

## URI CATHOLIC CENTER NEWS

Last week, we hosted our first **"Soul Food"** event of the semester. Soul Food is held every other week throughout each semester. Students prepare and serve a meal, I present briefly on some theological or spiritual theme, and then we have an informal discussion. Our first topic was *"The Francis Effect,"* in light of Pope Francis' visit to Cuba and the United States, and we had record numbers! Students expressed what many in our nation have observed about our Holy Father: his humility, his simplicity, and his love for the poor and disadvantaged. They were especially impressed by his interest in climate change. The evening was a great success. Thanks to all who had any part in preparing for and executing the event.

This past week, we welcomed to the Catholic Center the current freshman class from Prout for their **Freshman Class Retreats**. The retreats, which focused on identity and community, were led by Prout's campus minister, Lily Araujo, and members of the religion department, including parishioners Marie Lachapelle and Mike Frappier. A team of seniors also served as peer ministers and presented talks, led group dynamics and facilitated discussion. The retreats went extremely well, and our daily Mass crowd was very gracious in accommodating the students at the 12nn liturgies on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. It was great to see the chapel so full for Mass! Apologies for any inconveniences caused, especially with regard to space and parking limitations. The sophomores will be making their retreats at the Catholic Center from Monday, October 26-Wednesday, October 28. We look forward to welcoming them!

Don't forget that we will observe today's feast of Saint Francis of Assisi with a **Blessing of Animals** at 1pm at the Catholic Center (weather permitting). Please bring your friendly pets and animals to the Catholic Center for a blessing. Students will be on hand to serve refreshments. The Blessing of Pets and Animals is traditionally celebrated on or near the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi because of his great love for all of God's creation. His *Canticle of the Creatures* references this love: *"All praise to you, O Lord, for all these brother and sisters creatures!"* We look forward to welcoming you and, of course, Reggie is particularly excited! -Fr. Joe

