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Reflection for: January 20, 2019 - The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

For Whom Will You Not Be Silent?

Isaiah cries: “For Zion’s sake I will not be silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet. . .” While contemplative silence is needed in this noisy world, there are times when remaining silent can be a betrayal. In our time, Dietrich Bonhoeffer agreed: “Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”



In a new biography, Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom, author David Blight quotes Douglass in 1893, at the beginning of the Jim Crow and lynching period: “We have one weapon unimpaired and it is that weapon of speech, and not to use it. . . is treason to the oppressed.”

Recently, with the opening of the 116th Congress on January 2nd, over 100 women were sworn in, the most in our history though still not a number equal to men. Many women acknowledged their debt of gratitude to women on whose shoulders they stood, 100 years after women in the U.S. won the right to vote. If the suffragettes and their male supporters had not spoken out, marched, and demanded the legitimate right of women as members of a free society, if they had waited for men in power to introduce the 19th Amendment, when would all of us women reading this reflection been “given” the right to vote? We might also ask ourselves when will women in the church, the People of God we love and in which we have done heavy lifting for many years, when will our voices be included in decision-making at all levels?

In [this week’s Gospel](#), the Wedding at Cana, it is Jesus, of course, who changes water to fine wine, but Mary is in command. John first notes that she was there, and, by the way, Jesus and his disciples were also invited. It is Mary who notices that the wine was running out, and simply tells Jesus, “They have no wine.” At first, this does not seem important to Jesus, but he has been obedient to his mother for enough years to respect her wisdom and understanding, so he does as she requests. As a wife and mother, Mary understands that what may have appeared not significant enough for a miracle could have been a humiliating disaster for a couple on their wedding day. So she did not remain silent.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

In reflective silence, ask yourself for whose sake you have refused, or will refuse, to be silent? How have you, or will you, use your voice?

Suggested Petitions:

For all people who fear to speak on their own behalf, or whose voices are discounted, let us pray. . .

That we may rightly judge when to be silent and when to speak, let us pray. . .

Collect Prayer:

**Almighty ever-living God, who governs all things,
both in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the pleading of your people
and bestow you 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, forever and ever.**

Amen.

Leadership Conference of Women Religious Resolutions to Action for 2019

LCWR's Global Concerns Committee is pleased to share the Winter 2019 edition of [Resolutions to Action](#), "World Day of Peace Message" by Susan Rose Francois, CSJP.



"As we said goodbye to 2018 and welcomed in 2019, we faced the ongoing repercussions of increasingly uncivil discourse and a broken-down body politic. In the midst of this political drama Pope Francis released his message for the 52nd World Day of Peace, Good politics is at the service of peace. His words remind of us the potential of politics to build the global community." [Read more here.](#)

Greenpeace and Teen Vogue Bear Witness to Corporate Plastic

Greenpeace started with the mission of bearing witness to the man-made devastation in our world, and we regularly invite journalists to join us in covering these issues and spreading the word. This past September, *Teen Vogue* — one of the most influential publications for young people — sailed with Greenpeace on the *Arctic Sunrise* to



the Great Pacific Garbage Patch to [document for readers](#) the consequences of our throwaway culture.

The cost of convenience is simply too high. A plastic bottle that ends up in the ocean will last generations; microplastics often end up in our food supply, both through fish and sea salt. From this experience, *Teen Vogue* has published an entire in-depth series called [Plastic Planet](#) — a fantastic rallying cry for a new generation that knows we need to end our throwaway culture and adopt a sustainable approach that preserves our oceans and wildlife.

We encourage our members to [read the piece](#) and share it widely with your networks.

Resources for National Human Trafficking Awareness Month

January is National Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month. [ECPAT-USA](#) is the leading anti-child trafficking organization in the United States seeking to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children through awareness, advocacy, policy, and legislation. Our friends at ECPAT-USA have renewed their commitment to the mission of protecting every child's right to grow up free from the fear of exploitation.

We invite our members and friends to check out their [website](#) for the latest news, events, and resources to inform and inspire all month long.



Additionally, the USCCB's Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH) has updated their [tool kit](#) which contains Sample Letters to the Editor, Social Media Samples, Prayer Intercessions, Community Engagement Ideas, and more.

New Resource Breaks Down the Effects of Terminating TPS

Our friends at [CLINIC](#) (Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.) have developed a resource called [No Time to Lose](#) about Temporary Protected Status and the huge consequences to individuals, families and the U.S. as a whole following Temporary Protected Status terminations.



This document breaks down the costs of terminating TPS and the effect it will have over the next 10 years on our gross domestic product and employers. In addition, the research covers

how our economy is weakened, how national and regional security is affected and what happens to American families when TPS is terminated. We encourage members to use this resource to educate your network, friends and members of Congress, especially new members, local officials and their particular constituencies.

You can download [No Time to Lose](#) here.

FAN Member Has Letter to Editor Published in Local Paper

FAN member and friend, Leona R. Wieland wrote to let us know that she had a Letter to the Editor [published](#) in the St. Cloud Times in Minnesota. As it was published just after the new year, she thought it might have been considered a list of resolutions. A beautiful prayer entitled, [From peace to preservation, hear us, people of God](#), we encourage our members to read and pray on these petitions.



If you are a writer and have something published in a local media outlet, we encourage you to [share the news with us](#). We are a family of Franciscans and victory for one of us is a victory for all of us. Peace and All Good.

Take Action: HR1: “For the People Act” Introduced in Congress

Last month we [reported](#) that congressional offices around the country were going to be visited by pro-democracy reform advocates in a "Democracy Drop By Day." Today, we are happy to say, the efforts of everyone who participated are paying off.

Last week, the HR1 bill package which includes voting rights, campaign finance reform and anti-corruption ethics reform, now titled “For The People Act”, was introduced with a flurry of fanfare and media



coverage(*pictured*). Over the coming weeks it will be revised in committees and ultimately debated and brought for a floor vote in the House of Representatives.

The Jan. 21st holiday marks Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the anniversary of the disastrous Citizens United ruling. The week following is the perfect time to hold town halls with

Members of Congress and public events like rallies elevating HR1 democracy reform. [Can you help lead a Town Hall or rally in your district?](#) We urge our members and friends to help make sure democracy reform is top of the agenda in Congress.

FAN Will be at the March for Life, Will you Join us?

Many people of faith in the U.S. are currently preparing for the [March for Life](#) this **Friday, January 18th** in Washington, DC. FAN staff have attended for the last 7 years as we consider upholding the dignity of all life one of the core beliefs of our faith.

In their statement “[A Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities](#),” the U.S. Catholic bishops share that being pro-life requires that we adopt “a consistent ethic of life” of caring for human life “from ‘womb to tomb.’”



From the unborn child to the aging parent, the man on death row to the refugee all life is sacred. The health of the most vulnerable, especially children and the poor, is being damaged by our “throwaway culture”, our disconnection from our fellow humans, and a lack of care for our common home. Pope Francis insists that “it cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected” (Laudato Si, no. 138).

Please [let us know](#) if you are planning to make a trip to our nation's capital this year and would like to join us. We will be marching with our banner calling for a consistent ethic of life. *(Pictured with the Sisters of Mercy staff, from 2018's March)*