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Peace and All Good

As we enter into this new year our [readings this Sunday](#) call us to the importance of listening. Samuel, the psalmist and the first apostles hear God's word to them by attentively listening to God through the people and the events of their lives.



We enter this year in a country where “fake news” masquerades as unrelenting lies; falsehoods and cover-ups are far more common by our elected leaders than transparency, reality and objective truth. One of the last acts of our elected officials last year was to shamelessly vote for and celebrate legislation which will harm a majority of their constituents; all this against the wishes of these very vocal constituents. The disregard for democracy, among those elected and sworn to protect it, is unprecedented in US history. Money appears to give people license to detach themselves from the collective fate of the rest of Americans. Children without healthcare, Dreamers and immigrant families, refugees, those suffering from natural disasters were all cast aside in order to serve the financial interests of the .1 percent most affluent people in the country, some of whom are these legislators’ major donors (and many of whom are the recipients of federal contracts.)

How do we listen and hear God's word to us through these events and through the people in our lives? We know the lessons of history and know the dangers of leaders who have no regard for the truth, who demonize people more than speak out of love, who scapegoat minorities and who gather the wealth and resources of a nation as their own. As citizens informed by the Gospel, the life of the nonviolent Jesus and the example of Saint Francis who recognized the gifts and dignity of all God's creation, we cannot remain indifferent but are impelled to bring a moral and nonviolent voice to the public arena.

In the 2017 [World Day of Peace Message](#) Pope Francis stated that “Active nonviolence is a way of showing that unity is truly more powerful and more fruitful than conflict.” Erica Chenoweth writes that even under the most repressive regimes, nonviolence proves twice as effective as violent movements. [Pace e Bene](#) is a Franciscan Organization which fosters a just and peaceful world through nonviolent education, community building and action, programs endorsed by the Franciscan Action Network. May we journey through this year saying each day “Speak Lord, your servant is listening.” (1 Sam.3:10) Show me what is mine to do today to be a nonviolent instrument of your peace.

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF
FAN Board Secretary

Suggested action:

Please click [here to go to the Pace e Bene website](#). Commit to one nonviolent action this week.

Suggested Petitions:

May our nonviolent actions serve as an example of our passion for unity, we pray...

May we be attentive to the voice of God in our lives, we pray...

Collect Prayer

**Almighty ever-living God,
who govern all things,
both in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the pleading of your people
and bestow your peace on our times.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever**

Amen

Protecting Health and Life Webinar from Catholic Climate Covenant

The Trump Administration is proposing to “replace and repeal” the Obama administration’s Clean Power Plan (CPP). Stakeholders have a short time to comment on the proposed repeal. Join the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) to learn more about what’s at stake with the repeal of the CPP and how to respond effectively.



[Register here](#) for a one-hour webinar **Wednesday, January 10th, 2pm Eastern/ 11am Pacific**

Attendees will explore:

- Why the Clean Power Plan’s emissions reductions are seen as our best path to achieve the target set in the Paris Agreement.
- Why the repeal of the Clean Power Plan risks damage to our air, our waters, and people’s health, particularly the poor and vulnerable.
- How do we respond to likely repeal and replacement? What can Catholics do to ensure that if EPA chooses to “repeal and replace”, the alternative meets or exceeds the CPP’s national carbon emission reduction goals.

Celebrate National Migration Week January 7 – 13

This week is National Migration Week, an opportunity for the Church to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children, and victims and

survivors of human trafficking. The theme this year is [Many Journeys: One Family](#).

Each of our families have a migration story, some recent and others in the distant past. Regardless of where we are and where we came from, we remain part of the human family and are called to live in solidarity with one another. Unfortunately, in our contemporary culture we often fail to encounter migrants as persons, and instead look at them as unknown others, if we even notice them at all.

On **January 12th at 2pm EST/ 11am PST**, USCCB/MRS is cosponsoring a webinar with [Catholic Charities USA](#) that will provide education on the [Share the Journey Campaign](#) for migration. The webinar will feature the work of dioceses across the country, and efforts to promote Church teaching on migration. [Sign up to attend here](#).

