

## Anticipation and Expectation

This weekend's celebration of the feast of the [Presentation of Christ](#) in the temple is an opportunity to once again grasp with wonder, God's desire to be revealed and known in our lives and in our world. What gifts we have in Simeon and Anna, the prophet and prophetess. They were people of patient prayerful endurance, tremendous insight and vision. They were people of deep and abiding faith, fasting and prayer. They lived with anticipation and the expectation that God's promise of a Messiah would be revealed. They lived with the hope of encounter.



At that time, many in Israel also awaited the coming of the Messiah. However, many awaited a King, strong and mighty who would bring justice to the land and freedom from the oppression and captivity of the Romans. Simeon and Anna, imbued with the ancient texts and scriptures like the writing of the Prophet Malachi, held a different sense of expectancy. "I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me; and suddenly there will come to the temple the Lord whom you seek, and the messenger of the covenant whom you desire." Their depth of prayerful insight, opened and widened their imagination and perception to recognize and encounter the holy messenger of God in the infant son presented by the humble and poor parents, Mary and Joseph. This infant, born of our very flesh and blood, would bring salvation and redemption to the people.

In our Eucharistic prayer we proclaim, "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again." How do we live in anticipation and expectation of the promise of Christ's coming once again? What is our hope and understanding of encounter?

Pope Francis, in his message on the 105th World Day of Migrants and Refugees on September 29, 2019, warned that when fears and doubts "condition our way of thinking and acting to the point of making us intolerant, closed and perhaps even—racist"—there is a serious problem. For "in this way, fear deprives us of the desire and the ability to encounter the other, the person different from myself; it deprives me of an opportunity to encounter the Lord." The pope made it clear that this message is not simply about migrants. Rather, it is a call to build up the city of God and open spaces of welcome, support and community in our own neighborhoods and cities. May we create spaces and places where we encounter our brothers and sisters in the smallest and the least, in the poor and the marginalized. May we live with the anticipation and expectation of recognizing Christ in our midst and be the prophetic witnesses needed in our world today.

Sr. Margaret Magee, OSF  
FAN Member of the Board

**Suggested Actions:**

Spend time this week in contemplation of recognizing Christ in your life. Consider how you will be a prophetic witness in your community.

**Suggested Petitions:**

May the hearts of all be opened to see and hear the messages of God in our lives. We pray...  
For the courage and fortitude to continue bringing God's message of love to the public sphere.  
We pray...

**Collect Prayer:**

**Almighty ever-living God,  
we humbly implore your majesty  
that, just as your Only Begotten Son  
was presented on this day in the Temple  
in the substance of our flesh,  
so, by your grace,  
we may be presented to you with minds made pure.  
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.**

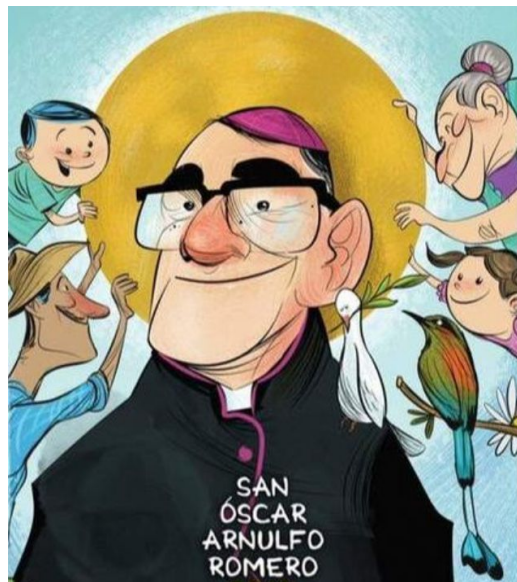
**Amen**

## Two Delegation Opportunities from SHARE Foundation

This year, the [SHARE Foundation](#) will host two delegations to celebrate with the organized communities and participate in the colorful commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the martyrdom of Monsignor Oscar Romero.

The first delegation is to [El Salvador](#) from March 21-27, 2020 where attendees will participate in the inauguration of the Water Project in Chalatenango, meet with organizations and families working on the issue of migration and listen to the testimony of deported people and the impact on their lives.

The second delegation is to [Honduras](#) from May 27th to June 3rd to study root causes of immigration, accompany communities in resistance, meet political prisoners, including the Guapinol 8, relatives of refugees, teachers, students, environmentalists, human rights defenders, Garifuna and more.



Click the link on the individual cities above to get more information about each trip and to apply.

## Save the Date: Annual Franciscan Federation Conference

The Invitational [Franciscan Federation Conference](#), set for **June 5-8 in Denver**, will throw open the doors to all those with a Franciscan worldview and invite the discussion of solutions to pressing issues facing the nation, the Church and the world.

In addition to Third Order Franciscans, **the conference invites** Franciscans of the First and Second Orders, Franciscans International, Secular Franciscans, Associates, Cojourners, Covenant Members, Franciscan Mentors, Franciscan Mission Service, Franciscans from other Christian traditions (Episcopal, Lutheran), leaders of the 24 members of the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities, and Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) coordinators from the above organizations.

