

Publication Date: September 17, 2018

Reflection Date: September 23, 2018: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time:

---

## Receive and Welcome Christ

“Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me.”

The words from this [Sunday's Gospel](#) should cause all Americans to pause. How do we, as a country, receive children?

Our government has been globally transparent in its disregard on the care for children. Our country is the only United Nations member state that is not a party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which aims to protect and promote the rights of all children around the world. Furthermore, the United States recently notified the United Nations that it will no longer take part in the global compact on migration, sending a signal to the global community how our government regards children who have fled their homes due to war (think Syria), gang violence, and environmental disasters.



Each day, approximately 3,000 children are aborted in the United States. While the United States is technically not at war, 87 percent of the children in the world killed by guns are killed in our country. Do we love our guns more than we love our children? While climate change and the destruction of the environment impact the human rights of all people, those of children both now and in the future are of great concern.

The United States is also now known as a country where babies are torn from their mothers' arms because the mother made the decision to flee violence and war to save her child and herself. The world's media was permeated with images of children forcibly separated from their parents in the United States and then "housed" in fenced cages. Government agencies have handed over (inadvertently) unaccompanied children to human traffickers.

“Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me.” At one time, other nations used to look to the United States as a beacon of hope that would protect and promote human rights around the world. How does the world see us today? How do we see ourselves? Our Catholic social tradition impels us to uphold all human life, to make decisions that will allow all peoples to have what they need to live with dignity, to uphold the family as the central social institution and that in our shrinking global world all people are our neighbor. As followers of Christ and as Franciscans, we strive to model the tradition of “welcome” that has been handed down to us through the legacies of Francis and Clare. We strive to receive each child, each human being, as “brother” and as “sister,” as a gift from God. In our attempts to receive and welcome each person, we receive and welcome Christ.

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF

FAN Board Member

**Suggested Action:**

This week, make a conscious effort to see the face of God in each person you meet.

**Suggested Petitions:**

May we strive to see God in each child, woman, and man we encounter each day and treat them as a loving gift from God, we pray...

For those children who are displaced, separated, or afraid; May they know the comfort of the Lord, we pray...

**Collect Prayer:**

**O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbor, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life.**

**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 Today for Endangered Species

The Endangered Species Act is today's modern Noah's Ark for species protection and is the strongest tool available to prevent species from going extinct forever. However, the Trump Administration is trying to weaken regulations regarding the Endangered Species Act.



As stewards of God's creatures we must work to preserve this bedrock conservation law. [Click here](#) to submit your opposition to the Trump Administration's proposal to weaken the Endangered Species Act. Our friends at the [National Religious Partnership for the Environment](#) (NRPE) are collecting and sending in comments, which are **due by Sept. 24th**. NRPE doesn't keep names or contact information. Please take action and [make a comment today](#).

We cannot let the last line of defense fade away for God's creation. [Act now](#) to let your faith voice be heard on behalf of God's creatures.

## National Council of Churches “Get Out the Vote” Webinar Series

In their ongoing efforts to end racism in our country, the National Council of Churches [announced](#) it will be hosting a series of webinars every other Tuesday, beginning on September 4th until election day. They are aware of the technical issues that occurred during their first webinar and believe the problem is fixed. If you have [registered](#) but have not received the link necessary to enter the webinar, [let them know by email](#).



The series aims to “provide constituents with resources and tools to develop a non-partisan get-out-the-vote campaign that can make a measurable difference in their community. Topics will include organizing non-partisan candidate forums, understanding what congregations can and cannot do during elections, and strategies to improve local voter turnout. Attendees will be able to participate in the live webinars as well as have access to the playback following each recording.”

This **Tuesday, September 18 at 8pm ET / 5pm PT** the topic will be Local Elections Matter! LaKesha Womack will be joined by Amelia Kegan of the Friends Committee on National Legislation. During this session, attendees will be provided a guide to hosting non-partisan candidate events to connect the voters with the issues and the candidates.

[Click here](#) for more information on the series. [Register to participate here](#).

## Take Action: Urge Congress to Repeal the Muslim Ban

In January 2017, people rushed to the airports and the streets when the Muslim Ban, the first of many racist actions committed by the Trump administration, was announced. Today, families are STILL being torn apart and hurt by this ban every day. We can't let this disgraceful act fall off our radar in the chaos of this presidency. [Sign this petition today](#).

In a decision that will forever stain our history and the legacy of the U.S. Supreme Court, our nation's highest court ruled in favor of this ban. [Now Congress can end it by defunding it](#).



Congress is back in session and there are bills in each house which would “block the implementation of certain presidential actions that restrict individuals from certain countries

from entering the United States.” Call on your elected officials and tell them to repeal the ban by co-sponsoring either [HR 4271](#) or [S 1979](#). Members of both parties agree: this Muslim Ban is blatantly unconstitutional and offensive. [Tell your members of Congress](#) to #RepealTheBan.

## FAN Participates in Welcome Refugee Rally at White House

Last week, FAN was in attendance as leaders of several Christian denominations gathered at the White House to call on the Trump administration to #Welcome75k refugees. FAN's own Patrick Carolan was interviewed by [Catholic News network](#), [EWTN](#). You can watch the clip by [clicking here](#).



After setting the lowest refugee admissions goal in history last year - 45,000 - and admitting less than half of even that low number, now the Trump administration is reportedly planning to set an even lower bar next year to admit only 25,000 refugees or even fewer in Fiscal Year 2019. Faith leaders, refugee leaders, business and community partners are outraged by the administration's continued slashing of the refugee program and are asking to raise this number and welcome 75,000 refugees in 2019. This ask is far lower than the average number set for the refugee admissions goal since 1980 - 95,000 and represents a good faith effort to restore our nation's commitment to welcome refugees in need of resettlement. Here is a [Refugee Arrivals fact sheet](#) for reference which compares FY2017 and FY2018.

As Franciscans, we must continue to welcome the stranger and stand up for refugee rights.

## Take Action for Clean Car Standards: Submit a Comment; Sign a Petition

In last week's newsletter, we advised you of the significant role existing Clean Car Standards play in addressing climate change and reducing air pollution. We remind you this week to [submit a comment](#) offering reasons we as Franciscans who care for all of God's creation, want to see this proposal defeated.



In addition, our friends at [Interfaith Power and Light](#) are asking clergy, faith organization leaders, and individuals to sign on to a petition to the Ford motor company, urging they stand by the Clean Car Standards. We urge you to [sign the petition](#) to make sure faith voices are heard. **Signatures are due by Sept. 20th.**

