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Reflection Date: January 21, 2018: The 3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Transformation in Ordinary Time

According to the Universal Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, Ordinary Time is the period where: “no particular aspect of the mystery of Christ is celebrated, but rather the mystery of Christ itself is honored in its fullness.” The mystery of Christ itself, of transformation, speaks to the reasoning behind the [readings this week](#). In the first reading, we are given a glimpse of a merciful God in the story of Jonah calling on the people of Ninevah to transform their lives and repent for their sins. In the gospel, we hear again the story of how Jesus called his closest friends and challenged them to become disciples, requiring a transformation of their worldly ideals. However, it is Paul’s warning to the Corinthians in the Second reading which called to me in particular.



Paul advises the people of Corinth that the time of this world is short, imploring all to conduct themselves worthily in the eyes of God and be detached from this world’s pleasures. Our hearts, minds and eyes should be more focused on God’s desires than our own. In our pursuit of worldly ‘riches’ and material ‘progress’ we are compromising the quality and meaning of our lives and the lives of those around us. How many possible Divine revelations are we missing because we take our focus away from God? This detachment from worldly and societal “needs” and “values” can I’m sure be seen as a great suffering by some, but it is often said that one can be transformed through their suffering. Transformation is the ultimate goal.

Richard Rohr [offers](#), “Suffering of some sort seems to be the only thing strong enough to both destabilize and reveal our arrogance, our separateness, and our lack of compassion.” Saint Francis, Saint Teresa of Calcutta and other saints were transformed, not just through their own suffering but also by living with the suffering of the entire Body of Christ. They worked with the poor and marginalized and felt the suffering of ‘the other’ deep within themselves. They prayed and trusted in God to transform this suffering in their time. God does not work on our human timelines, but S/He does allow for human transformation.

Are we willing to be transformed? Do we have the humility to trust in God’s plan instead of our own? Do we have the courage to endure the suffering of others and allow it to transform us?

Janine Walsh
FAN Communications Coordinator

Suggested Action:

Pray with the following bible verses and allow them to settle deeply in your heart. Pray for transformation:

[Jeremiah 29: 11-12](#)

[Psalm 145: 14-15](#)

[1 Peter 3: 8](#)

Suggested Petitions:

Fill our hearts, oh Lord, with the burning desire to do your will, we pray....

May our eyes be ever focused on you and our hearts be open to transformation, we pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Almighty ever-living God,
direct our actions according to y your good pleasure,
that in the name of your beloved Son
we may abound in good works.
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

Peace and All Good on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

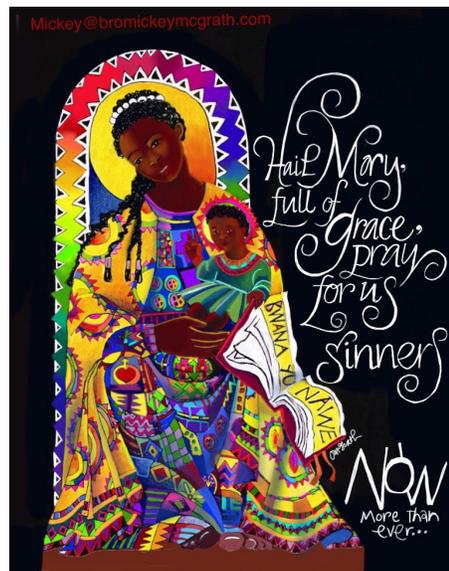
*“Bawana yu Nawe’ is Swahili for ‘the Lord is with you.’
Let’s remember that God lives in the hearts of all people.
Everywhere. Even Haiti, Africa, and Norway.” - Br.
Mickey McGrath, OSFS*

The staff of FAN welcome this beautiful image of Virgin and Child from [Bro. Mickey O’Neill McGrath, OSFS](#) as our wish for peace on this day commemorating the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We follow Dr. King’s example of working towards a more just world by denouncing the recent racist comments by our President. We urge members to read the [statement](#) by Sr. Anne-Louise Nadeau, Programs Director of Pax Christi, USA and [this statement](#) by the Sisters of Mercy. We are forever grateful for women religious who are the prophetic voices of our time.

As we take the time today to think about the life and work of Dr. King, let us reflect and pray, but also act. We are our sisters and brothers keepers and we must stand together as fellow Americans, no matter one’s country of origin, especially in times of need.

Peace and All Good.



