

Publication Date: October 14, 2019

Reflection Date: October 20, 2019 - 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lift up those weary arms!

Sometimes the [Sunday scripture readings](#) are in very clear alignment in support of a theme or teaching. This Sunday is one of those times. With help from friends, Moses is able to keep his hands raised in prayer until Joshua wins the battle against Amalek; Paul instructs Timothy "...be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient..."; Jesus narrates a parable to illustrate the necessity "to pray always without becoming weary."



The contexts of the readings from Exodus and Luke reinforce the message of Paul that persistence is needed even more when it is "inconvenient," when the going gets tougher. Moses assumes responsibility to keep his hands raised until the battle is won, but he grows tired. Haven't we all grown weary of continually beseeching God to intervene in a painful personal situation or in our deeply troubled country and world, yet nothing seems to change for the better? Haven't we felt like the persistent widow demanding "a just decision" from the unscrupulous judge? But neither Moses nor the widow gave up. Moses persisted with help from others. The widow persisted, convinced of the justice of her cause.

It is easy to pray when it is "convenient"—when I'm not distracted or anxious, when the weather is beautiful and I'm in a peaceful place. More often than not, however, outer or inner clamor distracts or disturbs me. I grow weary of calling on God to heal sick friends and to render just outcomes in very unjust situations. Like Moses, I rely on support and encouragement of friends and co-workers to keep me steady. Like the widow, I must be sure of the justice of my cause—the cause of people in poverty and pain caused by unjust systems—and be persistent "whether it is convenient or inconvenient." I must trust that God does listen and is with me, with us, in the struggle.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

Consider one situation you bring to prayer but nothing changes so you grow weary or discouraged. How can today's scriptures encourage you?

Suggested Petitions:

That we never give up in praying for the needs of the world and for the graces we need, let us pray...

That we not grow weary in responding to those who ask for our time, energy, and talents, let us pray...

Prayer by Jane Austen

Give us grace, almighty Father,
to address you with all our hearts as well as with our lips.
You are present everywhere;
from you no secrets can be hidden.
Teach us to fix our thoughts on you,
reverently and with love,
so that our prayers are not in vain
but are acceptable to you, now and always.

Amen.

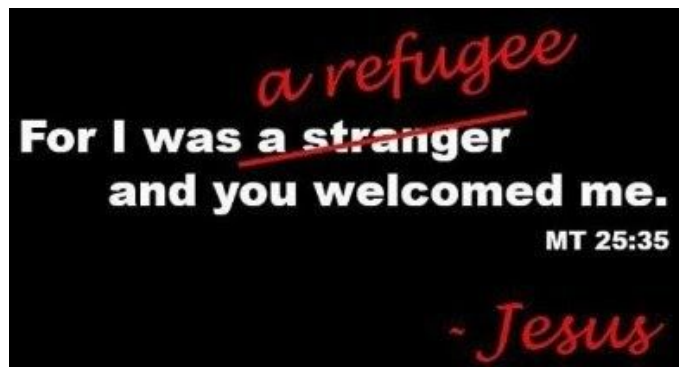
This week's St. Clare Pledge: Urge Congress to Support the GRACE Act

With more than 70 million people forced to flee their homes, the world is facing a historic refugee crisis. But rather than stepping up to meet this challenge, the Administration has turned its back on those most in need.

The administration recently proposed a cap of only 18,000 refugees in 2020—the lowest in U.S. history.

Unless we act, the U.S. is at risk of abandoning its proud legacy as a safe haven for the world's most vulnerable people. The [GRACE Act](#) will uphold America's long bi-partisan tradition by establishing an annual refugee admissions level of no less than 95,000, restoring refugee admissions to their historic norms.

As your [St. Clare Commitment](#) this week, we urge our members and friends to [Call your Representative today and ask them to support the GRACE Act.](#)



Start Planning One Today: Vigil to End Gun Violence

It's no longer *if* someone we know will be directly impacted by an act of gun violence, but *when*. Urban violence, domestic events, suicides, mass murder and accidents cause more than 100 gun deaths every day. Houses of worship must prepare for the potential of violence within their walls, respond compassionately to trauma in our communities and reclaim our communities as places of safety and sanctuary for all God's children.

This month, in Washington, DC, the FAN staff will



participate in a [multi-faceted discussion](#) with survivors of gun violence at the Washington National Cathedral. We expect to leave this discussion challenged, inspired and moved to act. We will also join in the National Vigil to End Gun Violence in December, which serves to anchor all the vigils/events across the nation.

We urge all our members and friends to [register to host a vigil or an event](#) in your town or city. To facilitate your planning, download the [2019 National Vigil Toolkit](#). There is [more information here](#).

Resources for Refugee Resettlement: Webinars, Letters and Toolkits

As faith communities, we are motivated to welcome and sponsor refugees by our sacred texts and Matthew 25, which remind us to love our neighbor and welcome the sojourner among us. Here are the latest updates we have on this issue.

