

Published: September 24, 2018

Reflection for: September 30, 2018 – 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

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## Make No Distinctions

This week's [scriptures readings](#) acknowledge that God calls all people to be part of the kingdom without making distinctions among groups, races, or nationalities.

In the first reading, God bestowed the spirit on Moses and the elders and they begin to prophesy. Eldad and Medad were not present with the others but they also received the spirit and began to prophesy. One young man complained to Moses that the two outsiders should not be prophesying. Moses rejected this complaint because he believed in inclusiveness and no one should be left out of the benefits of God's spirit.

In the second reading, James criticizes those who have become wealthy by taking advantage of others. James leaves us with the presumption that God will carry out appropriate justice toward them.

In the Gospel, as in the First Reading, John comes to Jesus to complain that someone who was not a member of the disciples was expelling demons in the name of Jesus. Jesus makes it clear that he has no problem with this and makes no distinction between "outsiders" and "insiders". Jesus makes a strong statement that he would only have a problem with those who would harm the faith of others.

It is very clear in all of the readings for this Sunday that Jesus' call for his disciples to spread the good news is a universal call and is not contingent on Membership in a certain group, social class, or race.

This is a message for our country today if we also want to be a member of God's Kingdom!

Sr. Marge Wissman  
FAN Board Member

### **Suggested Action:**

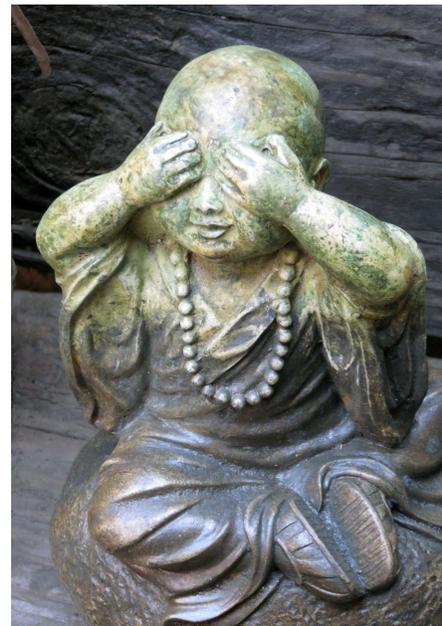
Embrace Jesus' call for acceptance of ALL people without distinction.

### **Suggested Petitions:**

That we may accept all remembering that all are made to the Image and Likeness of God. We pray...

That if we experience someone being left out, we draw them into the circle. We pray...

### **Prayer by St. James:**



Lord, you have given us your word  
as a light to shine on our path.  
Inspire us to meditate on that word and follow its teaching,  
so that we may find in it the light  
that shines more and more until it is a perfect day.

Amen

## Prayers Needed for a Good Friend of FAN

The staff of FAN learned this week that our very good friend, Gerry Lee of the [Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns](#) has been diagnosed with inoperable pancreatic cancer.

Gerry has been a long time friend of everyone here at FAN and we hope you will join us in keeping him and his family in our prayers. For anyone who would like to send a card, you can send them care of Susan Gunn at the Maryknoll Offices. She will be collecting them and assuring that Gerry and his family get them:



Maryknoll OGC Mailing address: c/o Susan Gunn, Maryknoll OGC, 200 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009

## Families Belong Together Week of Action

**This week**, the [Interfaith Immigration Coalition](#) and [Faith in Public Life](#) are coordinating a **week of action which includes a national call-in day** to call on Congress to [protect families](#) and stop fueling unjust detention, deportation, and border policies.

While the national crisis of family separation and harmful immigration enforcement persists, Congress has an important role to play. Right now, Congress is determining how to fund the government after September 30, 2018. They are debating pouring billions more dollars into immigration detention and enforcement, and considering legislation that could allow for the indefinite detention of children with their parents. People of faith and conscience must make our voices heard that all families deserve to be treated humanely.



There are a number of ways to [take action this week](#). First and foremost, we encourage all members to make a **call to your Members of Congress on Wednesday, September 26th**. Remember you must call (866) 940-2439 three times to be connected to your 2 Senators and

1 Representative. There is a [sample script available here](#).

This [toolkit](#) also has sample social media posts and other resources to take action for families all week.

## Survey Data on Guns and School Safety

Last week, the [Children's Defense Fund](#) released an issue brief and data tables related to gun violence and school safety based on a recent Parent and Child Trends Survey. The survey conducted by YouGov, polled 5,500 children and parents, and was conducted to amplify their concerns of the prevalence of guns in our society today.



The data shows troubling reality that school shootings are among the top concerns for children and their parents, ranking higher than typical childhood concerns such as fitting in with others or facing peer pressure. You can access the [full report here](#).

## Take Action: Demand Congress hold Secretary Ryan Zinke accountable

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has proposed gutting Bears Ears and Grand Staircase -Escalante National Monuments. He wants to massively ramp up oil and gas drilling off our coasts. And he's trying to slash protections for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Right now there are 14 federal investigations into Zinke's decision-making, misuse of funds, and potential corruption. We can't continue to allow the destruction of our wild places and communities for the benefit of private developers to the fossil fuel industry.

