Contemporary Catholic Socio-economic Teaching Presentation/Discussion

From the lecture on this topic, class notes, and select primary documents on contemporary Catholic socio-economic thought you have learned what some of the main elements of this teaching are. The task for this presentation/discussion is concrete and practical:

Identify a concrete socio-economic practice on this campus (preferably) or locally where you live, research it and provide a brief description of what it does, and evaluate it in terms of the following:

- Gospel teachings and practices
- Early Franciscan teachings, practices, and theology
- Contemporary Catholic socio-economic teaching

The most important task is to show whether or not this practice fits the contemporary teachings of the Catholic Church and why. Establishing whether the practice also fits the Gospel and the Franciscan teaching simply shows the continuity of the teaching and how Franciscan ideas have been absorbed into the contemporary Catholic teaching. Obviously some practices will fit the traditional, not contemporary, teaching of the Gospels and the Catholic Church (e.g., simply being charitable, or good to your neighbor). This task asks you specifically to evaluate how the practice fits the contemporary, post Vatican II teaching, which has its peculiarities and specific traits!

Below is the list of groups and practices on this campus from the recent “SBU Giving Tuesday” announcement that might suit this task:

The event itself: #GivingTuesday was inspired by the core Jewish value of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) and reflects the 92nd Street Y’s mission of reimagining community and giving back. #GivingTuesday harnesses the potential of social media and the generosity of people around the world to bring about real change in their communities; it provides a platform for them to encourage the donation of time, resources and talents to address local challenges.

- FCSC: The Franciscan Center for Social Concern provides expanding experiences of work with the poor and marginalized of society, along with academically credited opportunities to study both causes and solutions to social problems.

- BonaResponds: Formed in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina, this volunteer group has aided disaster relief efforts ever since while at the same time working in the local community to help those in need.

- Silver Wolves: Students visit a local assisted-living home weekly to socialize and participate in activities with residents.

- SBU @ SPCA: This group volunteers at the Cattaraugus County SPCA, located about 15 minutes from campus, helping walk the dogs and play with the animals that were left there or have been abandoned.
• BREAKtheBubble: A program that organizes trips centered on service, awareness, and education during the fall and spring breaks. This program encourages a deeper level of social awareness and empowers students as agents of change in addressing social issues. Recent trips have gone to St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia and St. Michael’s High School in Arizona.

• Enactus: Formerly SIFE, Enactus is a community of student, academic and business leaders committed to using the power of entrepreneurial action to transform lives and shape a better world. They plan multiple events including Canvas for a Cure and Dream It. Do It., and go on an annual service trip to the Bahamas.

• Embrace It Africa: A program of Enactus, EIA was established in 2007 by three students from St. Bonaventure. EIA’s mission is to help drive sustainable economic growth in the Rakai District of Uganda through initiatives that address the community’s three major challenges: access to financial markets, educational opportunities, and public health.

• Franciscan Fellowships: This program provides financial assistance to servant leaders grounded in the Franciscan charism, making further transformative experiences possible. These stipends help students with travel costs for service trips internationally and domestically.

• Farm to Table: Farm to Table is nine-week summer program made up of six students who live together in community. They spend four mornings a week volunteering at Canticle Farm in Allegany. They also staff the Warming House Sunday through Friday in the evening. The program provides students hands-on experience with sustainable agriculture and service on the margins.

• Warming House: The nation’s oldest student-run soup kitchen, the Warming House offers meals and companionship to patrons six days a week in downtown Olean.

• Campus Conservationists: The CC aims to promote conservation and sustainable practices at St. Bonaventure and the local community, and to promote outdoor spaces as an integral part of the St. Bonaventure identity.

• Bona Buddies: This long-running big brother/big sister group matches St. Bonaventure students with children in grades K-6 from the surrounding area.