Justice for Immigrants is hosting a webinar this week, **Wednesday Oct. 16th at 2p ET / 11a PT** on *Galvanizing State Support for Refugee Resettlement*. This subject is important and relevant given the President signed an [executive order](#) that permits state and local officials to block resettlement in their communities. To join the webinar:

Login: <http://bit.ly/2ohvK9u>

Phone: (917) 338-1451

Passcode: 7448825#



In response to the executive order, [hundreds](#) of elected officials, congregations, and business leaders have been showing their support for refugee resettlement across all 50 states. One inspiring action is coming from Congressman Ken Buck (R-CO-4) (ranking on HJC immigration subcommittee) who is leading a pro-refugee letter among the House Republican caucus to the administration, reiterating the need for the U.S. to continue its longstanding commitment to resettling refugees. **We urge you to contact your Republican Representatives and urge they contact James.Hampson@mail.house.gov in Buck's office to sign on the letter.**

Additionally, RCUSA has created this [new toolkit](#) that includes resources and materials for folks to contact your state and local officials and urge them to welcome refugees in your community.

Finally, FAN has partnered with other allies in a petition urging Congress to enact humane treatment for asylum seekers and immigrants. We urge you to [sign on by clicking here](#).

Take Action: Democracy for All, Day of Action to

overturn Citizens United

Big Money interests have overwhelmed the political process. The Supreme Court has made the problem exponentially worse through *Citizens United*, dismantling what's left of our country's campaign finance laws. The [House](#) and [Senate](#) have both introduced legislation that will limit the influence of wealthy special interests in elections and establish that corporations do not have the same rights as human beings.



These bills are collectively known as Democracy for All Constitutional Amendments.

We urge our members and friends to take action in two ways:

1. [Sign this petition](#) demanding Congress over turn Citizens United and end the unlimited amounts of political spending that influence our elections.
2. Use this [online tool to write a Letter to the Editor](#) in support of the Democracy for All Amendments to restore the ability of Congress and the states to enact common sense campaign finance regulations.

Citizens United provides more power to wealthy corporations than regular American voters. We must have common sense rules for the raising and spending of money on elections to advance political equality for all Americans.

#HomelsHere March for DACA and TPS begins October 26th

Our good friends at NAKASEC (the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium) have shared with us information about the [#HomelsHere](#) march they are helping coordinate. On November 12th, the Supreme Court will hear the case on DACA and begin proceedings to determine the fate of the program. Proceedings for the TPS program have already commenced, and a decision from the lower courts is projected to come out this month. These decisions will determine the futures of 700,000 DACA recipients and 300,000 TPS recipients. To build national support and call attention to the issue, a march is being mobilized to defend DACA and TPS and demand the courts rule on the right side of history.



Beginning on October 26th, a group of DACA recipients, TPS recipients, undocumented immigrants, human rights advocates, allies, and supporters will depart from Battery Park in New York City on a course for Washington. They will stop in Philadelphia on 11/01, Baltimore on 11/08, and complete the march on the day of the hearings, 11/12 in front of the Supreme Court building.

Because there are only 12 days until they begin to march, they have sent out a call for support with lodgings, food donations, and more. There are several ways to support the march:

- Sign up to march [here](#)
- Commit to in-kind donation support (such as food, equipment, or lodging) [here](#)
- Monetary donations can be made [here](#)

More information about the march can be found on the [Home is Here website](#). **We urge all our members and friends along the [proposed route](#) to help our friends in any way possible.**

TSSF issued order-wide statement responding to planetary crisis

The Ministers Provincial and Minister General of the [Third Order Society of St. Francis](#) (TSSF) recently issued an order-wide statement. The statement, which was "birthed in prayer", affirms the work many Franciscans are doing in addressing the climate crisis and serves as a reminder of our Gospel call to care for all of God's creation.



From the [statement](#):

"Dominion [rule] is not about control or about using others [people, animals, or the earth] for our gain. It is about living in a way where we join with the Creating Spirit so that all of creation and all of us who live in it may flourish. We lament we have not lived this way."

Thank you to the leaders of the TSSF for your example.

We Went on Strike, Celebrated the Season of Creation; What comes next?

We have participated in climate strikes. We have prayed and advocated during the Season of Creation. These actions helped us renew and reinforce our personal responses to the climate emergency. Now, it's time to make new changes that reflect our deepest values. Here are several options:



1. **Host a local supper:** As a way to work on transforming our own lives in response to the climate emergency, we urge our members and friends to [sign up to host a local supper, conversation, or other event](#). In sharing an experience with others, we become more committed, learn from each other, and develop the ability to become ambassadors for the changes we've adopted, thus widening the impact of our own individual lives. This link between personal and community transformation is at the

heart of the [Living the Change](#) campaign. There are [many resources to download here](#).

2. **Grounding in Faith** is a pilot program designed to offer participants the space and resources to reflect deeply, share honestly, and connect with other people of faith as you grapple with one of the toughest lifestyle challenges for living the change - air travel. The program consists of a virtual workshop, optional follow-up Grounding Sessions, Stories from the Ground, tools, and resources. It is fundamentally a guided experience based on your needs and where you are. It is for anyone, regardless of how frequently you fly or how you feel about air travel. Get more information and register to participate here: <https://livingthechange.net/grounding-in-faith>
3. **World Food Day** is on October 24th and the Catholic Climate Coalition is offering a webinar on *How Our Food Choices Can Save the Planet*. [Register](#) to receive a link to the Webinar recording. Join us on **Thursday, Oct. 24th at 2p ET / 11a PT** to learn how our food system (the way we produce, transport, and consume food) is responsible for over a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions and get practical suggestions on how we can take action. [Click here to register](#).