Cardijn Studies: On the Church in the World of Today



Lay Movements as Structures of Grace Conference – Part One

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The *Cardijn Studies* journal is a refereed journal which aims to document the history of the Jocist, Cardijin inspired, lay movements both historically and in the present day as well as the examining the rich tradition of Catholic Social teaching on the Church in the world of today. Articles cover a range of areas: the spirituality, methodology and the history of these traditions and movements in the church and in society.

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Business Manager
Mr Hilary Regan, Publisher, ATF Press Publishing Group, PO Box 504, Hindmarsh, SA 5007, Australia.
Email: hdregan@atf.org.au

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Editorial

Welcome to this second edition of Cardijn Studies, which focuses on the 'Lay Movements as Structures of Grace Conference' hosted by Mount St Joseph University, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, from 6–8 July 2018.

The idea for the conference emerged from an original suggestion by Dr Bob Pennington to convene a theological conference workshop that would explore Cardijn's see-judge-act method. Although the original proposal did not eventuate, it rapidly became clear that there was potential not just for a workshop but indeed a whole academic conference devoted to the issue.

The outcome was this conference, which borrows its title from the book 'Structures of Grace: Catholic Organizations Serving the Global Common Good' (Orbis Books, 2015) by Dr Kevin Ahern.

As the contributions to this volume indicate, the history of Cardijn-inspired movements, initiatives and method in the USA and in the Americas is rich and deep.

The rise of the US jocist movements

Indeed, knowledge of the jocist movements first reached the USA via several sources during the 1930s. Oklahoma priest, Don Kanaly, learned of the JOC and its counterpart Specialised Catholic Action movements while studying at Louvain. Upon his return he began to promote the movement particularly via an important lecture at a social action conference in Chicago in 1938.

In 1939, the Australian, Paul McGuire, and the English priest and YCW, John Fitzsimons, he published their book 'Restoring All

Things—A Guide to Catholic Action' (Sheed and Ward, publishers), which also presented an outline of the YCW and Catholic Action. This included several articles by noted jocist theologians, the Dominican Marie-Dominique Chenu, Mgr Palémon Glorieux, soon to become the rector of the Catholic University of Lille, France and the Benedictine liturgical reformer, Dom G Lefebvre OSB, the author of an influential Roman Daily Missal (*Missel vespéral romain*).

McGuire also visited the US on lecture tours as well as publishing several journal articles in which he continued to promote 'jocism' and Specialised Catholic Action. As Jay P Dolan has observed, the effect of these initiatives, particularly in Chicago, was 'like throwing a match into a puddle of gasoline'.[1] Chicago and Notre Dame in particular soon became centres of the spread of Specialised Catholic Action.

Margaret Frisbie's biography of the Chicago priest, Jack Egan, 'An Alley in Chicago: The Life and Legacy of Monsignor John Egan',[2] illustrates this as does Mary Irene Zotti's history of the YCW in the USA, 'A Time of Awakening, The Young Christian Worker Story in the United States, 1938 to 1970.'[3]

Meanwhile, the German Holy Cross father, Louis Putz CSC, who had worked with the JOC in France, had arrived at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, where he launched a flourishing and influential Young Christian Students (YCS) movement. Several of the leaders formed there soon initiated a Christian Family Movement (CFM), which boomed under the strong leadership of Pat and Patty Crowley, spawning the Cana Conferences and Pre-Cana Conferences. The La Leche League, promoting breastfeeding, was another initiative that emerged.

Jocist-inspired initiatives

A huge variety of jocist initiatives eventually blossomed across the USA as far as San Diego, California, where Fr Leo Davis founded a

1. Jay P Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience, A History from Colonial Times to the Present*, Doubleday, New York, 1985.
2. Margaret Frisbie, *An Alley in Chicago: The Life and Legacy of Monsignor John Egan*.
3. Mary Irene Zotti, A Time of Awakening, *The Young Christian Worker Story in the United States, 1938 to 1970*, Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1991.

Cardijn Center that flourished until the 1970s.[4] Among Davis' protégés was Fr Victor Salandini, later known as the 'Tortilla Priest' and as a close collaborator of Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers.[5]

Further north, in San Jose, a former YCW fulltime worker and former deputy director of the Peace Corps, Russell Tershy, and Anthony Soto, a laicised former YCS chaplain, launched a Center for Employment Training, that remains a model of its genre.[6]

Meanwhile, across the continent in New York, Caroline Pezzullo carried out extraordinary work at the United Nations in New York, promoting the cause of Non-Government Organisations, women and world development.[7]

Within the Church, another well-known former YCW national chaplain, Fr Reynold Hillenbrand, contributed greatly to development in the liturgy that foreshadowed those of the Second Vatican Council.[8]

Internationally, another prominent, YCW leader from Toledo, Ohio, Flo Triendl, went to Europe in 1947 to assist in post-war reconstruction, staying on to work with Cardijn in the International YCW Secretariat in Brussels.[9]

Later, she moved to South Africa to assist in the development of a YCW movement struggling to emerge in the face of the full force of apartheid. Nearly thirty years later, Nelson Mandela by then the president of the new South Africa, paid personal tribute to the work of the movement there.

'Our decades of struggle, outside and inside prison, taught us that the most important tool of resistance is proper organisation', Mandela stated. 'No matter how unequal the situation, if the people are committed and well organised then not even the most vicious oppressor can hold them back forever.'

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4. Father Leo Davis, Cardijn Priests: http://priests.josephcardijn.com/davis-leo
5. Father Victor Salandini, Cardijn Priests: http://priests.josephcardijn.com/victor-salandini
6. Center for Employment Training, San Diego, History: https://cetweb.edu/about/our-mission/
7. Caroline Pezzullo, Neighborhood Women: http://neighborhoodwomen.org/caroline-pezzullo/
8. Monsignor Reynold Hillenbrand: https://usml.edu/rector/monsignor-reynold-hillenbrand/
9. Flo Triendl, Cardijn Pioneers: http://pioneers.josephcardijn.com/flo-triendl