The [National Migration Week 2018 toolkit](#) is available for use and contains facts, talking points, tips and so much more. There is a beautiful prayer in both English and Spanish at the end. We urge our members to use this in your meditations and services this week. Additionally, the [Migration and Refugee Services](#) office of the USCCB has homily helps, prayer cards, and petitions available on their [website](#).

During this National Migration Week, let us all take the opportunity to engage migrants as community members, neighbors, and friends.

Rallies Across the Country to Close Guantanamo

More than a decade after they were first taken into custody, forty-one men are still held at Guantanamo Bay prison; they bear the physical and psychological scars of torture and abuse. Five of the people held there have been approved by the U.S. government for transfer out of Guantanamo, and the vast majority of the rest of the population has never been charged with or convicted of a crime. Yet they remain indefinitely detained with no end in sight.



On January 11th, human rights activists, torture survivors, Guantánamo attorneys, 9-11 family members, ex-military officials, and members of diverse faith communities will rally to close the Guantanamo Bay prison, end indefinite detention, dismantle Islamophobia, and call for the immediate transfer of cleared detainees currently still imprisoned.

Several actions are taking place all over the country which seek to educate and call for the end to senseless torture. Please see the links below for more information on each action:

[Washington, DC](#)

[Los Angeles, CA](#)

[Seattle, WA](#)

Manhasset, NY

We thank our friends at the [National Religious Campaign Against Torture](#) (NRCAT) for this information. You can find out more about [NRCAT here](#).

Educate Yourself during Human Trafficking Awareness Month

January 11th is Human Trafficking Awareness day. Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery—a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to approximately 20.9 million people around the world. And no matter where you live, chances are it's happening nearby. From the girl forced into prostitution at a truck stop, to the man discovered in a restaurant kitchen, stripped of his passport and held against his will. All trafficking victims share one essential experience: the loss of freedom.



Currently, there is legislation in both the House and Senate focused on combating human trafficking. Savanna's Act is a bill directing the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols related to human trafficking of Native women and girls. Something more to think about: Slave labor is in the supply chains of the items we purchase. In order to end slavery right now, we must start prioritizing where we spend our money.

Here are some links and more information for your use:

- Polaris Project: <https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking>
- Talitha Kum: <http://www.talithakum.info/>
- Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH): <http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/>
- USCCB's migration and refugee services committee has developed this National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month & Day of Prayer [Toolkit](#).
- End Slavery Now has developed [this helpful resource](#) to help learn to shop responsibly.

FAN invites you to learn more about this important topic during January.

FAN takes the Polar Bear Plunge Again

St. Bonaventure tells us that to love God, we need to love all that God created. He teaches us that what we choose to do here on this earth will have an effect on it. As part of FAN's commitment to care for all of creation, we will again participate in the Polar Bear Plunge to [Keep Winter Cold](#). This annual event is organized by the [Chesapeake Climate Action Network](#) (CCAN) and helps raise funds for important local grassroots efforts on climate justice.

This year, FAN's executive director, [Patrick Carolan](#) will be jumping in to the icy waters of the Chesapeake with FAN board members, [Doug O'Brien](#) and [Kelly Moltzen](#). **Please consider donating to help us reach our goal of \$3,000**



raised to help fund climate efforts in the Chesapeake area. Just click on the links attached to each jumper's name to donate to that person.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support of our efforts to make a positive change in our world. Our team will be gearing up to run into the water the morning of January 27th and would love for anyone in the DC Metro area to come down to National Harbor and join the fun! There will be plenty of hot cocoa and treats for everyone!

Take Action: Call on Congress to be Stewards of the Arctic Refuge

At the end of 2017, Congress passed tax reform that included opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. This unprecedented action will open up a unique and treasured part of God's creation that currently supports the Gwich'in native people.



Please [sign this petition](#) to urge Congress to reverse course on this devastating action against God's creation and the Gwich'in people.

Faith organizations and people of faith have stood in solidarity with the Gwich'in people and advocated for protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. [Join your voice with other faith voices by signing the petition.](#)

