

MAKING THE MOMENT COUNT

A Papal Reflection



December 2015

Together we can build a movement.

As a private, family philanthropy, GHR Foundation has seen the power of partnership. As a donor, we have a responsibility to bring people together to achieve impact. His Holiness Pope Francis' 2015 visit to the United States created an important moment – unlikely allies came together and people of all faiths were called to advance the common good.



Like many of you, GHR Foundation's board of directors was profoundly affected by the Pope's call for us to challenge the status quo and show greater compassion. We did not want the moment to pass without careful reflection and a new commitment to action.

With a focus on partnership, we shared a brief survey with GHR's partners and community. This online reflection was designed to ask an important question: *How can we make a moment a movement?* In total, more than 500 people visited the site and 100 people submitted their reactions and commitments to carrying the Pope's message forward. The following report highlights key findings and next steps – we hope it will serve as an inspirational starting point for continued collaboration.

Our commitment. GHR Foundation knows that together, we can launch a movement that moves beyond agendas to action. Our commitment is to continuing with this conversation by bringing unlikely partners together to look at lasting solutions to complex global challenges. GHR will also continue to fund priorities Pope Francis highlighted during his visit – the need for inter-religious action in an increasingly polarized world and the importance of strengthening families.

Fueled by faith and entrepreneurial creativity, GHR Foundation looks forward to working with you to build a movement marked by individual action and collective influence. Together, with great joy and optimism, we can improve lives and heed Pope Francis' call to move forward.

Onward,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy P. Goldman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Amy Goldman, Chair & CEO, GHR Foundation



Our partners were struck by Pope Francis' focus on unity, addressing poverty and his simple humanity.

“He calls us to overlook our differences, to open our hearts and work together, to not be afraid and undertake the changes necessary, to recall that the vitality of America was built from our ability to care for the common good, and remember the joy message of the Gospel: that God is with us.”

—Carolyn Woo, Catholic Relief Services

“I was struck by his ability to challenge in a way that still leaves others with their dignity. His willingness to say the hard things. His genuine warmth and caring. That Americans came together in unity in a way that hasn’t been seen in recent times.”

—Lorraine Reaume, Adrian Dominican Sisters

“Pope Francis’s visit was especially powerful and meaningful at a time of challenges and divisions. As a country we seem to be split on almost every issue, with little prospect for reconciliation. The Pope’s visit and message seemed, for a few magical days at least, to allow us to transcend our differences, to remind ourselves that the things we have in common—a concern for social justice, a desire to reach out to those in need and hope for a better future.”

—Michael Hemesath, St. John’s University

“Pope Francis put the issues of poverty front and center from and the moral imperative to do so—from a personal, community and political perspective.”

—Peter Karoff, GHR Foundation board of directors

“He used symbols powerfully, including a simple car, going from giving a speech to the powerful to the needs of the poor. Above all I am moved by his appeal for global solidarity in order to address the enormous needs of today—poverty and exclusion, care of the Earth, inter-religious dialogue, trafficking of persons and modern day slavery.”

—Patricia Murray, [International Union of Superiors General](#)

“I was struck by Pope Francis’ humanity and his political sophistication and courage.”

—Bob Berg, [Alliance for Peacebuilding](#) emeritus board member



People are motivated to work together and find common ground.

“We must let the love and mercy of God be the most evident characteristics of the Church and her ministries.”

—Sr. Carol Keehan, Catholic Health Association

“Rarely do we hear today in political discourse the call to care for the other; rather it is pandering to the needs and fears of limited constituencies. Religion can be a primary source of wisdom and energy for the common good.”

—Dirk Ficca, Minister and Inter-Religious Leader

“We understand that moving the dial on impact is a collective responsibility and that our role in the community must be in the form of education, inspiring engagement and leadership.”

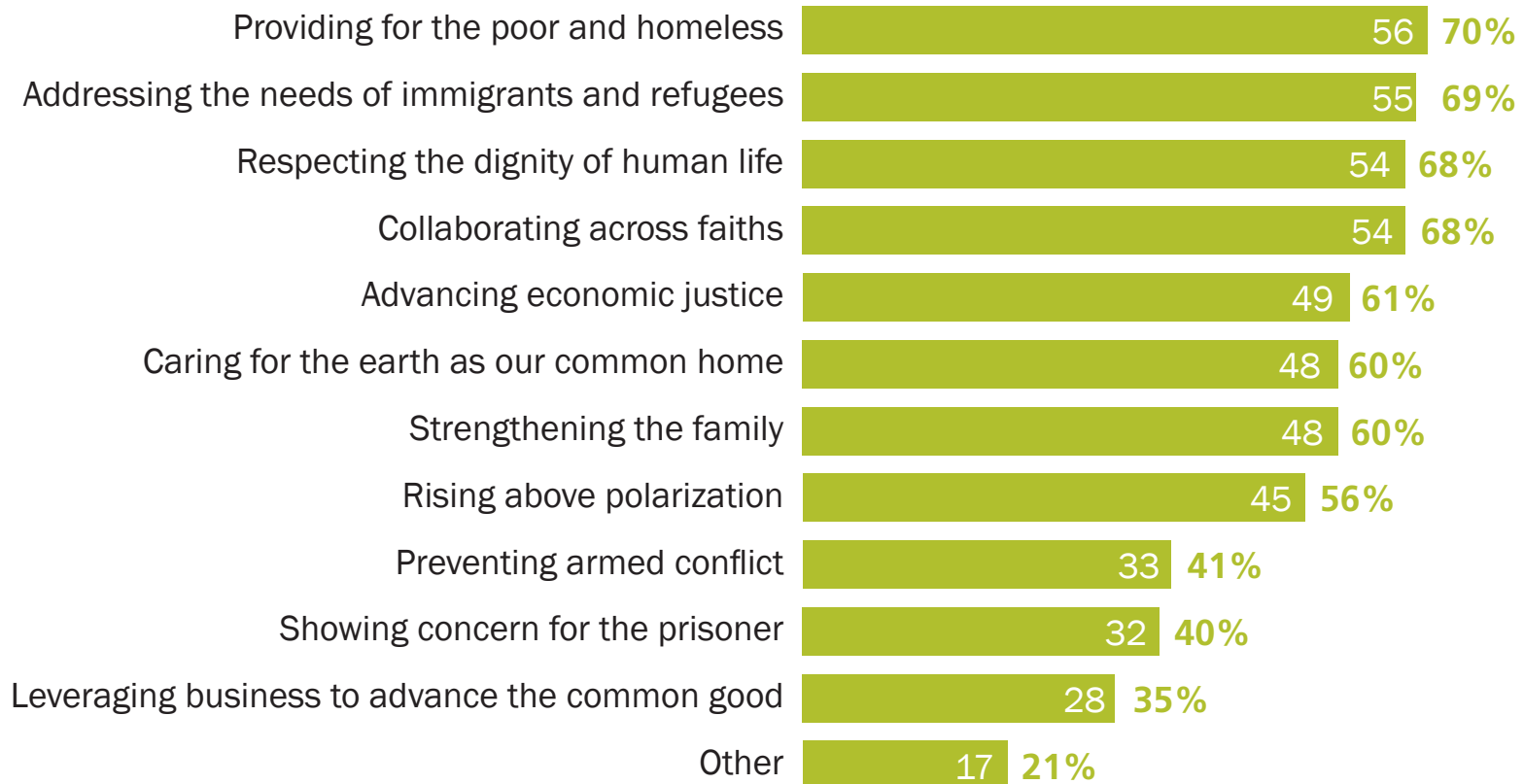
—Anne Cullen Miller, The Catholic Community Foundation of Minnesota

