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Reflection Date: May 5, 2019 - 3rd Sunday of Easter

“I am going fishing.”

Looking for a distraction from a deep feeling of let-down, a feeling too hard to bear, and even less to comprehend, Peter, [in this week's readings](#), is going back to what he knows best, fishing. I have to say that it is a reaction not very different from mine when I need something to distract me or help me deal with what I do not want to face yet, or I need time to come to terms with. I can procrastinate, do something I enjoy doing or that I am very familiar with, so I do not have to think. Peter had a lot on his mind, as did the six disciples who went with him.



However, it did not help and on top of it, fishing was not successful. The Gospel says that Peter and his friends “that night caught nothing.” So their sadness was compounded by disappointment and frustration. It is only when it was already dawn, the text says, that something different, unsettling and unexpected happened. A stranger dares to ask them, from the shore, if they caught anything and, even more daring he tells them to cast the net over the right side of the boat. I can only imagine Peter’s thinking: “Right, who are you to tell as how to fish?!” But they do it, maybe out of the desire to prove this daring stranger wrong or because they had nothing to lose anyway. We know the story...

It is at this moment, when something unforeseeable and really mind boggling happens, that their eyes were opened and they realized that only the Lord could have done such a miracle. The mood completely changes, from desperation to elation, so much so that Peter jumped into the sea...and they were treated to breakfast!

So it is the journey of faith, the Easter journey, our openness to the unexpected, big or small, that gives us the possibility to see with new eyes, what we cannot see if we remain closed in on ourselves, our own disappointments, fears, frustrations, and setbacks.

Following the Risen Jesus is to be open to new possibilities. He asks us to trust that life cannot, will not be the same, once we know that he is still present in our lives and in the lives of those we encounter every day, and so be ready to be challenged by the one we least expect.

Peter was now ready to be challenged about his love for Jesus and this time he passed the test: “Lord you know everything: you know that I love you.”

The Easter Season puts our expectations to the test. Are we ready to allow our life, our heart to be surprised by the novelty of the Easter message? Are we ready or willing to meet or find Jesus even in places we may not wish to go?

The apostles were ready: “We must obey God rather than men... So they left the presence of the Sanhedrin rejoicing that they had been found worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name.”

Can I say the same when I speak up for justice, for those who seek a better life in our country, for peace and a more merciful and humane world, and hope to be surprised with results? Yes, I want to be surprised and be able to sing: “Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!”

Sr. Maria Orlandini, OSF
FAN Director of Advocacy

Suggested Action:

Perhaps we will not suffer dishonor as the apostles did for the sake of Jesus’ name, so ask yourself: what am I willing to risk in my life or ministry in order to be in tune with the Easter Message?

Suggested Petitions:

Let us pray for all those who suffer persecution for the sake of their faith, that they may find in the message of the Resurrection the strength to continue to bear witness. We pray...

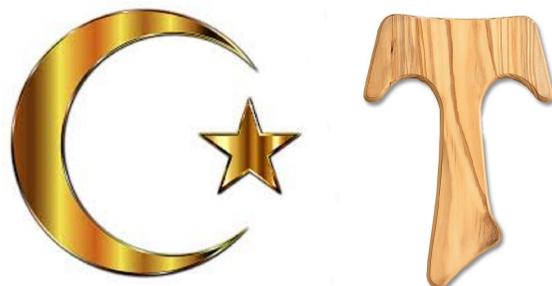
Collect Prayer:

**May your people exult for ever, O God,
in renewed youthfulness of spirit,
so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption,
we may look forward in confident hope
to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection.
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

Join Us: Franciscans To Fast in Solidarity with Muslims During Ramadan

The recent bombings in Sri Lanka, combined with the 800th anniversary of the meeting of St. Francis and Sultan Malik Al-Kamel during the 5th crusades, the staff of FAN has been daily thinking of our Muslim sisters and brothers. The president and vice president of the Centre for Islamic Studies in Sri Lanka released a [statement](#) last week which called for deeper investigations in to the attacks on Easter as well as urging an end to extremism in all forms.



You can [read the statement in full](#) on our website.

The Muslim holy observance of Ramadan begins next week at sundown on May 5th and continues to June 4th. Each year, during the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar, 1.5 billion Muslims participate in this season when, from sunrise to sunset, they fast from food, drink, and general sinful behavior, such as violence, arguing, and lying. It is seen as an opportunity for Muslims to rediscover their own belief, improve their character, and ensure they bring benefit to society. The idea is to develop a deeper understanding of where you are and what you have in order to become a better person.

Because we wish to stand in solidarity with our Muslim sisters and brothers, and honor their beliefs, we invite all our members and friends to [join us in a day of fasting on Friday, May 17th](#). On this day, we as Franciscans will fast for peace in all hearts, peace in all minds, and peace in our world. [Sign up here to join us](#).

Caring for God's Creation Continues Through Easter Season and Beyond

This Easter season we are reminded of new birth and resurrection as reasons why we care for God's creation. The trees are beginning to bud, the flowers are blooming and the lawn is starting to show signs that it needs mowing. Our good friends at the [Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns](#) sent the following hopeful actions as suggestions for us to take to care for Creation this Easter season.

