These days we live as if enclosed in shells of ideology. They divide us from reality, from each other and from ourselves. We proclaim the value of diversity, but can only talk to those who share our views. We say we love justice, but use it as a weapon against our enemies. We venerate science, but pick and choose its results along party lines. And when our ideologies fail to deliver, we are left alone, angry and afraid.

However, some events still manage to break through these shells. They can be tragic, like a natural disaster or a school shooting, or beautiful, like a new love or the birth of a child. Then, for a moment, we find ourselves in wonder…more aware…united. These events open our eyes and awaken something in us: nostalgia, thirst for life, a cry for meaning. And sometimes we discover that the seemingly unbridgeable distance between people—be they family, coworkers, or even strangers on the subway—is actually paper-thin.

We do not want to waste these moments!

And yet, left to our own devices, we retreat again into the shells of our tribal ideologies. These experiences, which made us see things differently, quickly decay, and everything gets twisted to fit our preconceptions.

In the end, is there anything that lasts? What can help us hold on to these experiences? Is there someone, somewhere, who lives fully and makes us want more from life? In short, a true friend?

We climbed up, he first and I behind him, far enough to see, through a round opening, a few of those fair things the heavens bear. Then we came forth, to see again the stars.

—Dante, Inferno, Canto XXXIV

Join us on February 14–16, 2020, for a weekend of public discussions, exhibits and live performances to delve into these questions with friends.
**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14 | 6:00 pm**

- **6:30 pm | “We climbed up, he first and I behind him …. To see again the stars” (Dante)**
  Music and staged readings from *The Divine Comedy* with Giuseppe Mazzotta, Sterling Professor of Humanities for Italian at Yale University, and welcoming remarks by Sean Cardinal Patrick O’Malley, OFM, archbishop of Boston.
- **9:00 pm | The Girl from Hong Kong**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16 | 8:30 am**

- **9:00 am | Memorial Mass for the 15th anniversary of Fr. Luigi Giussani’s death**
  Celebrated by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, with the choir of Communion and Liberation directed by Sebastian Modarelli.
- **11:00 am | What Can Free Us from Ideology?**
  **Speakers:**
  × Fr. Julián Carrón | president of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation
  × Ami Dar | founder and executive director of Idealist.org
  × Aaron Riches | professor of theology at Benedictine College
- **2:00 pm | A Paper-Thin Distance**
  How the discovery of our common humanity can shatter racial ideology.
  **Speakers:**
  × Daryl Davis | musician and public speaker
  × Christian Picciolini | author and founder of the Free Radical Projects global network
- **4:00 pm | Our Tears Are the Same**
  An Israeli and a Palestinian share their stories of reconciliation.
  **Speakers:**
  × Bassam Aramin | international spokesperson, The Parents Circle Families Forum
  × Robi Damelin | director of international relations, The Parents Circle Families Forum
- **5:30 pm | Someone, Somewhere, Who Lived Fully**
  Witnesses on the martyrdom of 40 Burundians killed by Hutu rebels and 21 Copts killed by ISIS extremists.
  **Speakers:**
  × Fr. Zacharie Bukuru | Benedictine monk in Buta, Burundi
  × His Grace Anba David | bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of New York and New England
  × Rev. Marcel Uwineza, SJ | Rwandan genocide survivor
- **7:30 pm | All This Starry Sky ... That Makes Me Dream**
  Final night of celebration and songs with the Encounter volunteers.

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16 | 9:30 am**

- **10:00 am | A Place for Life**
  Witnesses on the enduring importance of family.
  **Speakers:**
  × J. D. Flynn | editor-in-chief, Catholic News Agency
  × Sarah Hemminger | founder and CEO of Thread
  × Matteo Stohlman | software engineer in a DC real estate startup
- **11:30 am | Working in an Inclusive Economy**
  Young workers and entrepreneurs discuss Pope Francis’ economic vision.
  **Speakers:**
  × Anujeet Sareen | portfolio manager, Brandywine Global
  × Giorgio Vittadini | professor of statistics at the University of Milan-Bicocca, Italy
- **2:00 pm | Bridging the Divide in the Most Unlikely of Places**
  A conversation on reconciliation and going over apparently un-crossable divides.
  **Speakers:**
  × Jeanne Bishop | Cook County Public Defender
  × Fr. George Williams | chaplain for San Quentin State Prison death row
- **4:00 pm | In Search of the Other America**
  **Speakers:**
  × Chris Arnade | writer and photographer
  × Patrick Deneen | professor of political science and constitutional studies at the University of Notre Dame
- **6:00 pm | Ideals vs. Ideologies in Politics. A Lost Battle?**
  A conversation on the direction of American politics.
  **Speakers:**
  × Sohrab Ahmari | op-ed editor, New York Post
  × Christine Emba | columnist, The Washington Post
- **9:00 pm | Classical Music and Jazz ... Two Sides of the Same Coin**
  A concert with Andrea Domenici, jazz pianist, and Radoslawa Jasik, classical pianist.
EXHIBITS

5th Floor

Crossing the Divide: From Ideology to Wonder
Exhibit on the Encounter’s theme
Presentation: Friday, February 14, 7:45 pm | 2nd Floor

“His seeing caused me to begin to see”:
Looking at Race and Reality with James Baldwin
Exhibit on James Baldwin, novelist, playwright, and activist
Presentation: Friday, February 14, 8:15 pm | 2nd Floor

“A human being is a remarkable thing”
Exhibit on the wartime writings of Dutch-Jewish woman
Etty Hillesum (1941-1943)
Presentation: Saturday, February 15, 1:15 pm | 2nd Floor

Humans and Machines: Behind the Curtains of Artificial Intelligence
Exhibit on Artificial Intelligence
Presentation: Saturday, February 15, 3:00 pm | 2nd Floor

Giussani in America
Exhibit on Fr. Luigi Giussani, founder of Communion and Liberation
Presentation: Saturday, February 15, 12:45 pm | 2nd Floor

Main Floor

Guided tours for each exhibit will be available every day. Please check the Encounter’s website for scheduled tour times.

ACROSS THE DIVIDE series

The Power of Human Experience

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

12:45 pm | From Dereliction to a Life of Luminous Love, The Journey of the Late Frank Simmonds
Speakers:
- Rita A. Simmonds | wife and biographer
- Lawrence E. Sullivan | professor emeritus of theology and comparative world religions at the University of Notre Dame

3:15 pm | Unafraid of the Divide
Speakers:
- Sr. Mariae Agnus Dei, SV | Sisters of Life
- Sr. Virginia Joy, SV | Sisters of Life
- Fr. Richard Veras | director of pastoral formation at St. Joseph’s Seminary, Yonkers, NY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

5:15 pm | SOMOS: Doctors on the Front Line
Speakers:
- Mario Paredes | chief executive officer of Somos Community Care
- Ricardo Rivera | chief development officer of Somos Community Care

8:15 pm | From the Street to the Backyard
Speakers:
- Alberto Carignano | post-doctoral fellow, Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Washington
- Rex Hohlbein | founder of Facing Homelessness Seattle and the BLOCK Project

The Power of Human Experience

Making Poetry Sing: Crossing the Divide between Poet and Audience
A presentation on poetry by Dana Gioia, poet; followed by the Poetry Contest Award Ceremony

Giussani in America
Exhibit on Fr. Luigi Giussani, founder of Communion and Liberation
Presentation: Saturday, February 15, 12:45 pm | 2nd Floor

Guided Tours of Exhibits
Guided tours for each exhibit will be available every day. Please check the Encounter’s website for scheduled tour times.

www.newyorkencounter.org