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Reflection Date: February 10, 2019 - 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Here I Am Lord

We often think that the term ordinary means something that's not very special, it is just kind of 'run of the mill'. Because of this, people sometimes think that the period in our liturgical calendar known as Ordinary Time refers to a period in the Church that is unimportant. In fact the word "ordinary" comes from the Latin word "ordo" which means "order." Ordinary Time is the time to reflect more deeply on the life of Jesus and what it means to follow him.

Our [first reading this Sunday](#) is from Isaiah 6. In it Isaiah says: "Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips;" Isaiah goes on to say: "He touched my mouth with it, and said, 'See, now that this has touched your lips, your wickedness is removed, your sin purged.'" Isaiah was symbolically purified of sin in preparation for his mission as God's prophet. The reading ends with: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?' 'Here I am, I said; send me!'"



One of my favorite Christian songs is *Here I am Lord*, written by Dan Schutte. He wrote it over 30 years ago in response to a request to have a new piece of music ready for the ordination of some new deacons. Some of the lines in the song are:

"Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord If You lead me
I will hold Your people in my heart."

People sometimes spend a great deal of time discerning the question, what is God calling me to do? Yet by our Baptismal Rite we are all called to be "priests, prophets, and kings." I think some folks take that too literally. Presidents Trump's press secretary Sarah Sanders recently said that God choose Mr. Trump to be President. Others like Rev. Franklin Graham have made the same claim. Of course in 2015, when the presidential campaign started, Gov. Rick Perry from Texas had a large group of Christian ministers who proclaimed that God had chosen *him* to be president. Sarah Sanders' father, Mike Huckabee also claimed that God had ordained him to be president.

I am pretty sure that when Isaiah said "Here I am Lord send me" that is not what he meant. Being the first, the best, the highest in the land is not what the prophet Isaiah envisioned. That's not even the most important phrase of the song, in my opinion. The key phrase in the song is the last one, which gives us the direction: "I will hold Your people in my heart." Perhaps, instead of

discerning what God is calling us to do, maybe we should consider how we hold God's people in our hearts.

Patrick Carolan
FAN Executive Director

Suggested Actions:

In contemplation this week, consider what you do for others. How you hold them in your heart, how you help them in their need.

Suggested Petitions:

May we confess our sins and open our hearts to the mercy and love of God's boundless forgiveness, we pray...

With clean hearts, may we have the courage to preach the Word and act as Jesus did, we pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,
they may be defended always by your protection.
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

Take Action: Shut Down Tornillo and Child Immigrant Detention

After the [tremendous success](#) in helping to convince the government to shut down the immigrant children's prison in Tornillo, Texas, our friends at Shut Tornillo Down Coalition will be in Washington, DC this week on Wednesday through Friday, February 6-8, lobbying to end immigrant detention. A press conference is in the works with Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Representative Judy Chu (D-CA27) who will be re-introducing their bills to shut down immigrant child detention.



For those people who cannot be in DC, you are **encouraged to visit the district offices of your congress people and make phone calls to congressional offices.** If you can help with any of these efforts, please email ShutTornilloDown@gmail.com and include in the subject-line of your email one of the following, so that they can follow up with more details:

- * I will come to DC
- * I will visit my district office
- * I will phone congressional offices

Once your email is received indicating how you can help, you will receive more details. In the meantime if you have any questions, feel free to contact Rosann Geiser on behalf of Shut Tornillo Down Coalition at rosanng@gmail.com

Resources for Annual Day of Prayer Against Human Trafficking

This Friday, February 8th is designated as an annual day of prayer against human trafficking. It is also the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. On February 8th, Catholics all over the world are encouraged to host or attend prayer services to generate greater awareness about human trafficking. For sample intercessions, prayers, and more ideas, visit this [2019 Day of Prayer Tool Kit](#).



For reference, the Migration and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development has released a set of guidelines to help the worldwide Catholic community eradicate human trafficking. The publication, [Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking](#), offers Catholic dioceses, parishes, religious congregations, schools and universities an in-depth reading and understanding of modern day slavery.

Additionally, the Catholic Health Association, U.S. Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking, and USCCB Migration and Refugee Services have come together to raise awareness about human trafficking through an exciting social media campaign. For more information about how to participate, go to the *Please Share on Social Media* section of [CHA's Human Trafficking website](#).

CMSM Petition to Banks: Move Investments Away from Private Prisons

We all know that immigrants are increasingly being detained, deported, and separated from their families, while the root causes of immigration remain under-addressed at best. As a first step to address the issue, the Conference of Major Superiors of men worked last fall with a [corporate accountability](#) campaign to petition Wells Fargo and JP Morgan



Chase to move their money from private prisons which profit from immigrant detention. Their efforts led to a positive direct meeting with Wells Fargo representatives and internal deliberation at JP Chase. We invite you to join CMSM in the next phase of the campaign.

Sign this [petition](#) which calls on the banks to move their money or else we will move and/or encourage others to move their money from these banks. Petition Deliveries and local branch actions are being planned for Feb. 14th (Valentine's Day) as part of this Show the Love campaign. We encourage members and friends to support these efforts on social media using this [Toolkit](#).

Ignatian Solidarity Network to Host Virtual Teach-in

Our friends at [Ignatian Solidarity Network](#) (ISN) work with a network of 150+ institutions (schools, universities, and churches — almost all Catholic, the majority affiliated with the Jesuits) throughout the year. Next month, they will examine the current realities of migration during their first annual [Virtual Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice](#).

