areas of tension and conflict. The services reflect integral human development; they include educational and socio-cultural activities, extra-curricular activities such as theater and sports, psychological support for children, youth and families, a social center that improves social cohesion, a comprehensive health care center, and a shelter offering holistic care for girls who have been rejected, victims of abuse, trafficking or exploitation. This project also honors the CST principle of human dignity, seeking a society capable of peaceful integration and attentive to the inherent dignity of natives and migrants alike. The project aims to create conditions that make peaceful cohesion and the gospel value of welcoming the stranger a real possibility.

Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees (POWR)

POWR, a program of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, provides funding to parishes to strengthen their ability to recruit and utilize volunteers in support of newly-arrived refugees. Activities commonly include support in navigating U.S. systems, English language learning, transportation, employment mentoring, community outreach, legal support, cash, and in-kind fundraising and hospitality. Each parish plans and implements programs locally. POWR also collaborates with partners such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), who have donated significantly to provide furniture, funding, and other necessities. Limited by the ability to resettle families within 100 miles of an authorized resettlement site, POWR has also gained approval from the US Department of State to implement Remote Placement by partnering with 501(c)3 organizations in the remote resettlement area. Remote Placement permits resettlement of refugees with families already living in the country, even when they are beyond the 100-mile radius of the nearest resettlement office. POWR embraces CST, especially subsidiarity and solidarity, which are at its core. It demonstrates subsidiarity through bringing solutions and resources down to the local parish level. As more parishioners become actively involved in welcoming and assisting the stranger in local communities, the program also builds solidarity.

La Posada Providencia (LPP)

A project of the Sisters of Divine Providence in Texas, LPP provides a safe and nurturing shelter to immigrants, asylum seekers and asylees who have come to the United States for safety and a better life. Clients live together in community with assigned chores and shared meals. In addition to safe shelter, food, and clothing, clients receive support through an individualized case management process that provides local transportation to needed services, access to communication technologies, assistance with school enrollment for children, emotional support, and ESL and life-skills education. Additionally, clients gain sustainable living skills through work in an organic garden and practice with methods used for water conservation, composting and recycling. Imbued with Catholic principles, LPP's presence at the South Texas border reminds all who encounter its services of the importance of respecting our common humanity, practicing care of the earth, and the need to help the poor and vulnerable. LPP also strives to welcome the stranger with compassion and respect for each person's human dignity, while embracing the principle of integral human development through its diversity of services.

Common Table and Common Earth Gardens

Catholic Charities of Louisville, KY has founded two interrelated programs. Common Earth Gardens empowers and improves the quality of life for refugee families and Louisville communities through agricultural opportunities. Common Table is a social enterprise that provides a culinary arts program to train refugees, former inmates, and other residents in need of job assistance. Common Earth Gardens supports self-reliance by facilitating access to land, culturally-appropriate training, community education, technical assistance, and opportunities for supplemental income for refugees. Common Table's culinary arts program trains participants in basic kitchen and food safety skills as well as resume writing tips and job placement assistance. Participants receive 160 food training hours over eight weeks in a certified commercial kitchen. Upon completion of the program, participants receive the ServSafe food safety certification. These two programs serve a number of marginalized populations, integrating refugees and migrants with other communities of people in need. These programs reflect multiple CST principles, starting with a clear preferential option for the poor. They reflect the principle of caring for the earth by keeping resources local and sustainable, which also preserves resources for the common good. At

the same time, they practice subsidiarity through the focus on self-reliance, affirm the dignity of work by providing culinary and agricultural training to participants, and affirm the skills and cultural values that refugees bring with them to the United States.

SOCIAL INNOVATION AS A CATHOLIC CONCEPT

While it is helpful to discussions both of social innovation and of Catholic social action to define Catholic social innovation essentially as social innovation done by Catholics, in Catholic ways, because they are Catholic, this paper asserts a deeper connection between the general practice of social innovation and Catholic social innovation. At some level, while certainly not intentionally so, social innovation itself arguably is inherently Catholic. This is demonstrated both through the striking parallels between Catholic social values and core principles of social innovation, and because the body of work known as Catholic Social Teaching contributed to 20th and early 21st century notions of what the “social” in social innovation means.

First, return to Tables 1 and 2 and consider the similarity demonstrated between Catholic and secular responses on social innovation criteria like enhances social justice, transforms the problem, and effective. These similarities suggest that both secular and Catholic-led organizations share core values when it comes to pursuing social innovations in response to complex social problems or crises. Indeed, one can draw striking parallels between widely accepted characteristics of social innovation the Catholic social values used in this study. Table 3 highlights the parallels.