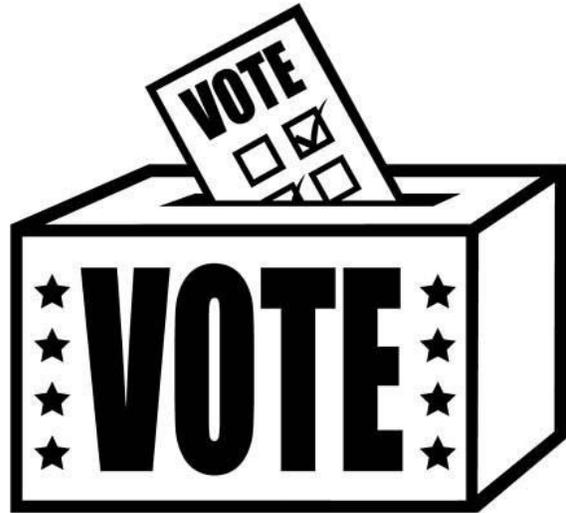


- 1. Support the Climate Action Now Act.** The House of Representatives is expected to vote in the next couple of weeks on the Climate Action Now Act (HR 9), which is intended to keep the U.S. in the Paris climate agreement. [Look for your Member of Congress here](#) and contact them urging their support of this important bill.
- 2. Sign onto Faith Principles for the Green New Deal.** The Franciscan Action Network has joined hundreds of other organizations in signing onto faith principles for a Green New Deal. [Click here to add your name](#). Deadline to sign is early May.
- 3. Join a webinar about "Catholic Social Teaching and the Green New Deal."** The Catholic Climate Covenant is hosting the webinar at 2pm Eastern / 11am Pacific, TOMORROW, Tuesday, April 30th. [Register for the webinar here](#).
- 4. Explore "Next Generation Rises."** Our friends at Creation Justice Ministries have developed an education, worship and action resource entitled "[Next Generation Rises](#)." It focuses on children and youth leading the way for creation justice. Find the resource [online here](#).
- 5. Sign up to host a FREE screening of "Paris To Pittsburgh."** Interfaith Power and Light is offering a free DVD to those who [sign up to host a screening](#) of this inspiring National Geographic film with your faith community. Hosts will receive the Hosting Packet to advertise and prepare for the event that includes additional faith-based questions for discussion, a helpful toolkit for event planning, language and images for newsletters and social media posts.

We hope you take advantage of these creation care resources.

Take Action: Submit a Comment on Secure Voting Systems

Right now, a set of guidelines for what's considered a secure voting system in the U.S. are being written. The voting system guidelines as drafted include very good language protecting the security of voting systems and the secrecy of the ballot. They also include an important provision requiring that systems be audited; that means every vote should be recorded on paper and reviewed by the voter before being cast. What they don't say is that voting systems **should not be online**.



Currently vendors are pushing machines with wireless and cell connectivity as a convenience for election officials for reporting unofficial election results, however any system with online connectivity increases the vulnerability of those systems and opens itself to hacking. We need to drive comments into the [U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#) (EAC) to make sure that voting systems do not include online connectivity.

We urge our members and friends to submit a unique comment urging the ban of wireless modems and Internet connectivity in voting systems. Comments should be sent to votingsystemguidelines@eac.gov.

Discussion on Refugee Livelihoods and Decent Work

On **Tuesday, April 30, at 10am EST / 7am PST**, the [International Rescue Committee](#) and [Solidarity Center](#) will co-host a discussion on a recurring challenge in refugee livelihood efforts: the lack of sustainable and decent employment. People in the Washington, D.C. metro area are encouraged to attend in person, however a video conferencing option is available for those in need. For more information, RSVP to: Neha Misra at nmisra@solidaritycenter.org



Self-reliance is increasingly central to the refugee aid narrative. Humanitarian organizations worldwide are now engaged in creating economic opportunities for refugees, bringing a new perspective to work on jobs that has long been dominated by development agencies, global lenders, and private actors. This event seeks to spark dialogue about lessons learned in this field over the past few years.

FAN and Interfaith Good Governance Work Featured

in NETWORK's Connections Magazine

FAN's executive director, Patrick Carolan was proud to author an article for NETWORK's most recent issue of "[Democracy: Our Right and Responsibility](#)."



This quarterly magazine managed to cover a breadth of topics impacting how our democracy works (or should work).

This latest issue also includes contributions from Common Cause and the League of Women Voters as well as a guest column by Stacey Abrams "Demanding a Fair Fight in All Elections." We hope you will take a moment to look through it.

Take Action: Call your Senator and Urge Support for VAWA

The [Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) sent out a Native American Legislative Update last week with important information. On April 4th, the House passed H.R. 1585, a bill to reauthorize the [Violence Against Women Act](#) (VAWA).



The bill included several strong provisions for Native American women. It would expand tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians to include crimes of sexual assault, stalking, sex-trafficking, and child abuse. The bill also contains Savanna's Act, a bill from the 115th Congress. It addresses the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women by improving responses to cases and data collection. Now H.R. 1585 now moves to the Senate for a vote.

We encourage our members and friends to [contact your senators](#) and urge them to **support reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.**

Take Action: Sign Petition to Close the Homestead Child Detention Center

The U.S. government is currently holding over 2,000 child migrants, many of whom have been separated from their families by U.S. immigration officials, in a detention center in Homestead, Florida. Most have fled violence and poverty in Central America and are seeking asylum in the United States.

Instead of being released to family members or other sponsors, many are spending weeks or months in inhumane detention. And



because Homestead is an emergency influx center, children are not protected by agreements that ordinarily ensure licensing and other standards are met. We urge our members and friends to [sign the petition](#) to stop immigrant child detention today.

After last week's decision by Attorney General Barr to deny a asylum seekers a bond hearing to argue for their release, we increase our [efforts to speak up](#) for those attempting to escape violence and poverty in their home countries.

All children deserve to live in safety and peace. It's time to reunite children with their loved ones. [Sign the petition today.](#)