



Center for FaithJustice

Faith without worX is dead • James 2:26

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Center for FaithJustice (CFJ) has received a grant of \$1,249,844 from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help establish a new project called "Family Matters: Empowering Catholic Caregivers as Protagonists in Domestic Faith Stories."

The project is being funded through Lilly Endowment's Christian Parenting and Caregiving Initiative. The aim of the initiative to help parents and caregivers share their faith and values with their children.

A collaborative effort with RENEW International, "Family Matters" will pilot a new program at 12 parishes aimed at nurturing Christian protagonism among parents and caregivers in those respective communities. Through shared family "Road Trips," participants will gain a deeper understanding of their own agency and acquire the knowledge, language, and skill set to engage one another and the world through the lens of Catholic social tradition. Family Matters draws heavily from current Synod documents, numerous secular studies, and CFJ's own forthcoming research on faith engagement. The project will pay particular attention to the "gap years" between sacraments.

"The Center for FaithJustice is honored to have been selected as part of this new initiative from Lilly Endowment" reflected the organization's president, Stephanie Peddicord. "For many years, we have been engaged in programs that encourage young people of faith to understand the intersection of what we believe as Catholics and how we engage in and with the world. This grant represents an opportunity to apply our ongoing research findings to families with children from early childhood through adolescence. Parents have long been essential champions of our work with young people, but we are especially excited to have the opportunity to accompany and empower them directly through this new program."

Greg Tobin, president and executive director of RENEW commented: "We are excited to collaborate with the Center for FaithJustice on this effort. The work of this grant will strengthen and deepen family relationships, enhance their connections with each other and with God, and contribute to the flourishing of their communities and the world."

The Center for FaithJustice is one of 77 organizations that are receiving grants through this competitive round of the Christian Parenting initiative. Reflecting the diversity of Christianity in the United States, the organizations are affiliated with mainline Protestant, evangelical,

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Catholic, Orthodox Christian and Pentecostal faith communities. Many of the organizations are rooted in Black church, Hispanic and Asian Christian traditions.

"We've heard from many parents who are seeking to nurture the spiritual lives of their children, especially in their daily activities, and looking to churches and other faith-based organizations for support," said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion. "These thoughtful, creative and collaborative organizations embrace the important role that families have in shaping the religious development of children and are launching programs to assist parents and caregivers with this task."

Lilly Endowment launched the Christian Parenting and Caregiving Initiative in 2022 because of its interest in supporting efforts to help individuals and families from diverse Christian communities draw more fully on the wisdom of Christian practices to live out their faith fully and well passing on a vibrant faith to a new generation.

About Lilly Endowment Inc.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is a private foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. A principal aim of the Endowment's religion grantmaking is to deepen and enrich the lives of Christians in the United States, primarily by seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment also seeks to improve public understanding of diverse religious traditions by supporting fair and accurate portrayals of the role religion plays in the United States and across the globe.

About the Center for FaithJustice

Founded officially in 2008 (with programs dating back to the late 1990s), the Center for FaithJustice (CFJ) inspires the next generation of leaders by creating programs to serve those in need and educate for justice in the Catholic tradition. Informed by the passage "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26), CFJ offers a line of signature "WorX" programs through which participants engage in direct service with those in need followed by community, prayer, and reflection activities that emphasize Catholic Social Teaching.

In 2018, CFJ was the only Catholic organization in the country to receive a multi-year \$1 million grant from Lilly Endowment as part of its "Strengthening Congregational Ministries with Youth" initiative. The grant enabled CFJ to pilot "NeXt Level," an entirely new approach to youth ministry in collaboration with parishes across the New Jersey region. Final research findings for this project are expected in early 2024.