Table 3. Parallels between Social Innovation Characteristics and Catholic Social Values Used in the Study

Social Innovation Characteristic	Catholic Social Value	Parallel Explained
Efficiency	Care of the earth Rights & responsibilities Common good	The basic concept of efficiency is to use the fewest units of a resource necessary to achieve positive results. This complements the Catholic concept that the earth’s goods are precious, that therefore people are accountable to treat them as such, and they should be used for collective benefit (23). ¹²
Effectiveness	Human dignity	Stewards of resources must use them effectively as well as

¹² Pope Francis. *Laudato Si*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015.

	Care of the earth Rights and responsibilities	efficiently. Maximum impact is required out of respect for the needs and dignity of those experiencing the problem as well as those investing in its solution. Also, one manifestation of care of the earth is a commitment to good stewardship. Efficacy - like the deployment of energy or resources to maximum possible effect -- arguably is the definition of good stewardship. It also is a responsibility one assumes when asking others to put their well-being in one's hands (109). ¹³
Transforms the problem	Integral human development	Transformation of the problem, at its simplest level, is the desire to treat the cause, not just the symptom. Increasingly, the social innovation measures impact as not only alleviating symptoms but also solving the root problem (vii-viii). ¹⁴ Integral human development manifests a desire to enhance the whole person and contribute to authentic human flourishing, rather than just healing a symptom. Therefore, the pursuit of one requires the pursuit of the other.
Foments social capital	Solidarity Common good	Social capital is increasingly understood as a core strategy for vital communities and human flourishing, as it helps people form bonds that allow them to solve problems together and pursue common cause and their collective well-being. As such, it recognizes the inherent solidarity among human beings and seeks to create the conditions for the common good to exist.
Repurposes existing resources	Care of the earth Rights and responsibilities	Repurposing of existing resources to a new problem not only requires creativity but also manifests a commitment to maximize the use of a given resource. That, in turn, represents good stewardship of the earth's resources and understanding of the responsibilities to each other that good stewardship implies.
Enhances social justice	All	The characteristics of "social" innovation are a secular attempt to address core social justice issues, just as the body of Catholic Social Teaching often provides the secular world with an understanding of what social justice is, the challenges to it, and how, morally, to respond to those challenges (1). ¹⁵

¹³ Edgardo Bucciarelli, Nicola Mattoscio, and Tony E. Persico, "The Christian Ethics of Socio-Economic Development Promoted by the Catholic Social Teaching."

¹⁴ Mary Cronin and Tiziana C. Dearing. *Managing for Social Impact: Innovations in Responsible Enterprise*. Switzerland: Springer, 2017.

¹⁵ Mary Ann Brenden. "Social Work for Social Justice: Strengthening Social Work Practice through the Integration of Catholic Social Teaching." Lecture at NACSW Convention, Philadelphia, PA, October, 2006. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.551.658&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Further, drawing these parallels is not unprecedented. Scholars in fields ranging from nursing to social work, to counseling psychology have done so, examining the social justice values embedded in their professional codes of ethics (794-795)¹⁶ and their relationship to Catholic and Christian principles of social justice (1,3,952).^{17 18 19} It is worth noting one particular parallel that is missing between the characteristics of social innovation and Catholic social values used in this research, however. As noted earlier, “newness” has long been a fundamental, if not necessary component of social innovation and its precursor concepts such as social entrepreneurship. It is not, however, inherent in the Catholic social values used, nor in the body of Catholic Social Teaching. The research team noted during the project that those nominating Catholic social innovations did not seem specifically to prioritize newness as a criterion for nomination. Secular programs scored somewhat higher on the social innovation criterion of new service.

Second, just as the characteristics of social innovation parallel Catholic social values, the practice of social innovation looks similar in secular and Catholic contexts. The heart of this parallel lies in a) the influence of Catholic Social Teaching on broader concepts of social justice; and b) the legacy of Catholic institutions and approaches on the larger nonprofit social and human services world. Across various definitions of social innovation, the “social” generally refers to the pursuit of solutions to various social challenges or social problems - often complex and broad in scale, such as environmental degradation, poverty, inequality, poor health, etc. (5).²⁰ Our collective understanding of social challenges or social problems is rooted in our beliefs about why they are problems, and what a preferable, or just, alternative would be. That is social justice.

