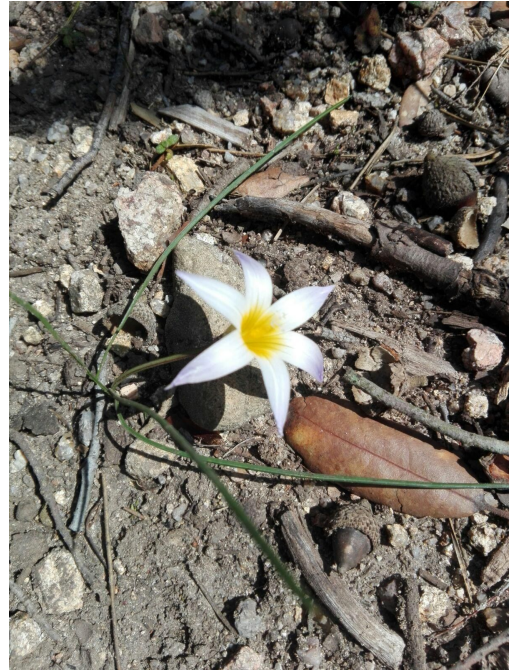


Conversion from the Good to the Better

As we enter the season of Lent I am reminded of one of the [Franciscan Values Guiding FAN](#) developed by Fr. Tom Nairn, OFM, which states: “Franciscan vision is transformational, demanding change and conversion in its adherents, following the example of Saints Francis and Clare. Francis saw his entire life as a continuing conversion into the vision of God, whom he saw as a loving parent. Francis saw his life as a continuous conversion from sin to a life lived in gratitude for God’s love. Many described the conversion of Clare from ‘the good to the better.’ The Franciscan life today remains one of on-going conversion. There is always an unfinished quality to this conversion until we enter into the Reign of God.”



Our readings this [first Sunday of Lent](#) remind us that continuing conversion occurs only with total dependence on God. The psalmist cries out, “Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.” (Ps. 91: 15b) while St. Paul assures us in the letter to the Romans, “for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Rom. 10:13) In our Gospel, St. Mark recounts the temptations of Jesus in the desert by Satan. With each attempt by Satan, Jesus goes “into the vision of God,” to the word of God to find strength to overcome each temptation. Every time we are tempted to be complacent when we are confronted with injustice, tempted to exert power over those more vulnerable than ourselves, or tempted to pursue “more” for ourselves at the expense of others, our baptismal mandate calls us to “continuous conversion from sin to a life lived in gratitude for God’s love.”

As we pursue our 2019 Lenten journey let us strive to follow the example of St. Clare of Assisi, for continuous conversion from “the good to the better.”

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

Consider a concrete action you can take to continue your own personal conversion from good to better.

Suggested Petitions:

May our mouths be ever praising of the gifts from God, we pray...

As we are tempted, may we trust in the Lord to guide us along the right path, we pray...

Collect Prayer:

Grant, almighty God,
through the yearly observances of holy Lent,
that we may grow in understanding
of the riches hidden in Christ
and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.
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.

Lenten Resource from Interfaith Immigration Coalition

The [Interfaith Immigration Coalition](#) (IIC) is developing a Lenten resource focused on the impacts of border walls and fences on immigrant communities. Each week will link scripture, reflection, stories, action, and prayers with various points about the border wall highlighted.



Ash Wednesday: Walls Break Relationships
Week One: Walls Separate Families
Week Two: Walls-An Ineffective and Immoral use of Public Funds
Week Three: Walls Do Not Deter Immigration
Week Four: Walls Hurt Border Communities
Week Five: Walls Cause Environmental Harms
Palm Sunday: Walls Infringe on Indigenous Communities
Easter: Breaking Down Walls

The resource will be posted on the [IIC website](#), under “Resources” the [Holy Days and Holidays](#) tab.

Tomorrow: Make a Call and Take a Stand for Democracy

After tireless amounts of organizing, our movement to build a more equitable, transparent and participatory democracy is finally preparing for an historic week. This Wednesday, the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on [H.R. 1 “For the People” Act](#).

This legislation ensures a democracy where voters are protected from



discrimination and can make themselves heard at the ballot box. A democracy where electoral districts are drawn fairly, so that every voter's ballot is worth the same. A democracy that isn't bought and paid for by the highest corporate bidder. And a democracy where ordinary Americans -- more women, people of color, and working people -- can run for office without relying on special interest Big Money.