Take Action: Clean Power Plan Repeal Comments Due January 16th

The Trump Administration is proposing to “replace and repeal” the Obama administration’s Clean Power Plan (CPP) which contains lifesaving standards that combat climate change by setting the first-ever federal limits on carbon pollution from power plants. Stakeholders have until January 16th to [comment on the proposed repeal](#).

FAN urges all members to [submit comments](#) to the EPA by January 16th urging them to not repeal the Clean Power Plan. There is sample text below, however, *we suggest that you edit the text and make it your own, as in the past, all the comments that were identical were counted as one comment instead of multiple.*

Sample Comment:

“I (OR NAME OF ORGANIZATION) oppose any attempt by the EPA to dismantle the lifesaving Clean Power Plan and replace it with weaker standards that would expose millions of Americans to more pollution. Instead, the EPA should strengthen safeguards that address climate change. Any replacement to the Clean Power Plan should reduce carbon pollution even more than the original standards to reflect the market’s rapid shift towards clean energy and the falling cost of renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

The EPA has a duty to protect us from climate change, which is exacerbating destructive extreme weather events that threaten our communities, our families, and God’s creation. The EPA’s mission is to “protect human health and the environment” – we need the EPA to live up to that solemn responsibility by reducing the pollution that causes climate change.”

[Click this link to be taken to Regulations.gov website.](#) To submit your comment, **click on the blue “Comment Now” button at the top right of the page.**



Educate Yourself during Human Trafficking Awareness Month

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.



This week, we want to highlight the [U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#) which is a collaborative, faith-based national network open to all congregations of women religious, coalitions working against human trafficking in which women religious participate, and individuals. In their effort to eradicate modern-day slavery, the [website](#) is kept up to date offering education, resources including faith based reflections, and supports access to survivor services.

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.

Help Us Reach Our Goal: 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!

No Muslim Ban Ever Week of Action Toolkit

On January 27, 2017 the Trump Administration released Executive Orders banning individuals from seven (then six) Muslim-majority countries and all

refugees from entering the country. Now, a year later, we're in a critical moment. After the courts repeatedly blocked various versions of these bans, **parts of both the most recent Muslim ban and refugee ban are being implemented.** We must keep up the public pressure and media coverage to stop the Muslim and refugee bans now.

Many advocacy organizations are building a list of creative activities and important public witness events for a **week of action from January 27 - February 3, 2018.** There is already an action being planned in front of the White House in Washington DC. We urge all FAN members to use this [toolkit](#) to find an idea and some resources for taking action. One example we offer is to click on the [postcard image here](#) to download and print a supply to distribute. Have folks in your community or parish sign them and send them to their members of Congress.

Put your event on the map and find an event near you at www.nomuslimbanever.com/ and www.weareallusa.org/events

Building Momentum for Climate Action

Food and Water Watch sent out an exciting update last week. [More than 100 candidates](#) for the U.S. House and Senate have already committed to co-sponsor the Off Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act (OFF Act), which would halt all new fossil fuel development and commit America to 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2035.

The OFF Act is the strongest, most comprehensive climate and energy legislation ever introduced in Congress with a focus on the next 10 years as the critical timeline for action. This milestone shows the strength of the grassroots movement. If our current congress won't take the urgent action on climate that we need, we'll find people who will.

If you've got more questions or want to learn more, Food and Water Watch is joining People's Action, National Nurses United and People Demanding Action in hosting a webinar on the Off Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act on **Thursday, January 18th at 5p PT/ 8p ET.** Attendees will be provided with nuts-and-bolts details on the bill and given the opportunity to ask your questions. [Register for the webinar here.](#)



Scholarship Opportunity for Dreamers

As we continue to fight and wait for congress to find a permanent solution for DREAMers, there is a message of hope that you can share with your networks. Spread the word on your email list, Facebook and social media pages to let people know about The Opportunity Scholarship worth \$80,000. The application closes on January 23, 2018.



Sponsored by [The Dream.US](http://TheDream.US), The Opportunity Scholarship is for high school graduates who have DACA, TPS, or would have met the DACA eligibility criteria and live in states that do not

offer in-state tuition to DREAMers - or bar them from attending state colleges and universities altogether. The Scholarship is for up to \$80,000 to cover tuition, fees, and on-campus housing and meals for a bachelor's degree. For more info:

<http://www.thedream.us/scholarships/opportunity-scholarship>

