



STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

Boston College

Graduate Employees Union

June 28, 2017

Catholic Scholars for Worker Justice stands in solidarity with the Boston College Graduate Employees Union (BCGEU) that seeks to bargain collectively for just wages, job security, health and retirement benefits, and other improvements to the workplace that befit their dignity as human beings created in the image of God.

We call upon the Trustees of Boston College to support their employees as they assert the right to free association that is rooted in the natural moral law and that serves as the cornerstone of Catholic Social Teaching on workers' rights.

We strongly encourage the faculty, students, administration, and staff of Boston College to stand in solidarity with the BCGEU as it pursues this noble cause.

Support for labor unions enjoys a long history in the Catholic Church. Following the medieval support for guilds of working people the Catholic Church, since the publication of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), has given exceptional support for labor unions. The official teaching of the Catholic Church as found in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) holds that labor unions exert a "positive [influence for social order and solidarity, and are therefore an *indispensable element of social life.*" (#305) In 1986 the Catholic Bishops of the United States stated: "The Church fully supports the right of workers to form unions or other associations to secure their rights to fair wages and working conditions...No one may deny the right to organize without attacking human dignity itself." (*Economic Justice for All*, #104) [For a complete understanding of Catholic teaching on labor unions, see Chapter 6 of the *Compendium*, "On Human Work." See also Catholic Scholars for Worker Justice's Foundational Statement and "Union Busting is a Mortal Sin," found on our website at <http://www.cswj.us>.]

"Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together."

The Mission of Boston College
