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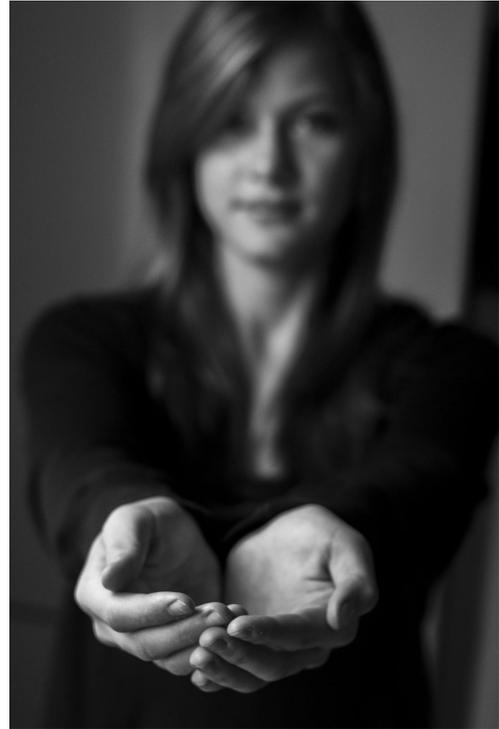
Reflection for: November 11, 2018 – 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

What “Mite” I Give?

The readings for the [32nd week of ordinary time](#) call us to consider the question; What might I give? In each of the readings, and the psalm, the scriptures are challenging us to give. To give not only from our surplus, but to make give in total; to make a total gift.

The story of Elijah and widow in 1 Kings is a favorite of mine. Elijah asks the widow for a gift of all that she had remaining in the world, her last bit of flour and oil during a severe famine. This widow made a total gift of what she had to Elijah, trusting in the providence of God. Result? God provided for her and sustained her through the rest of the famine, her jar did not go empty.

The Gospel reading from Mark is another story of a widow making a total gift of all she has. “The Widow’s Mite” is how many recall this story. The rich man gave of his surplus and made sure everyone knew of his generosity earned his reward on earth, while the widow gained an eternal reward.



What strikes me about these two stories is the most generous givers turned out to be those the Mosaic law called on the Jewish nation to support. The book of Deuteronomy, the book of the law, commands no less than 12 times that Israel must take care of and support the widow, the orphan, and the alien among them, the most vulnerable of society. Jesus often spoke out against those who tithe on mint leaves yet neglected to care for the poor.

Now for the real meat of the readings, Psalm 146. I do not have the space here to quote in total but in summary, the Psalm praises the Lord who cares for the oppressed, hungry, prisoners, blind, those who are bowed down, strangers, widows, and orphans.

St. Paul reminds us that “we” are the body of Christ. As the body, we are the Lord who cares for the oppressed, hungry, prisoners, blind, those who are bowed down, strangers, widows, and orphans. As the body, we are called to total giving as Jesus gave himself totally for all persons.

Sisters and brothers, this is our call to action! We must be the Lord’s two feet of love. We are called, with one foot, to take care of the immediate needs of those in need, regardless of race, creed, nationality or gender and create for them lives worthy of people redeemed by Christ. With the other foot we are called to engage in the field of public life to advocate for laws and policies that will create a just society that alleviates conditions which keep those on the fringe of society from coming into a more secure and sustainable quality of life.

What “Mite” I give? Support FAN financially so it may continue the work of engaging the leadership of our nation to create just laws and policies We must take care of the immediate needs of those on the fringe, but it is also important to create a society where those immediate needs become less frequent. Visit the [FAN website](#) and donate. Consider the [10 for 10 campaign and pledge](#) your monthly gift of \$10. Consider sponsoring a ticket to the [FAN 10th Anniversary Award Benefit](#) this month so a deserving immigrant or religious brother or sister can attend. If you have deeper pockets, consider sponsoring a table and purchasing an ad in the benefit E-Ad booklet. We must support both feet of love. Without both feet we are not able to stand in support of our brothers and sisters in need.

David Seitz, OFS
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

This week, we urge all members and friends to [get out and vote](#).

Suggested Petitions:

May we see the divine equality of all people and desire justice for the poor and underserved.
We pray...