Social justice is rooted in religious tradition. Jesuit philosopher Luigi Taparelli

¹⁶ Lisa Goodman, Belle Liang, Janet Helms, Rachel Latta, Elizabeth Sparks, and Sarah Weintraub. “Training Counseling Psychologists as Social Justice Agents: Feminist and Multicultural Principles in Action.” In *The Counseling Psychologist* 32, no. 6 (November 2004): 793-837.

¹⁷ Brenden, 3.

¹⁸ Ruth Osuch, “Catholic Social Teachings and Social Work Values,” 1.

¹⁹ Kelly Buettner-Schmidt and Marie L. Lobo, “Social Justice: A Concept Analysis,” *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 68, no. 4 (April 2012).

²⁰ Caulier-Grice, Davies, Patrick, and Norman, *Defining Social Innovation*.

d’Azeglio is credited with first using the term in 1843, as a conceptual extension of other legal conceptions of justice, such as “commutative” or “criminal” (98,952).^{21 22} While Christian scholars understand the core concepts of social justice, such as “equity, access, participation and harmony,” to be Biblical, Roman Catholic doctrine solidified a set of social values in the 20th Century specifically in answer to massive economic and social changes in global society and to speak to that broader society (3).²³ This body of work is called Catholic Social Teaching (CST). CST and social justice are not the same thing. Those writing about social justice often decry that it either has no specific definition (950, 332)^{24 25} or many (795).²⁶ There is no single source text to which a broad range of scholars, practitioners, and members of different faith traditions can turn. While in the Catholic tradition - and among debating Catholic scholars - CST and social justice are not synonymous, the well-codified body of writings that make up CST has become a single substitute text for a broader public seeking guidance on the ethics or moral calling of social justice (2,9,99).^{27 28 29} According to the Minnesota Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, for example, “CST is the most systematic and thorough attempt by religious faith to articulate its positions on social policy..it provides a first lens look at nearly every social justice issue and seriously influences all our positions” (2).³⁰ Therefore, the well-articulated, clearly codified and often discussed the body of work

²¹ Thomas Patrick Burke, “The Origins of Social Justice: Taparelli d’Azeglio,” *Modern Age* 52, no. 2 (Spring 2010).

²² Buettner-Schmidt and Lobo, “Social Justice: A Concept Analysis.”

²³ Brenden, “Social Work for Social Justice: Strengthening Social Work Practice through the Integration of Catholic Social Teaching.”

²⁴ Beuttner-Schmidt and Lobo, “Social Justice: A Concept Analysis.”

²⁵ Robert John Araujo, “The Meaning of Social Justice in Catholic Thought,” (lecture, Loyola University of Chicago School of Law, Chicago, IL, November 10, 2011).

<https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/law/students/publications/llj/pdfs/araujo.pdf>.

²⁶ Goodman, Liang, Helms, Latta, Sparks, and Weintraub, “Training Counseling Psychologists as Social Justice Agents: Feminist and Multicultural Principles in Action.”

²⁷ Brenden, “Social Work for Social Justice: Strengthening Social Work Practice through the Integration of Catholic Social Teaching.”

²⁸ Michael Novak, *Social Justice: Not What You Think It Is*. Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, (June 10, 2009).

²⁹ Burke, Thomas Patrick. “The Origins of Social Justice: Taparelli d’Azeglio.” In *Modern Age* 52, no. 2 (Spring 2010): 97-106.

³⁰ Brenden, “Social Work for Social Justice: Strengthening Social Work Practice through the Integration of Catholic Social Teaching.”

known as CST has bled into broader conceptions of social justice.

Other than government, the nonprofit sector is most directly charged with and associated with seeking to solve complex social challenges, serving almost as a governmental supplement (543).³¹ The nonprofit or nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector has been a primary source of responses to significant social problems, social challenges, impoverishment, and marginalization for well more than 150 years. This sector also makes up a substantial portion of the social innovation responses to social problems happening today, and the social entrepreneur – a term that, while it has a specific meaning, is often used broadly to define anyone engaged in social innovation – is motivated to social change action by values (17).³² Catholic-led organizations have long been among those at the forefront of both local and global nonprofit work. In the United States, Catholic nuns helped establish the networks of schools, hospitals, and orphanages and programs for the poor that helped form our social service sector (1-2).³³ Churches and religious communities have always ministered to the poor through the Christian principle of charity. Even non-Catholic founders in health and human services such as Jane Addams instigated a dialog with Catholicism around issues of social action and the common good (95).³⁴ Today, health and human service organizations make up nearly 50% of that sector (4-5).³⁵ The codes of ethics of some of the most central professions in health and human services challenge practitioners specifically to pursue social justice as part of their work, and, as noted above, both openly embrace concepts of social justice in their professional codes or often mirror CST in that content (952, 5-6).^{36 37}

NGOs such as humanitarian organizations and nonprofits, especially human services, grew exponentially right around the time of World War II. Humanitarian organizations, for

³¹ Judith Saidel, “Resource Interdependence: The Relationship between State Agencies and Nonprofit Organizations,” *Public Administration Review* 51, no. 6 (1991).