[Sign this petition](#) demanding Congress hold Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke accountable for his potential ethics violations. Even if it means calling for him to be removed from his position.



## Honduran Journalists and Human Rights Defenders Struggle for Safety

In January of this year, FAN's Director of Advocacy, Sr. Maria Orlandini was part of a delegation to Honduras, heading down to show support for the



Honduran people in their struggles with their government. We invite you to [read Sr. Maria's blog post](#) about her trip.

The Honduran citizens have regularly appealed to Congress for help, presenting first hand accounts of the disturbing pattern of human rights abuses in their country and calling for an end to U.S. Security Aid, which supports ongoing state-sponsored violence towards Honduran land and human rights defenders.

Advocates in the U.S. can support the Honduran people by continuing to raise awareness of their situation. Educate yourself on the plight of the Honduran people. Read this [executive summary](#) of a delegation who was in country in May and this [grant proposal](#) for funds to rebuild a public radio tower. Both of these documents contain vital and stark background information on the current situation.

Recently, FAN was one of 31 U.S.-based organizations and 5 private individuals who signed on to a letter addressed and delivered this week to Heide Fulton, Chargé d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa. The letter expressed the signers' profound concern over recent threats to human rights defenders and journalists in Honduras, and asked U.S. officials to press the Honduran government to uphold the right to freedom of expression and to endorse the suspension of U.S. security assistance to the Honduran government. You can [read the letter in full here](#).

Please continue to pray for the Honduran people and raise awareness of their situation in your community.

## Take Action: Tell EPA to Follow its Mission

As we celebrate the [Season of Creation](#) and work to [live the change](#) in our personal lives, we also see the need for our government agencies to effectively enact policies that will protect the environment. As people of faith, we are called to care for our common home, which includes reducing contributions to climate change and its effects. This is a time of ecological crisis, where the impacts of carbon pollution are being faced more frequently and in greater intensity. We must [call on our Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) to follow its mission](#) to "protect human health and the environment."

Last October, the Trump administration announced the repeal of the Clean Power Plan and last month, the EPA unveiled their replacement plan. Dubbed the "Affordable Clean Energy" (ACE) rule, the replacement plan allows states to decide *not only how but if* they will reduce their carbon pollution. Based on the EPA's own estimates, the replacement could cause up to 1,400 premature deaths annually by 2030 due to increased air particulates. This ACE rule falls short of the EPA's mission and the faithful call to care for creation.

We urge all members to [make a personal comment to the EPA](#). Tell them that, as people of faith, we believe in caring for our common home and the administration's replacement plan does not live up to this sacred obligation.



## FAN Responds to Immorally Low Refugee Resettlement Limit

The United States Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, announced last week that the Administration will set the level of refugees allowed into the United States, at 30,000 refugees for 2019. This is the lowest number set in the history of the U.S. refugee admissions program which was formally created in 1980.

In response to this announcement, FAN staff attended a [rally in front of the White House](#) (pictured) to voice their concern and ask Congress to work with the Trump administration to more than double that number. FAN Intern Michael Specht wrote this [blog](#) about being there.



Statements were released by multiple faith based organizations, including the [US Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) and the [Interfaith Immigration Coalition](#), where FAN's Patrick Carolan stated, "As Catholics and Franciscans, we believe in the message of Pope Francis in his address to Congress. He talked about the magnitude of the current refugee crisis in our world today and that instead of concern over the sheer number of refugees, instead we need to view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories. As a nation of immigrants, we must open our doors to refugees who are escaping war and persecution. 30,000 refugees is too low a number when we are facing this historic crisis. It is imperative that we translate these words into action on behalf of refugees and ask for 75,000 people resettled at minimum." Even [U.S. Members of Congress responded](#).

We encourage everyone to continue to make your voice heard to your members of Congress using this [#RefugeesWelcome social media toolkit](#) with some unbranded graphics as well as this the [#Welcome75k](#) Toolkit with sample scripts to use when making calls and other helpful hints for planning actions.

## Take Action: Tell ALEC Companies to Stop Funding Bigotry

Major companies like UPS, AT&T, and Comcast are funding bigotry through their membership in the [American Legislative Exchange Council](#) (ALEC) -- a secretive corporate lobbying group that pushes harmful legislation through state houses.

By being members in ALEC, major companies are giving right-wing extremist David Horowitz a platform to spread his racist, homophobic, anti-Muslim, and sexist rhetoric. In his [keynote speech](#) last month at ALEC's annual conference,



Horowitz made extremely hateful comments about women, LGBTQ people, people of color, and the Black Lives Matter movement.

This is unacceptable. We must [hold corporations accountable](#) for the dangerous groups and tactics they secretly fund. Over the last few years, we have been able to push over 100 major companies to cut ties with ALEC due to its extreme agenda and anti-democratic operations. [Sign this petition](#) to UPS, AT&T, Comcast, and other major companies to STOP funding bigotry and [STOP funding ALEC](#).