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Reflection Date: March 18, 2018: The 5th Sunday of Lent

Anxiety and Freedom

Recently, as I drove to immigration court to accompany a woman and her two daughters seeking asylum, I thought about anxiety. I felt anxious about getting there on time, parking, etc., yet I knew that my apprehension was nothing compared to what this family felt at that moment. I thought about the tremendous anxiety in our world and how much was caused by the inhumane treatment of other human beings.



In [this week's Gospel](#), Jesus is anxious as he prepares for his last public act, his crucifixion and death. In four words "I am troubled now." (JN 12:27) Jesus gives all of humanity one last lesson, a lesson in what it is to experience and know the inhumanity human beings bestow on other human beings. Yet, through his anxiety Jesus continues to teach us. "Whoever serves me must follow me...I will draw everyone to myself." (JN 12: 26, 32) Even on the cross Jesus did not reject any human being.

Jeremiah reminds us that God wants all human beings to be free - a freedom that cannot be given by executive orders, tweets, or legislation. "I will write it upon their hearts--all shall know me, from least to greatest; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (JER 31:33-34) If we believe that all human beings are made in God's image and likeness, are we not disrespecting God when we disrespect one another's differences? When we consider or refer to human beings as "other" or as "aliens," what are we saying to God?

"This is the covenant that I will make." (JER 31:33) What is God calling us to today as part of this covenant, with this freedom? Perhaps our prayer this day is that each individual in our family of humanity may be present to the God-given identity deep within each of us and echo the psalmist "A steadfast spirit renew within me...a willing spirit sustain in me." (PS 51: 10,12)

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF
FAN Board Secretary

Suggested Action:

This week, consider the anxieties in your life. Pray to God to take these anxieties off your heart and believe that he is doing so.

Suggested Petitions:

For all people dealing with stress or anxiety, that their burden be eased through the power of the Holy Spirit. We pray....

As we continue through Lent, that we have an open heart to receive the gift of God's everlasting mercy and love. We pray...

Collect Prayer

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God,
may we walk eagerly in that same charity
with which, out of love for the world,
your Son handed himself over to death.
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

The DACA Deadline has Passed and Millions of Lives Hang in the Balance

Last week, as the March 5th deadline imposed on Congress by President Trump to pass legislation for DACA recipients passed, a rally of Dreamers and a large faith contingent occurred at the Capitol. FAN's own [Jason Miller was arrested](#) for civil disobedience, saying he was "inspired by the women religious and other Catholics who put their faith into action last week."

When the Supreme Court upheld injunctions pausing the president's executive action to end DACA, some used the opportunity to act like that solves the problem of protecting Dreamers. But that's not a solution. We need a pathway to citizenship, like the Dream Act, so Dreamers and their families are protected from the fear of deportation.

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition released a [statement](#) reaffirming the urgent protection needed for Dreamers. Coalition members offered statements from their faith traditions and collectively call on Congress to defund deportation, detention and border militarization. Here is an updated [Interfaith Toolkit](#) containing the Top 5 Ways to Take Action.

Congress will vote on a spending bill to fund the federal government before their deadline of March 23rd. The Trump Administration is asking that \$21.5 BILLION be included, essentially to ramp up deportation and build a border wall. From now until March 23rd, we must continue a steady and loud drumbeat to defund the hate agenda and pass the Dream Act. We urge members to **continue to call their members of Congress and support Dreamers.**



Boycott Wendy's and Fast for Action

For generations, farmworker women have endured some of the most hostile working conditions this country has to offer. In 2011, after nearly two decades of hard-fought organizing with consumers across the country, farmworker women and men with the [Coalition of Immokalee Workers](#) (CIW) launched the [Fair Food Program](#) (FFP) and, within a few short years, put an end to sexual assault and other human rights violations in the \$650 million Florida tomato industry. Today, the FFP extends to seven states and three crops, and all the major fast-food companies, with one exception: Wendy's.

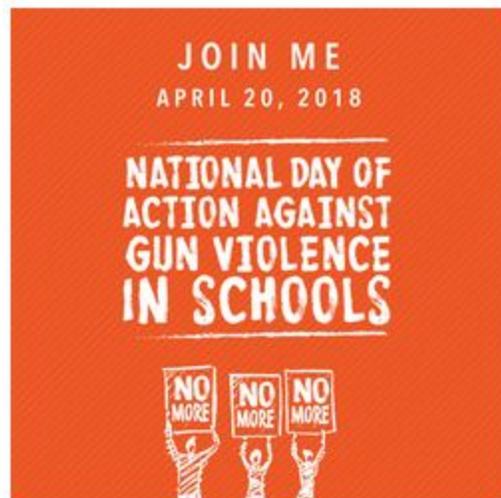


Yesterday morning, Sunday, March 11th, dozens of farmworkers and consumer allies from across the country began a five-day Freedom Fast to demand an end to sexual violence in the fields. They will be stationed around the clock outside Trian Partners, the hedge fund offices of Wendy's Board Chair Nelson Peltz, at 280 Park Avenue in Manhattan.