Take action today to ensure your Representative is supporting "For the People Act." **Call 888-724-8879 and urge your Representative to vote YES on H.R.1.**

Take Action: Advocate with our Immigrant Sisters and Brothers on Wednesday

This Wednesday, March 6th the House Judiciary Committee will hold hearings on the human impacts of terminating important programs like DACA, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations, and Liberian Deferred Enforced Departure (DED). These programs were a promise to protect people from deportation and family separation. **It is critical that people of faith stand in solidarity with our immigrant neighbors** and call for the introduction and passage of a permanent legislative solution.



As March 6th is also Ash Wednesday, join us for a [National Call-In Day](#) as we begin this holy season of Lent. Together, let us urge our Members of Congress to pass a permanent legislative solution with a pathway to citizenship for all.

Here is a sample script:

Hello, my name is [NAME] from [CITY, STATE] and as a person of faith, I support dreamers, Temporary Protected Status holders and Liberian Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) holders. I am calling to ask you to take a stand against the unjust terminations of these protections. I urge you to do everything in your power to see that Congress passes legislation like the Dream and Promise Act of 2019 and to issue statements and make floor remarks supporting dreamers, and all TPS and DED holders.

Use this [call-in tool](#) from Church World Service to call your Members of Congress this Wednesday.

Sign and Share: Stop Plastic Pollution Petition

Plastic production is directly connected to climate change as 99% of plastics are derived from fossil fuels. U.S. shorelines are littered with millions of tons of single-use plastic. We must cut down our reliance on single-use plastics. While this can seem like a daunting task, we invite you to take a simple action as part of your commitment to [Living the Change](#).



Start with something small, like [plastic straws](#). It's estimated that 1 billion plastic straws are used daily worldwide. Single-use plastic straws are not recycled. They are used for minutes and become instant plastic pollution, many times ending up in our oceans. However, several major U.S. cities, including Seattle and Washington, D.C., have limited single-use plastic straws. [Let's build on this momentum](#).

[Sign the petition](#) to call on your local elected officials to limit plastic straws and make straws available only upon request. When possible, you will be connected to local organizers working on a campaign near you.

Mark Your Calendar: Ministry in the Time of Climate Change - On Food and Faith

The Center for Earth Ethics' [ministers' training](#) this year will teach faith leaders how our current food system is contributing to the climate crisis, explore the impact climate change is having on farming and food security, and help empower attendees to take action. There is [more information on the conference here](#).

Plan to attend from May 30 - June 1, 2019 at the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, OH. **The application deadline is March 29, 2019.** Applicants will be notified of decisions by April 30, 2019. [Click here to submit an application](#).

Please contact [Genie Cooper](#) with any questions.



NETWORK's 2019 Lent Guide: "Recommit to Racial Justice"

Our friends at Network Lobby shared with us their 2019 Lenten resource, "[Recommit to Racial Justice](#)." Please see their invitation below:



During Lent this year, we invite the NETWORK community to experience a journey of education and reflection on our nation's dominant racist structures. We are seeking to provide readings for our participants that illustrate the many ways our policies and practices have served white supremacy and oppressed communities of color, including racist immigration policies, labor exploitation, devastation of Native and Indigenous people, and others. This series is intended to deepen participants' commitment to working for racial justice and connect the work of racial justice with their personal faith. Each week, there will be a reflection and prayer from communities of color, information about policies and practices that perpetuate white supremacy, and an action alert. There will also be 3 phone calls during Lent for participants to discuss their insights and learnings.

Please sign up at www.networklobby.org/lent

Good News on Gun Violence Prevention: HR8 and HR1112 Pass the House

Last week, the House of Representatives passed two bills aimed at cutting back gun violence. The first was [H.R. 8](#), the bi-partisan bill to expand Brady background checks. Democrats [called](#) the 240-190 vote a major step to end the gun lobby's grip on Washington.

The second bill was [H.R. 1112](#), the *Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2019*. This bill will address the so-called "Charleston Loophole" and minimize the risk of gun sales proceeding before a background check is completed by extending the time granted to law enforcement to complete a background check from three to ten business days.

It's very encouraging to see movement on these important measures. After 25 years of stagnation in Congress, last year's massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas high in Florida prompted this new wave of student-led activism that gives us tremendous hope.