“We cannot function without each other—we need to accept each other’s blessings and challenges in community.”

—Debra King, St. John Paul II Catholic Preparatory School

GHR partners are committed to responding to pressing issues.

When asked which of the following issues they were passionate about advancing, respondents prioritized:



Pope Francis' visit inspired a new commitment to serving the poor.

When GHR partners were asked what they can do to address this challenge, they said:

“Like Pope Francis, intentionally be with the poor, listen to their cries, get to know those close at hand as persons, with a name and identity.”

—Gemma Doll, Dominican Sisters of Peace

“We need to recommit ourselves to open dialogue with those we serve. It is easy to start to believe that you have the answers to difficult questions, but the answers more often come from those we seek to serve.”

—Rebecca Lindsay-Ryan, Big Shoulders Fund

“Articulate and demonstrate that ‘we are all in this together’ and continue to participate in sacrificing some of what we have for the good of the poorest of the poor.”

—David Sauer, Medicines for Humanity

“Always be sure that those about whom decisions are made are included in the conversation prior to the decision.”

—Marlene Weisenbeck, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration



Leaders identified practical next steps to maintaining momentum following the Pope's visit.

A sample of these priorities includes:

Helping families access the resources they need to stay healthy and educated

Empowering families through their children's education

Improving care of vulnerable children

Increasing our commitment to the integration of life and faith

Learning Arabic and developing ways to work with people of the Muslim faith

Trying to learn more about other faiths and convictions, not to change them, but to understand them

Exploring how we might educate sisters worldwide in the area of inter-religious dialogue and help them become advocates for peace and nonviolence

Building a coalition of community members, funders, nonprofits, financiers and others to bring clean energy to the world's poor

Mapping the landscape of faith-based eco-justice work and design plans to add strategic next steps to the movement

Living more simply to build awareness of the needs of ecology, and living with less until all have enough

Educating others to the meaning of renewable energy sources and giving to those in need from our resources, not our surplus

Strengthening personal relationships with the poor or marginalized

Staying in touch with our elected officials about the issues that matter by being a voice for the voiceless

Spending more time with those on the margins and advocating for those who are poor and suffering

Continuing efforts to make socially responsible investments

Identifying current critical issues, such as all forms of modern slavery, responding to urgent needs, such as refugee flows and natural disasters and coordinating funding sources on an international level

Seeking to become a person of mercy, forgiveness and attentive listening to the needs of others

Living Pope Francis' example of simplicity and joy

"Forward!
Let's keep
moving
forward!"
Pope Francis

The importance of reflection.

In the midst of our busy lives, moments to reflect can be rare. GHR Foundation is grateful for the opportunity to join with its partners to study the impact of Pope Francis' visit, and looks forward to convening unlikely partners to continue this momentum.

"It was delightful to be reminded of the joy and hope that Pope Francis' visit brought to the United States. Despite having a job where I see lives transformed regularly, I can still become so heavy hearted about the many threats to the earth, escalating violence and poverty that I am lulled into believing that my actions do not matter. The Pope reminds us all that even the littlest of gestures are important and do indeed matter a great deal to our shared God and to other people."

—Donna Vroom, Dominican Sisters of Peace

"We have to continue to engage the public so that what is started by Laudato Si and the U.S. trip in the way of interests and momentum will be sustained to achieve meaningful change."

—Carolyn Woo, Catholic Relief Services



About GHR Foundation

GHR Foundation applies entrepreneurial creativity and universal catholic values to foster hope and opportunity where it is needed most. Started in 1965 by Opus founders Gerald A. and Henrietta Rauenhurst, the Foundation seeks transformational change in education, health and global development. GHR is anchored by a belief in responsibility and partners with leading experts to achieve sustainable, local impact.

Learn more at [**www.ghrfoundation.org**](http://www.ghrfoundation.org)