The Teach-in will feature dynamic speakers, prayer, virtual networking, and shared reflection opportunities as attendees explore the realities of migration—both on the border and in communities across the country.

The [virtual Teach-In](#) will take place live on **Saturday, March 2 from 12:15pm ET-3:30pm ET/9:15am PT-3:30pm PT**. While our live participants will have additional virtual networking opportunities, all registered participants will be able to access the virtual IFTJ recordings and prayer/reflection resources to engage in the program at a later date.

For more information, [click here](#).



Tell Congress to Protect Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Families Seeking Protection

The Trump administration has set this year's refugee admissions goal at 30,000 - the lowest level in U.S. history. Last year, the administration failed to meet even half of their then-historically-low goal of 45,000. This is a drastic departure from the historic average annual admissions goal of 95,000.

Protecting vulnerable populations part of our faith tradition. We can and should protect refugees and others fleeing violence and persecution. **We urge our members to [sign your organization on to this Refugee Resettlement Letter](#) to Congress which**



was developed by our interfaith partners. Please note, this is for **organizations only** at this point. We will keep you informed if any individual sign on letters become available.

Additionally, **Members of Congress will be in their local offices from February 15th through February 24th.** We urge you to plan a visit to your elected officials. Especially as this will be the 116th Congress' first recess, it is a critical time when Senators and Representatives need to hear that their constituents care about refugees.

Here is a very [helpful toolkit](#) developed by our friends at Refugee Council USA (RCUSA). Additionally, there are more resources and background information on [RCUSA's website](#).

Help Locate Carla Valpeoz, Missing Detroit Woman

We have been made aware of a campaign by friends and colleagues of Carla Valpeoz, a Michigan resident who went missing in Peru in December 2018. She was there to attend a wedding of a friend, after which she stayed to explore the culture and country. She has been missing since Dec. 12th.

Carla is a local disability rights activist, restorative justice educator, and a beloved daughter, sister, and friend. Extensive searches have been conducted to no avail and now her family is requesting more help from outside sources.

This [petition](#) is addressed to the Pruvian Ministry of Internal Affairs, asking they request aid from the U.S. FBI to get agents on the ground in Peru, searching for Carla.

This [petition](#) is addressed to US Senators & Congress, asking for an FBI investigation into Carla's disappearance.

This recent [news article](#) quotes Carla's brother as saying the "family believes she may have been a victim of a crime..." We urge members to sign and share these petitions.



Registration is Open for Ecumenical Advocacy Days

[Ecumenical Advocacy Days](#) (EAD) for Global Peace with Justice will gather in Washington, D.C., April 5-8, 2019 for its 17th Annual Conference and we are happy to report that [registration is now open](#).

We urge all our members and friends to [register to attend](#) this year's EAD gathering. **We will again be hosting a meeting on Friday afternoon of all Franciscans in attendance. Please [let us know](#) if you will be coming.**



This year's theme is "Troubling the Waters for the Healing of the World -- #GoodTrouble." The history of engaging in #GoodTrouble is embedded in our faith tradition and this year's World Day of Peace Message from Pope Francis, which said, "Good politics is at the service of peace." The significance of our upcoming gathering cannot be understated. We gather at a time in which people of faith and conscience are again called to stand in the prophetic stream of those who have come before us, those who were not afraid to stir up #GoodTrouble for the sake of God's kingdom.

JFI Webinar Rescheduled due to Technical Difficulties

Last week, we reported to you about the first [Justice for Immigrants](#) (JFI) webinar that was scheduled for last Wednesday.

Due to technical difficulties, it has been rescheduled to this Thursday, Feb. 7th at 2PM Eastern / 11AM Pacific.

JFI apologized for the inconvenience and lost time. **Please note the new login link and Dial-in passcode below.**

On the webinar, partners working to assist migrants on the U.S./Mexico border will discuss some of the work they are doing. You can join on the computer with this login: <http://bit.ly/BorderWebinar> or on the phone with this Dial-In:(267) 279-9000 and Passcode: 649521#

Humanitarian Assistance at the US/Mexico Border and the Catholic Response

Thursday, February 7th, 2pm Eastern

Join JFI along with Casa Cornella, The Hope Border Institute and the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach as we give an update on the ongoing efforts along the US/Mexico Border.

HOPE
BORDER INSTITUTE
INSTITUTO FRONTERIZO ESPERANZA

 **ColumbanCenter**
for Advocacy & Outreach

Login: bit.ly/BorderWebinar
Dial- In: (267) 279-9000
Passcode: 649521#

Happening Now: Green New Deal Week of Action

For the last two years, the Trump Administration has [rolled back](#) numerous environmental protections driving us ever closer to climate chaos. [Now is a crucial moment to show the strength of our movement for climate justice.](#)

From February 4-8th, a broad coalition of environmental organizations and people like you are joining forces to send a strong signal to Congress that their constituents demand a [Green New Deal](#). Dozens of organizations and hundreds of volunteers are already hard at work organizing events at local Congressional offices to demand solutions that care for all of God's creation. Will you join us? [Search for an action in your community](#) to push your Representative to support a bold, ambitious Green New Deal!



The science is clear – we have just [12 years](#) to prevent the worst impacts of climate chaos. We can't afford more half-measures. We need bold, ambitious climate legislation to truly

address this threat. Together, we can tackle the threat of climate chaos and fight for the just transition that our environment and communities are counting on. [Click here to search for an event near you.](#)