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Reflection Date: August 4, 2019 - 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

You Fool...

“If today you hear his voice, harden not your heart.” As I begin this reflection, I ask myself this question over and over again: What is God’s message that I need to be open to hear to-day? If you wish, do the same, ask yourself the same question before you continue reading.

For me, God’s voice could not be louder and clearer in this [18th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) readings: “Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions.” Lk. 12:14



We (the human race) have sold ourselves a big lie. We have convinced ourselves that being successful, thus happy, is linked to what we possess in money, material things and intellectual capacity: the bigger, the more, the better. The rich man of the gospel certainly represents this belief. In fact, instead of sharing what he had unexpectedly acquired in abundance, he does not hesitate to build larger barns for his exceptional harvest and say to himself: “You have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!” Then God says to him:

“YOU FOOL, this night your life will be demanded of you,
you will not be able to carry your barns with you!”

What is it with us humans that in spite experiences of life to the contrary we continue to believe that “bigger barns” are the proof of having made it in life, of being blessed by God’s goodness? We continue to believe what has been disproven by common sense or even by science.

We seem not to hear, or at least not believe, the New Testament warnings against greed and the constant invitation to love simplicity of life, in order to grow in Christ. The letter to the Colossians invites us to: “Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires, and the greed that is idolatry... even further: “Stop lying to one another.” Indeed, we are all caught in a big lie.

We as a country, and the world as well, are living a moment of history of deep confusion, when human values placed in our hearts by the Almighty are abandoned and substituted with the almighty dollar; when the world is more then ever divided by the have and have-nots, by the place where we come from and by the color of our skin. In the midst of this, today I hear God’s voice suggesting to us: you fool, is that going to matter when life is going to be demanded of you? How much can you take with you? It is not what you had that will be remembered of you, but what you were able to share of possessions, your welcome to others, your effort to create a more compassionate and livable world for future generations. And so...

If I want to be honest with myself and listen to God’s voice, I cannot miss this clear teaching:

“Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all in all.”

May we heed God’s Word.

Sr. Maria Orlandini, OSF
FAN Director of Advocacy

Suggested Action:

As you think of your life in the past five years, ask yourself if God could have a reason to call you too, a fool.

Suggested petitions:

Let us pray for all those who are not accepted by society. We pray...

Let us pray for ourselves that we may listen to God’s voice and try not to fall into the seduction of greed. We pray...

Let us pray that we, as a country, open our hearts to welcome refugees at the border no matter the color of their skin. We pray...

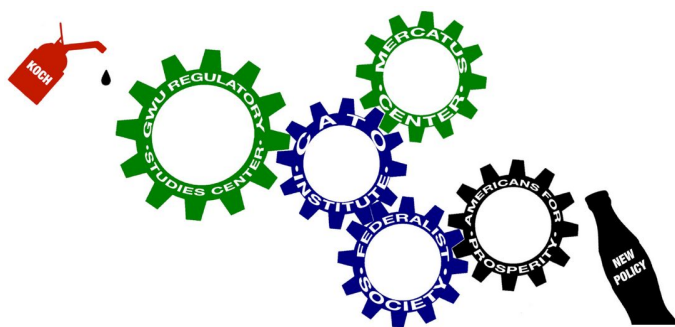
Prayer:

**Draw near to your servants, o Lord,
and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness,
that for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide,
you may restore what you have created
and keep safe what you have restored.
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.

Demand the Koch Network Stop Funding Junk Science to Spread Doubt on Climate Change

According to a well-researched [report from Public Citizen](#), Charles Koch has had help from strategists who have drawn up blueprints for integrating different types of organizations to achieve policy changes. According to this [article in Common Dreams](#), this is another example of how the “Koch brothers use their immense wealth to influence university research and spread their corporate-friendly ideology.”