May all public discourse during election season be civil, respectful, and courteous. We pray...

Collect Prayer

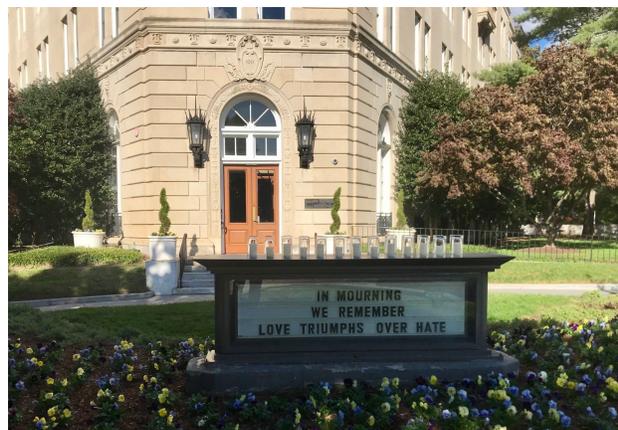
**Almighty and merciful God,
graciously keep from us all adversity,
so that, unhindered in mind and body alike,
we may pursue in freedom of heart
the things that are yours.**

**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

The Struggle for the Soul of Our Country

One week in October, 2018, capsulizes the struggle in this country between the two powerful forces of hatred and love, especially for people of faith. The theme of the conference in Boston of the United States Catholic Mission Association was “[A Culture of Encounter](#),” during which participants were reminded that by virtue of our Baptism, all of us are in mission, and encounter with others is at the heart of the Church’s mission. The message of love was emphasized by speakers. “The work of



mission is inviting people in to be loved by God,” said FAN’s friend Chris Kerr, with the [Ignatian Solidarity Network](#). Father Roger Schroeder insisted that mission today is the idea, not of conversion, but the idea that “God’s love is pouring out into all creation.” And Sr. Lisa Valentini reminded us that “We are the hands and hearts of God.” Franciscans recall that the theme of the film, “The Sultan and the Saint,” is the encounter between two men of different faiths who took a risk for peace, an encounter of love.

The same week was marked by events of hatred and violence. The US administration warned the country about the horde of “terrorists,” heading to our southern border and promised to send the military to stop them. In reality, the caravan crossing Mexico from Central America is comprised of thousands of men, women and children seeking protection in numbers to flee violence and extreme poverty in their home countries rather than be subject to the cruelty of traffickers. Hatred of immigrants compels this administration to incite false fears of the caravan.

Pipe bombs were sent to 14 prominent Democrats; two African American men were shot and killed by a white supremacist in Louisville, KY; and the week concluded with the horrific slaughter of 11 Jewish worshipers in the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA. Racism, anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant rhetoric and actions have fomented deep divisions in this country which have culminated in a week of violence.

We have on the one hand, the encounter of love; on the other, hatred and violence. Just one week puts the choice in sharp contrast and perspective. As US Americans of faith, we cannot ignore the choice we must make to heal the fractures in our society. If the vision of our country as “one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,” is to continue to be pursued, if our soul is to be saved, we must stand up to racism, anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant and anti-LGBT actions, and deep political divisions. We must [choose love over hate](#), not only in our words and prayers, but in our encounters with others in our daily lives and in the choices we make when we cast our votes for leaders at every level of our government. We offer this [Prayer for Our Nation](#) by Rev. Alvin Herring.

Meetings Spark Hopes of FAN in England

The Anglican Third Order Franciscans in Europe invited FAN Executive Director, Patrick Carolan and Board Vice President, Fr. Mike Lasky, OFM to an historic meeting in London on Thursday evening, October 25th.



Attended by over 30 Franciscans (*pictured, right*) from eight different Orders, including Anglican and Roman Catholic, Religious and Secular, the goal of the gathering was to consider how they might increasingly work together to advocate, speak out and act on causes such as poverty and social justice, peace making and the care of God’s creation.

Organizer, Jamie Hacker Hughes TSSF, Minister Provincial in Europe invited Patrick and Fr. Mike to share the history and processes behind the start of the Franciscan Action Network. The group wants to continue discussions and possibly start a FAN in England.