Supporters are encouraged to join them on site throughout the week. Those who aren't local can [register to fast](#) and send a message of solidarity for the fasters at organize@allianceforfairfood.org. These messages will be read on site each afternoon during the fast.

National Day of Action Against Gun Violence in Schools

The [Protect our Schools](#) movement is inspired by the courageous young people in Parkland, Florida and across the nation who are demanding our leaders take real action to end gun violence in this nation. On **April 20**, they are asking everyone to participate in a high-profile activity of your choosing that demonstrates your support for comprehensive legislative solutions and programs designed to reduce gun violence in schools. What ever action you are a part of, please wear orange (the color of the movement) in solidarity. [Click here to organize an action in your community](#).



April 20 marks the 19th anniversary of the massacre at Columbine High School when 12 students and one teacher were killed. Unfortunately, there have been far too many other school shootings since then: Virginia Tech. Chardon High. Umpqua Community College. Sandy Hook Elementary, and now Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. These are just some of the schools that have experienced shootings in recent years. We must stand up on April 20 and say NO MORE!

In the past, when gun tragedies happened, they attracted attention and mourning for a week or two before attention moved on to other issues. Only sustained movement and the work of many groups on many days to overcome the resistance to change. Protect Our Schools salutes all efforts to combat gun violence and is supportive of the [March for our Lives](#) on March 24th.

The [National Law Enforcement Partnership](#) released a statement calling on congress to implement a slate of reforms they recommend including background checks, a limit to high capacity weapons and ammunition, and more. [Read the full statement here.](#)

We encourage all members and friends to continue to talk about the need for common sense gun legislation, and lift up and participate in events in your area.

Celebrate National Catholic Sisters Week

[National Catholic Sisters Week](#) began last week on March 8th - International Women's Day. This annual celebration was created to honor women religious and is a series of events that instruct, enlighten and bring greater focus to the lives of these incredible women. It's our chance to recognize all they have done for us.

This year's iteration includes about 80 events funded by mini-grants to the hosting organizations and includes activities such as bowling with sisters, stand-up comedy/storytelling, and making chocolates.

The website is updated and has information on events in your area (you can search using your Zip Code) and a place to [register an event](#) you are aware of. Join us in acknowledging and thanking all the special sisters in our lives.



ONLINE EVENTS
MARCH 8-14

Register Now for the Food Justice, Faith, and the Ecological Imagination Summer Institute

Each year, the [Wake Forest University School of Divinity](#) Food, Health & Ecological Well-Being Program hosts a summer institute on food, faith and ecology in western North Carolina. Here, on holy ground, faith leaders gather for four days to participate in God's active renewal of the face of the earth and explore ways they are called to join God in that good work.



This year's Summer Institute will be led by Dr. Gary Paul Nabhan, a first generation Lebanese-American, ethnobotanist, agroecologist, literary naturalist and Ecumenical Franciscan Brother who is recognized internationally as a desert food scholar and farming activist.

[Registration is now open](#) for the "Food Justice, Faith, and the Ecological Imagination" Summer Institute taking place June 11-15, 2018. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Take Action: Comment on BLM Methane Rule Proposed Rollback

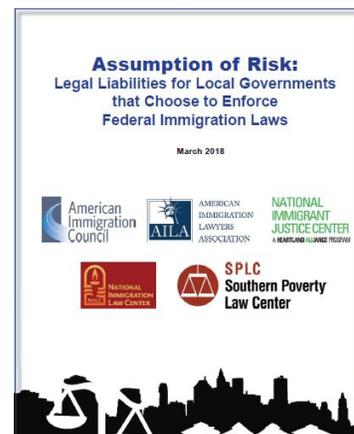
Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has [proposed](#) to rollback the Bureau of Land Management's methane waste rule, a move that puts polluters and lobbyists ahead of taxpayers, Western communities, and hard-working families. Our leaders should be prioritizing funding for communities and putting clean air in our lungs instead of gutting critical rules that cut methane emissions and making revisions to common sense rules just to appease special interests.



While the proposed rule is open for [public comment](#) generally, the Federal Register notice specifically requests comment on ways that the BLM can reduce the waste of gas by incentivizing the capture, reinjection, or beneficial use of the gas. Public comments on this proposed rule are due by April 23rd. [Click here to register your comment](#).

Immigration Lawyers Release Civil Rights Report

A [joint report](#) by attorneys from NIJC, American Immigration Council, American Immigration Lawyers Association, National Immigration Law Center, and Southern Poverty Law Center describes the legal liabilities local governments face when they honor ICE requests, known as "detainers," to hold individuals past the completion of their criminal custody until immigration agents take them into administrative custody.



This [report](#):

1. Outlines the constitutional and legal framework governing ICE detainers
2. Places the detainers programs in historical context
3. Describes the legally defective ways the Trump and Obama administrations have attempted to package these practices
4. Addresses the non-legal, moral and ethical costs that arise when local police take on federal immigration enforcement

Given the Department of Justice has issued a lawsuit against California for its sanctuary policies, and Attorney General Sessions has issued erroneous and hateful [remarks](#), we feel this new [civil rights report](#) provides a very helpful pushback for local governments.