Titled “Called to This Hour,” the conference will focus on the **urgency of the Franciscan voice** in responding to needs within our nation, our Church and our world, as saints Francis and Clare did in their own time. With facilitator Dr. Bryan Froehle, those present will value their past, celebrate the present reality, extend relationships, and create and color their future together.

To learn more about the keynote speakers [click here](#). We will keep you updated with information on registering when it’s available.



## Faith 4 Asylum Campaign Uploads New Resources

January 29th, 2020, marks the anniversary of the first asylum seeker sent back to Mexico under the [MPP/Remain in Mexico policy](#). Asylum seekers are migrants who flee their homes due to fear of violence or persecution. U.S. and international laws state that anyone has a right to apply for asylum in the United States, but this policy change prevents asylum seekers from waiting for their hearings in safety in the U.S. Instead, they are forced to wait in locations in Mexico where they face violence, extortion, and kidnapping. During this year at least 636 people have been victims of rape or assault or kidnapping or even murder, including 138 children.



To mark this anniversary, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) has launched the [Faith4Asylum](#) campaign to stop this inhumanity and call for January 29th to be a national day of prayer and action. FAN will join with IIC and other faith partners at a vigil in Washington, D.C. and we invite our members and friends to **hold a prayer service in your community**. Together, we will call for an end to U.S. government policies like Remain in Mexico that harm asylum-seekers and reject their sacred humanity. [Sign up to host or attend a prayer vigil here!](#)

Visit the [#Faith4Asylum website](#) for opportunities to endorse the campaign, sign the People’s

Pledge, and **find many new resources** to help you plan a prayer vigil.

## Changing Systems, Changing Ourselves: Anti-racist Practice for Accompaniment

We would like to make you aware of a new opportunity that came to our attention recently. A FREE five-session monthly interactive [online training](#) for groups to explore, reflect, and act for social change.

### Changing Systems, Changing Ourselves

Anti-racist practice for Sanctuary, Accompaniment, and Resistance

The e-course, called [Changing Systems, Changing Ourselves](#) begins **January**

**28th** and continues on every fourth Tuesday evening through May and is a chance for groups and individuals to explore:

- Anti-racist practice in caucus groups, PoC and white, to reflect on how to show up consciously alongside those most impacted by injustice.
- The U.S. immigration system's history of racial exclusion and how it plays out today.
- Criminalization, immigration, and the prison industrial complex.
- Anti-Blackness and working for immigrant justice.
- The theology and practice of accompaniment.
- Real-life examples through case studies.
- Practical skills to accompany immigrants in ICE check-ins, detention visitation, and other contexts.

This program is a collaboration of the American Friends Service Committee's [Friends Relations office](#), the UUA and UUSC's [Love Resists campaign](#), [Church World Service](#) and [Freedom for Immigrants](#), formerly CIVIC. [Click here for more information and to sign up.](#)

## New Website Resource: Halting and Healing the Border Disorder

FAN has been made aware of a new website resource called [Halting and Healing the Border Disorder](#).

The goal is two-fold: to better educate citizens and promote national policies that save lives and property while conserving human and financial resources and to promote reduction of the environmental and cultural damage caused by current U.S. government actions and policies.



The people behind this new site are health and environmental workers and agriculturists who have lived and worked in the Borderlands for decades, including FAN friend Gary Paul (Brother Coyote) Nabhan. They seek to “halt the chaos, cruelty and destructive actions at the Mexican border.”

We invite you to check out the website at [healingtheborderdisorder.org](http://healingtheborderdisorder.org).

## Resources to Honor the Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita

Human trafficking is an exploitation of vulnerability and migrants are among the most vulnerable populations. As we approach the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita, known as the patron saint of victims of slavery, we offer some resources for you and your community to use during prayer services.

The U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking publish the [Anti-Trafficking Newsletter](#), dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among USCSAHT members, organizations and concerned persons collaborating to eliminate all forms of human trafficking. The focus of the this month's issue is the intersection between forced migration and human trafficking. Please [click here](#) to access this newsletter.

As we shared with you before, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange developed a reflection for prayer during the month of January. We offer it again here with both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) versions available.

Finally, the Justice for Immigrants campaign of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has [new resources here](#) including toolkits, background information, and more.

We continue to pray for an end to this form of modern slavery.



## Now Available: Interfaith Power and Light's Faith Climate Action Week Kit

[Faith Climate Action Week](#) is Interfaith Power and Light's (IPL) annual program of climate-themed worship services and sermons that spans ten days of activities in celebration of Earth Month. This year's Faith Climate Action Week theme, "**Love Made Visible**" is partially inspired by 19th century Lebanese-American poet Kahlil Gibran who said, "Work is love made visible."

When you order your kit, you will receive:

- Sacred Activism Guide on the importance of people of faith taking part in civic engagement
- Faith Climate Voter Pledge postcards and stickers for use with voter registration drives
- "For Love of Trees" tree planting ceremony booklet
- And so much more.

[Click here to order your Faith Climate Action week kit](#) today.