While there, Patrick and Fr. Mike also attended the European screening of the Sultan and the Saint (*pictured, left*). The film was well attended with discussions centering around building dialogue about the value of difference and how we can all be peacemakers. More photos on [Twitter courtesy of Emily R Miller, TSSF](#).

View The Recording: Catholic Climate Covenant Webinar on Root Causes of Climate Change

The Catholic Climate Covenant hosted a very informative and engaging webinar last week, *The Root Causes of Climate Change: Understanding Extractive Industries and their Impacts*. If you missed it, the slides and [recording can be found here](#).

The Speakers were Marianne Comfort (on staff of Sisters of Mercy), Joan Brown OSF (Director of New Mexico Power and Light), and Fr. Peter Hughes, a Columban priest in Peru. Each shared gripping viewpoints of our need to move away from extractive industries.

We urge you to look at the Catholic Climate Covenant's new [webpage on extractives](#) and watch and share this [video on the Amazonian Synod](#).



Some good news in a dark week: FedEx Ending Member Discount for NRA Members

Last week, it was [reported](#) that FedEx, the shipping giant, has agreed to end its member discount program with the National Rifle Association (NRA.) The program offered NRA members discounts up to 26 percent on FedEx shipping and was marketed by the NRA to members as a benefit of membership.

Following the shooting in Parkland, Florida, [Guns Down America](#) and its partners re-launched a [campaign](#) from 2016 calling on the company to stop offering the discounts. The current campaign included a petition that attracted almost 500,000 signatures and urged thousands of people to email FedEx CEO Fred Smith to cut ties with the gun lobby.

FAN is encouraged and gladdened with this news.



St. Bonaventure Holds Prayer Vigil for Tree of Life

Victims

Last week, St. Bonaventure University held a prayer service for the members of the Tree of Life Synagogue. The service was held outside of the campus ministry center at the peace pole (*pictured*) and was attended by students, faculty, staff, friars, sisters and local community members. FAN Board President, Sr. Margaret Magee, OSF said it was a very moving experience.



After the service, everyone was encouraged to stop by the [Check Out Your Blind Spot](#) mobile van. It is an organization working to promote diversity and inclusion. From their website: "Experts tell us that we all have unconscious biases – that is human nature. Focused on raising awareness of unconscious bias, the Check Your Blind Spots mobile tour is a multimedia experience designed to help enable individuals to begin recognizing, acknowledging, and therefore minimizing potential blind spots."

For more information or to request a stop in your area, check out their [website](#).

DHS issues Federal Register Notice to continue TPS for four countries under Court Order

On October 31st, the Department of Homeland Security issued a [Federal Register Notice](#) to continue Temporary Protected Status for Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti and El Salvador, as required by Court Order in the [Ramos v. Nielsen](#) case. Click [here for CLINIC's analysis](#).



This initial Federal Register Notice includes detailed information about the continuation of TPS for Sudanese and Nicaraguan TPS holders whose status was set to expire on Nov. 3, 2018 and Jan. 5, 2019, respectively. More information regarding the continuation of TPS for Haiti and El Salvador under the Court Order is to come.

As we watch the asylum seekers in caravan make their way through Mexico, fleeing from gang violence, organized crime, government repression, and poverty, our laws on immigrating to the U.S., seeking asylum, and TPS must be upheld. Last week, CLINIC legal released [this statement](#) in response to the Administration's declaration to send troops to the border.

1.4 million voters could be re-enfranchised in Florida

Florida is one of the last states in the nation with a [lifetime ban on voting](#) for people with past felony convictions. That lifetime ban prohibits over 1.4 million Floridians—10 percent of the state's adult population—from voting in



crucial, life-shaping elections.

Amendment 4 is the key to changing that. Voting YES this week on Amendment 4 will restore the eligibility to vote to over a million adults who have completed their sentences and want to actively participate in our democracy.

Returning citizens are [leading the coalition](#) driving the [Second Chances](#) campaign to restore the eligibility to vote to Floridians with past felony convictions. Their untiring work has engaged and galvanized people all across Florida, and uplifted the importance of passing the amendment. We urge our Florida members to vote “yes” on Amendment 4. For those not in Florida, forward this message to family, friends, and community members who do live there.