

Publication Date: May 14, 2018

Reflection Date: May 20, 2018: Pentecost ([Mass during the day](#))

A Call to be the Fire of Love, Integrity, and Compassion

As I anticipate this upcoming feast of Pentecost there is a deep yearning within me to see and experience some signs of newness, change and renewal. The Pentecost experience that we hear proclaimed in [this Sunday readings](#) speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit as the birth of the church. The reading from the Acts of the Apostles recorded the events which transformed the once reluctant disciples, fearful of the Romans and Jewish leaders, into fearless proclaimers and evangelizers of Christ and the Kingdom of God.

Are we content with simply remembering the past and celebrating what happened thousands of years ago? Where and how do we experience the presence of Christ and the boldness of the Spirit today? Where and how do we experience the winds of life and goodness blowing new life in the places where disciples of Christ gather? Where and how are we touched by the presence of Christ and the Spirit as if tongues of fire came down and rested on each believer? Where and how are we moved to go forth fearless and empowered to be witnesses and evangelizers incarnating Christ's presence in our world today?

What might this change look like in our church, in our national government and throughout the world? Dare we hope to see ourselves, our ordained leaders, ministers and our civic and national leaders as servants of the people? Imagine how engaged and enlivened people and communities would become if they felt that their voices were heard and that the concerns of those most in need were respected, realized and fulfilled.

I've heard the following or similar words repeated over and over on TV, on the radio and from common folks, "We are allowing bizarre behavior to become normalized without complaining, questioning or calling for change." Have we allowed our spirits and souls to become lulled and complacent into thinking that either individually or even together we cannot make a difference or change a seemingly hopeless situation?

One has only to read the newest document, [Gaudete et Exsultate](#), of Pope Francis to be reaffirmed and challenged with how much we can do as persons of faith and communally as people of faith. In the section entitled Boldness and Passion (129-133), Pope Francis writes that holiness is parrhesía, that is, holiness is to live with a boldness and with freedom. This boldness or freedom is not grounded in ourselves or in our own ego. In order for our boldness and freedom to be genuine and used for the goodness and well-being of others it must be rooted in Christ and open to following the will of God.



As we celebrate this Pentecost let us truly be renewed and enlivened by the Spirit of God. “We need the Spirit’s prompting, lest we be paralyzed by fear and excessive caution, lest we grow used to keeping within safe bounds. Let us remember that closed spaces grow musty and unhealthy. When the Apostles were tempted to let themselves be crippled by danger and threats, they joined in prayer to implore parrhesía: “And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness” (Acts 4:29). As a result, “when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

Let our spirits, our places of worship and gathering be shaken with the boldness of God’s compassionate and loving Spirit. “Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.”

Sr. Margaret Magee, OSF
FAN Board President

Suggested Action:

Take time this week and read [Gaudete et Exsultate](#).

Suggested Petitions:

May our hearts be open to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which You bestow on us freely, we pray...

With the grace of the Holy Spirit within us, may we act with boldness to renew the face of the earth, we pray...

Collect Prayer: (From Mass During the Day)

**O God, who by the mystery of today’s great feast
sanctify your whole Church in every people and nation,
pour out, we pray, the gifts of the Holy Spirit
across the face of the earth
and, with the divine grace that was at work
when the Gospel was first proclaimed,
fill now once more the hearts of believers.
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

Vigil Held on May Day in NH; DACA Immigration

Legislation Update

On May 1st, Texas and six other states filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas challenging the 2012 DACA program itself. This is following multiple lawsuits which were filed across the country last Fall challenging the Trump administration's actions to terminate DACA.



The [Justice for Immigrants](#) campaign has a [one-page fact sheet](#) that answers some questions about the newest lawsuit and the [National Immigration Law Center](#) has updates on the current status of this and other lawsuits.

FAN members and friends continue to work for a comprehensive solution for children of Immigrants. At a May Day vigil in New Hampshire marking one year of protest over national immigration policies, interfaith clergy and affected people urged for a way to make sure people who wish to be citizens can find their way, without breaking up families. FAN member, Fr. Sam Fuller, OFM, Cap (*pictured*) offered a prayer and a reflection during the vigil. You can [read more about the vigil here](#).