According to the [report](#), much of the work from Koch-funded Regulatory Studies Center (RSC) operated by George Washington University, revolves around providing "scholarly rationales against government regulation" of corporate America. What that means is the RSC gets pseudo-scientific organizations to produce and promote junk science that spreads doubt about the climate crisis.

FAN has joined several organizations in this [petition](#) to demand an end to Koch Industries' funding of junk science. We hope you will [consider signing](#).

Take Action: Sign up to Host or Attend a Voting Rights Vigil

August 6 is the 54th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. In June 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court's *Shelby County v. Holder* decision served to gut the VRA, giving individual states the ability to pass a wave of new restrictive voting laws that disproportionately impact people of color.

This August 6th, activists across the country are mobilizing to demand action. [Sign up to host or attend an event](#) calling for the restoration of the Voting Rights Act.

Voter ID laws, gerrymandering and voter purges are just a few of the barriers voters have encountered in the 20 states that have passed restrictive voting laws. Protecting the right to vote for every citizen is critical to a functioning democracy, which is why passing the Voting Rights Advancement Act (HR-4) to fix the Supreme Court's ruling is a major priority.

Join us on August 6, the anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, by hosting or attending a VRA Vigil in your community. [Find an event near you](#).

SHINE A LIGHT



FOR DEMOCRACY

Tell Congress to Declare a Climate Emergency Now

Since the [National Climate Emergency Declaration](#) was released, activists like you have signed up for more than 110 office visits to ask Representatives and Senators to sign on to the Declaration. Fantastic! **Join us in a follow up call in drive this week!**

Announced by several Congressional leaders, the declaration expresses the sense of



Congress that climate change is a national emergency and demands an "economically just and managed phase-out of oil, gas and coal to keep fossil fuels in the ground" as part of a "national, social, industrial, and economic mobilization of the resources and labor of the United States at a massive-scale to halt, reverse, mitigate and prepare for the consequences of the climate emergency and to restore the climate for future generations." The resolution has since gained the support of every major presidential candidate in the Senate and over 35 members of the House.

There is no more time for multi-decade solutions or small steps forward. If we don't act now, Earth could become uninhabitable in a matter of decades. This is exactly the momentum we need to continue. First, we encourage you to educate yourself by reading this [declaration fact sheet](#). Then, **call your Representative using this hotline: 202-915-5634. It will ask you to type in your ZIP code and you will be immediately connected to your Rep's office.**

If your Representative has already signed on, contact your Senators at this hotline: 202-915-3748 - or by [going to this link](#).

If you haven't yet, we urge our members and friends to [sign the petition](#) showing your commitment to solving this crisis.

Take Action: Sign Letter of Support to our Immigrant and Refugee Family

Our good friends at Faith in Public Life have created a [solidarity letter](#) for people of faith to sign to send a message to our immigrant and refugee family: we are with you. In these trying times, we remain committed to taking action against hateful and immoral policies that target our neighbors and people seeking safety from violence and poverty.



The letter is a way of reaching out to our immigrant family directly in love and support as we know the anxiety, stress, and fear people are experiencing from the border to our congregations. Please [consider signing](#) as this letter is **open to all people of faith**.

As people of faith, we will continue to work to dismantle all systems of oppression that harm our immigrant neighbors, both at the border and in our communities nationwide.

Job Opening: FAN Seeking New Executive Director

Like the work we do? Think you'd like to work with us?

The Franciscan Action Network is currently seeking an [Executive Director](#) to grow and forward its mission: *Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus, and the example of Saints Francis and Clare, the Franciscan Action Network*

Franciscan Action Network



(FAN) is a collective of Franciscan voices seeking to transform United States public policy related to care for creation, poverty, human rights, and peacebuilding. The Executive Director will provide leadership for the organization with a focus on fundraising, public relations, community engagement, programming and fiscal management.

Resume and cover letter should be sent to jobs@franciscanaction.org and include the words "Executive Director" in the subject line. See the [full job description and qualifications](#) on our website. **Deadline for applying is by September 15, 2019.**