³² Kristen Pue, Christian Vandergeest, and Dan Breznitz, *Toward a Theory of Social Innovation*. Toronto: Innovation Policy Lab, University of Toronto, 2016.

³³ John Fialka, *Sisters: Catholic Nuns and the Making of America*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2013.

³⁴ Brandon Harnish, “Jane Addams’s Social Gospel Synthesis and the Catholic Response,” *The Independent Review* 16, no. 6 (November 2004).

³⁵ Jeffrey Berry and David Arons, *A Voice for Nonprofits*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2005.

³⁶ Buettner-Schmidt and Lobo, “Social Justice: A Concept Analysis.”

³⁷ Osuch, “Catholic Social Teachings and Social Work Values.”

example, exploded with the formation of the United Nations, while the Great Society era saw growth in nonprofits in the United States. While in the 19th-century nonprofit organizations had been favored as conservative alternatives to governmental intervention, governmental approaches post New Deal and well through the Great Society favored progressive perspectives, which bled over into nonprofits as government funding surpassed private giving as the key source of nonprofit revenue (7).³⁸ CST and Catholic social values in the 20th century had a noticeable impact on the Progressive agenda (2-3).³⁹ It has also been argued that the reverse was true - a Progressive agenda began to shape interpretations of CST (3).⁴⁰ Regardless of this chicken and egg dispute, the link between CST political philosophies and policies influencing humanitarian and human service work exists.

It is reasonable to argue, therefore, that Catholic conceptions of just outcomes, of appropriate social change, of what the common good is, would have and still do influence how the nonprofit and NGO sector perceives both what a social problem is and what a positive outcome resolving that problem looks like. One might argue that a more accurate statement would substitute the word “Christian” for the word Catholic. Indeed, while a thorough search did not surface work of substance on Catholic social innovation at the start of the project, it did surface a body of work on Christian social innovation. That CST arguably is the most clearly codified and articulated body of work around social justice within modern Christianity further underscores the potential and likelihood of its influence in shaping modern responses to social problems aimed at transforming those problems and achieving positive social change.

CONCLUSION

Catholic social innovation is happening and is animated by Catholic social values that make not responding to the global refugee and migrant crisis unthinkable. Catholic institutions are finding creative, resourceful responses to the global refugee and migrant crisis in ways that enhance social

³⁸ Lester Salamon, “The Nonprofit Sector at a Crossroads: The Case of America,” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 10, no. 1 (1999).

³⁹ Kenneth Himes, “Catholic Social Teaching on Building a Just Society: The Need for a Ceiling and a Floor,” *Religions* 8, no. 4 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel8040049>.

⁴⁰ Novak, *Social Justice: Not What You Think It Is*.

justice and advance the common good. The Catholic social values animating these and other Catholic social innovations are closely tied to the values that contribute to the philosophy and practice of social innovation more broadly.

Future research directions include both further examination of the data collected on the Catholic social innovation response to the refugee and migrant crisis, as well as the utility of CST as an ethical framework for a secular world struggling with responses to complex social problems. For the former, the nominated programs could be examined for patterns of intervention that correspond to particular social innovation characteristic or Catholic values. For example, is there a specific way in which fomenting social capital gets done? Is there a difference in how secular organizations engage in hospitality and welcoming the stranger than Catholic sister-led organizations? In the case of the latter, how, specifically, do core components of CST mirror and offer further insight into secular responses to complex social problems? Is there potential there to create, for examples, frameworks for inter-organizational collaboration based on shared values? Does CST offer a useful lens in evaluating innovative, evidence-based practices? Just as Christian just war theory became secularized and widely embraced as a framework for the use of force, what is the potential for CST to become further secularized as a framework for establishing new social contracts and addressing today's wicked problems, such as climate change and income inequality? Further exploration of these questions could not only advance scholarly understanding but also impact the nature and efficacy of future social innovations.

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