In the House, a bipartisan group, led by Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA) and Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA), and 246 of their colleagues are supporting the [Queen-of-the-Hill rule](#) to allow a vote on four immigration bills. This is a rarely used rule and a sign that Members of Congress from both parties are frustrated that there has been no action yet to protect Dreamers.

Now, Rep. Denham has introduced a discharge petition on the Queen of the Hill resolution. THIS IS A VERY BIG DEAL. If a simple majority of the House signs the discharge petition the House would be forced to vote on bills to protect Dreamers. **The progress being made is very encouraging and we will continue to update you on actions you can take.**

“Pope Francis - A Man of His Word” Opens Friday

This Friday, May 18th in many theaters nationwide, is the premiere of the movie on the life of Pope Francis entitled, "[A Man of His Word](#)". Watch the official trailer for the Wim Wenders' film on [YouTube](#).



From YouTube: *“Pope Francis - A Man of His Word,” is intended to be a personal journey with Pope Francis, rather than a biographical documentary about him. The pope’s ideas and his message are central to this documentary, which sets out to present his work of reform and his answers to today’s global questions. From his deep concern for the poor and wealth inequality, to his involvement in environmental issues and social justice, Pope Francis engages the audience*

face-to-face and calls for peace.

We urge all our members and friends to find a theater near you, invite a friend and go see [Pope Francis - A Man of His Word](#).

Join in a Worldwide Prayer Vigil for Peace in Israel and Palestine

After today's formal relocation of the American embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, religious leaders of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities of the United States are calling for an evening of prayer for peace in Israel/Palestine. (AFP Photo/Mohammed Abed)



The decision to move the embassy could [cause significant tension](#) as it poses a major setback to the goal of a Jerusalem shared by Palestinians and Israelis and by Jews, Christians, and Muslims. It acknowledges the importance of Jerusalem to Israelis while neglecting the Palestinian history of the city.

May 14th is also the 70th anniversary of Israel's independence. While this event is being celebrated, we must not forget the Palestinian's commemorate the 70th anniversary of their *Nakba*, (catastrophe), which resulted in one of the largest refugee populations in the world.

We urge other faith communities to [say a prayer](#) for a commitment to nonviolence by both Palestinians and Israelis. In Washington, FAN staff plan on attending an interfaith prayer vigil at the White House, tomorrow evening, Tuesday, May 15th.

Take Action: Arctic Drilling Once Again Planned

The Department of the Interior is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to conduct oil and gas leasing in the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This notice is the beginning a 60-day public comment period that will run through June 19, 2018.



During this stage, Interior will be looking at alternatives, areas to lease, terms and conditions that need to apply to the leases and other industrial activities, and how to address potential impacts to the fish, wildlife, and other sensitive resources on the Coastal Plain. **Interior has said they plan to rush through the environmental review process and attempt to hold a lease sale in just over a year.**

The [National Religious Partnership for the Environment](#) (NRPE) is encouraging the faith community to send in comments or sign a petition to halt the rush to drill with the goal to get 15,000 comments by June 19. Below are links to these two ways to take action.

[Send comments to Dept of Interior](#) AND

[Sign a petition through Faithfortheartctic.org](https://faithfortheartctic.org)

We urge our members and friends to take action.

All Against the Wall: Action in New Mexico

Border residents are united in opposition to the militarization of our border. They are calling for unity at an [action in Santa Teresa, New Mexico](#) on June 2nd to reclaim our space, oppose the militarization of our border, and the first major construction of the border wall.

The event is co-sponsored by [NM Comunidades en Acción y de Fé](#), [ACLU Border Rights Center](#), and the [Southwest Environmental Center](#).

From the [event page](#):

“Over the last two decades, the United States has militarized the southern border region with little regard to its negative impact on our communities, wildlife, and environment. We are standing in the breach of this blatant disregard and disrespect for human life and sacred lands. The barriers that separate us physically and metaphorically allow for ALL communities to come together in resistance to this destructive and divisive border wall that grows stronger and stronger every day.

*We invite people from around the region and nation to stand with us. **Join us on Saturday, June 2, 5-8 pm**, where we will gather in solidarity in the path of construction to demonstrate to the world our unequivocal rejection of the militarization of our border.”*

