

How did Elizabeth know?

How does this happen to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43)

How did [Elizabeth recognize](#) her Lord, as Mary, wearied from her travels, approached her? What are the implications of Elizabeth's greeting for us, as we see images of children and pregnant women, boys and men who have traveled miles to flee violence in their nation of birth, now in camps within miles from our southern border?



Was it because Elizabeth was contemplating the presence and action of God in her own life that she could be open, to recognize and acknowledge God in another? Is this what our baptismal mandate calls us to; to see the hidden presence of God in all with whom we come in contact? Doesn't our baptism also empower us to be bearers of "he who shall be peace" (Mt 5:4) with our every action, conversation, greeting?

If we honestly reflect on when we are most at peace, is it when we are open to others, open to recognize the basic humanness of others, open to recognize "he who shall be peace?" Are we ever at peace with ourselves when we close ourselves off from another human being? When we put a border between ourselves and another, are we not putting a border between ourselves and God?

If we believe that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God then what are we saying to God when we are complacent, "lukewarm" and take no action when we meet our brothers and sisters, our "holy families," weary from their journey, as they approach us?

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

This week, spend some time in contemplation of the image and likeness of God and see if you can translate that image on to another person.

Suggested Petitions:

May we eagerly celebrate the mystery of the birth of the infant Jesus, God Incarnate. We pray...
For all those seeking asylum at our borders. May we recognize God in each face and burn with the desire to protect them. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,

your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

Take Action: Call Omni Air to Urge they Cancel the Flight Today Scheduled to Deport Refugees

[Omni Air International](#) is a private charter flight company that has been participating alongside ICE in deporting refugee community members. Today, December 17th a Omni Air flight is scheduled to depart from the US to deport 46 Cambodian refugees. This is the largest Asian deportation flight in United States History.

FAN friends at the [Asian Law Caucus](#) have been urging **calls to Omni Air International: 918-836-5393** urging they cancel this deportation flight today. Here is a sample script developed by Asian Law Caucus:

Hi my name is _____, and _____ (optional - title, organization) and I am deeply concerned about Omni Air International's participation in the deportation of 46 beloved Cambodian community members on December 17. The Trump administration has heavily targeted Cambodian refugees for deportation, many of whom have never set foot in Cambodia with few ties to family or community. The month's flight will be the largest deportation flight of Southeast Asian immigrants in U.S. history, and Omni has the opportunity to stop the permanent separation of families. I demand Omni Air International immediately cancel this flight and remove itself from further collaboration with ICE in deporting our Cambodian refugee community.

All humans have dignity and are made in the image and likeness of God. We must continue to change the narrative surrounding people of color and fight for their rights as human beings.

FAN Risks Arrest With Love Knows No Borders in San Diego

Last Monday, hundreds of people (including FAN's own Patrick Carolan, *pictured far right*) from across California and the country risked arrest at the San Diego border. They were



STOP OMNI
TELL OMNI AIR INTERNATIONAL
TO STOP THE DEPORTATION FLIGHTS

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leaders of all different faiths who marched, sang, prayed, and engaged in nonviolent action together.

These interfaith leaders chose to take action on International Human Rights Day to deliver a simple message: We stand for the absolute protection of migrants and the demilitarization of our borders.

Watch this [video of the events](#) developed by Now This News and shared on Facebook.

FAN Participates in Letter Delivery to Congressional Leaders

Last week, FAN staff members were among the delegation of clergy that delivered a [letter](#) to congressional leaders signed by more than 800 clergy members from 43 states and Washington, D.C. The letter urged lawmakers to cut funding for the President's deportation machine while strongly denouncing the hateful anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric.



As heightened tensions at the border coincide with Congress' debate on funding for detention, deportation, border militarization and interior enforcement, faith leaders gathered to oppose expanded funding and share the groundswell of compassion and grief that faith communities felt witnessing the hostility asylum seekers faced at the southern border.

Sr. Marie Lucey (*pictured praying outside of Rep. Paul Ryan's office*) and Sr. Maria Orlandini were part of the 30 clergy and faith leaders who carried candles with the message, "Be the Light," to highlight their ask that Congress be the guiding light toward compassionate and humane policies. See a [video here](#) of everyone singing "I'm gonna let it shine" with lyrics written especially for the occasion. **The funding date has been extended to December 21st, so we urge our members and friends to continue to [call your Senators and Representatives](#) urging reduced funding for detention, deportation, and militarization of the southern border.**

FAN Joins Nurses and Community Members in Calling on Ascension Healthcare to Keep Providence Hospital Open and Fully Functional

A group of nurses and community members gathered outside of Providence Hospital in Washington on Dec. 11 to call on Ascension Healthcare to keep Providence Hospital open and fully functional. Ascension recently announced the upcoming reduction of services



in the hospital's Pope Francis Emergency Care Center. Recently, it was [reported](#) the hospital was scheduled to stop all emergency services along with the majority of other services, but community and government opposition has led to a decision to temporarily keep the emergency services operating.

FAN's Jason Miller spoke (*pictured*) at a rally last week alongside nurses, advocates and other community members calling on Providence Hospital in D.C. to remain open and fully functional. You can read more about the [campaign to keep Providence Hospital open here](#).

Join Good Governance Groups For December 20th Drop-by Day

The outcome of the most recent election is proof that the public is tired of the corruption, the attacks on voting rights, and the influence of big money in our democracy. The very first bill that House plans to vote on in 2019 is an extraordinary, comprehensive package of democracy reforms. Labeled HR1, this bill includes steps to restore the Voting Rights Act, automatic voter registration, public financing of election (small donor matching funds), supporting the overturn of *Citizens United*, ending partisan gerrymandering and much more.



H.R. 1

MAKE IT EASIER, NOT HARDER, TO VOTE

END THE DOMINANCE OF BIG MONEY IN OUR POLITICS

ENSURE PUBLIC OFFICIALS WORK FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Now that we have our representatives' attention, we need to ensure they know what we want. FAN is part of a coalition of organizations working on good governance reforms. This coalition is coordinating a "[Drop-by Day](#)" on December 20th to deliver the message, in no uncertain terms, that we demand a strong democracy. We urge our members to join us on December 20th - all you have to do is print out a one-pager and bring it to your Congressperson's office. [Sign up here to participate](#) and we will help recruit some people to join you.

Congratulations Franciscans International on 30 Years of Advocacy

FAN staff were thrilled to learn that 2019 will mark [Franciscans International](#)'s 30th anniversary. Franciscans International (FI) is "non-governmental organization that represents the Franciscan family at the United Nations. Taking Francis and Clare's example as a guiding light, Franciscans International works to protect people and communities affected by human rights violations and abuses, and the environment through advocacy."



Throughout 2019, FI will be organizing a number of events to celebrate their achievements and reflect

on the many challenges we as a society still face. We invite our members to keep them in your prayers and keep updated on their activities through their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).