

As an investor in the CUIT Magnus® Funds, your organization participates in a robust Catholic Responsible InvestmentsSM program which is implemented by CBIS. This program allows your organization's funds to have a direct influence, based on Catholic moral and social teaching, on companies in the Magnus® Funds portfolio.

A Conversation with Julie Tanner, Managing Director, Catholic Responsible Investments




Julie B. Tanner
Managing Director

By all appearance, the CBIS team has had some success recently with a couple of big-name companies.

Ms. Tanner: You're probably referring to ExxonMobil and Apple. And, yes, we had significant and positive impact with both. A near majority of ExxonMobil shareholders voted in favor of our proposal regarding the company's business model under a net-zero 2050. That's an incredible showing for a proposal appearing on the ballot for the first time.

Our success with Apple concerning the company's ability to protect minors through technology as part of its child sexual exploitation efforts actually received a fair amount of media coverage. We're very concerned about how

children are at risk in this digital age. I think we're going to see continued progress, not only with Apple, but around similar issues with companies like Facebook and Google.

How long has the Impact & Justice team been working on these issues? One's been around for decades and the other's a new technology.

Ms. Tanner: We have been addressing issues related to care for creation for the greatest number of years — nearly three decades — while child sexual exploitation is our newest issue, starting in 2016. The majority of our engagements are long term and can last anywhere from five to 20 years.

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How does CBIS become “engaged” with a company?

Ms. Tanner: We look at the priorities of our investors, views of the Church, and themes of Catholic teaching related to human dignity, economic justice, and care for creation. From there, we try to identify linchpin companies that can advance our issues.

And what exactly does it mean when you do engage?

Ms. Tanner: Engagement typically means meeting with companies to bring forward issues of core concern with a goal of achieving long-term advances in policy and practices. We have also found creative tactics over the years to enhance our influence with corporate boards and management, including releasing reports with corporate guidance, supporting legislation that mandates corporate disclosure on environmental and human rights issues, and forming coalitions with like-minded investors around the globe.



That’s an interesting point. Has CBIS’ Catholic Responsible Investments approach influenced secular investors in any way?

Ms. Tanner: CBIS and other faith and select socially responsible investors have been engaging companies on issues related to human rights and climate change for over three decades, yet only recently have these issues gained traction with the wider investor audience.

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Is there a bright line between what CBIS considers acceptable and unacceptable corporate behavior?

Ms. Tanner: At times it can be clear when company performance is problematic — persistent violations, lawsuits, fines, and protests are indicators that change to policies and practices is necessary. However, companies are complex and may have extensive operations around the globe. One area may be making progress while another division is responsible for a host of violations.

What key areas are the I&J team focusing on now?

Ms. Tanner: Core issues we currently focus on are human dignity, child sexual exploitation online, and climate change. Engagements to address forced labor and human trafficking started in 2012.

Is there a way to measure success in all of this?

Ms. Tanner: For each of our engagements we establish short- and long-term goals to measure and evaluate our progress. Goals are dependent on how far along the company is towards identifying and addressing the issue. Our role in this larger process is to work for change in corporate behavior that results in more just and responsible relationships between companies and society based on Catholic beliefs.



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