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Reflection Date: November 24, 2019 - Solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

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## Honoring both Jesus and Christ as King

The liturgical year closes with the feast of [Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe](#), which holds three challenges for me. First, is the concept of kingship. In the book of Samuel, when the Israelites asked Samuel to appoint a king over them “as other nations have,” Samuel resisted until God told him to grant the people’s request—but with a warning that by asking for a king they were rejecting God. Through many centuries there have been benevolent and malevolent kings. It was King Herod who targeted Jesus for execution. In the history of this country, the first European settlers crossed the ocean to escape the dictates of a king, and the framers of the U.S. Constitution designed a political system of checks and balances to prevent rule by a dictator, a king. Yet there are people in countries around the world, including the United States, who support leaders who try to place themselves above the law and rule by dictate. This Feast was not instituted until 1925 when Pope Pius XI mistakenly saw an end to absolute monarchy. Today there are many uprisings by people who refuse to accept a dictator “king.”



The second challenge for me is how we interpret the title of the feast: Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Are “Jesus” and “Christ” one and the same? We tend to speak of “Christ” as Jesus’ last name, but some contemporary theologians and spiritual writers explore who we mean by “Christ,” of whom Jesus was one very special expression, but not the whole expression of God. Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF writes about *The Emergent Christ*. In his new book, *The Universal Christ*, Richard Rohr, OFM, quotes numerous scriptures which indicate that Christ has existed “from the beginning,” so “the Christ cannot be codeterminus with Jesus.” (P.17)

So a final challenge for me is what to make of this feast. In human history kingship does not have a great track record, even though there have been just, generous kings. In the Church, Pope Francis insists on the need for clerics to exercise “shepherd leadership” in which they bear “the smell of the sheep,” not the trappings of kingship. In secular society, dictatorship whether by kings or presidents or other leaders must be resisted by freedom-loving people. I can celebrate this Feast, then, in my understanding that there is one King of the Universe, the Christ who is the “firstborn of all creation,” in whom were created all things in heaven and on earth,” (Col.1:14), including you and me, and who is also the Word Made Flesh in the birth, life, and death of Jesus. My role is to do all I can to help God’s “kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven,” a kingdom of love, mercy, peace and justice.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF  
FAN Associate Director

### **Suggested Action:**

Consider Rohr's thesis that God became "flesh" in both the person of Jesus in the human story, and "from the beginning," in the Christ in all created things. What implications are there for you?

### **Suggested Petitions:**

For Pope Francis and all Church leaders that they may exercise shepherd leadership. We Pray...

For wisdom, courage, and strength for all people who struggle against dictators. We Pray...

### **Collect Prayer:**

**Almighty ever-living God,  
whose will is to restore all things  
in your beloved Son, the King of the universe,  
grant, we pray,  
that the whole creation, set free from slavery,  
may render your majesty service  
and ceaselessly proclaim your praise.  
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**

## **Next Month: National Vigils to #EndGunViolence**

"What kind of a world is this?"

This is the question [from a student](#) at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita, CA, the site of the most recent school shooting on Nov. 14th. Two students lost their lives and many were wounded. The incident is the 30th shooting attack at a school this year, according to [Everytown for Gun Safety](#).

Our question is, when will this end?

As people of faith who believe every life is a sacred image of God, we must challenge the policies that need to be changed to alleviate this sort of violence.

We urge all our members and friends to [host an End Gun Violence vigil or an event](#) in your town or

city. These vigils serve to showcase our faith and deepen our resolve to continue advocating for change. FAN staff will join in the National Vigil to End Gun Violence in Washington, D.C. this December, which serves to anchor all the events across the nation. Won't you join us? To facilitate your planning, download the [2019 National Vigil Toolkit](#). Find [more information here](#).



## New Video on 2020 Census and Why it's so Important

Our friends at [Faith in Public Life](#) have developed a [short video](#) describing the 2020 Census, what it is and why it's important.

The census is the engine of our democracy. It determines political representation and funding for hospitals, schools and roads for the next decade. When everyone in our communities is counted, we all get the resources and political influence we deserve.

In past censuses, millions of children, people of color, low-income people and immigrants have gone uncounted -- perpetuating systemic racism, undermining political representation, and underfunding resources we all use, everything from hospitals to roads to schools for the next 10 years. That is why [Faith in Public Life](#) put together a video to explain the importance and encourage people to participate: [check it out!](#)

We encourage you to [watch and share the video](#) to inform your community about the importance of the 2020 Census.



## This week's St. Clare Pledge: Four More Co-Sponsors Needed for Bill Banning Assault Weapons

The vast majority of Americans, including gun owners, support common-sense gun safety legislation. America is ready for an assault weapons ban.

Last week, the Supreme Court [announced](#) it will allow the relatives of Sandy Hook victims to sue the manufacturer of weapon used in that mass shooting. The families of victims in the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook elementary school in Newton, CT are challenging a federal law protecting gun manufacturers from liability. The suit said the gun maker recklessly marketed the Bushmaster AR-15-style rifle through product placement in violent video games and advertising pitches like "consider your man card reissued," and "the opposition will bow down."

Right now a [bipartisan bill](#) to ban assault weapons is in the House, but it needs more support from legislators to pass a vote. Advocates for this legislation have heard from some Members of Congress who are hesitant to cosponsor but who have signaled that they would vote in favor of the bill.

Newton Action Alliance has a [list of specific Representatives](#) whom they think would consider

say **NO** to  
**#WeaponsOfWar.**



cosponsoring if enough constituents requested they do so. For your [St. Clare Pledge](#) this week, we urge you to check the list to see if your Rep. is on it and then [write to your Representative urging they sponsor this important legislation](#). [Click here](#) to see if your Rep has already sponsored the legislation. If s/he has, adjust the letter to be one of thanks.

## Campaign for Climate: Join Climate Strikes and Fire Drill Fridays

On Nov. 29th and Dec. 6th, young people and adults will strike all across the United States and world to demand transformative action is taken to address the climate crisis. To learn more, sign up to host a strike, or receive updates, check out [strikewithus.org](http://strikewithus.org).

The strikes build on the momentum of September 20th Climate Strike, the largest youth-led climate mobilization in US history. Inspired by Greta Thunberg when she said, “Our House Is On Fire”, actress and activist Jane Fonda has moved to Washington, D.C. to be closer to the epicenter of the fight for our climate.



Every Friday through January, Jane is leading weekly demonstrations called [Fire Drill Fridays](#) on Capitol Hill to demand that action by our political leaders be taken to address the climate emergency we are in. **FAN is honored to be a part of the rally on December 6th which will hold a theme of migration, human dignity and climate.** We will be collaborating with the organizers at [Strike with US](#) and together we will bring forth a message that caring for the climate is a moral issue.

## Sign the Petition in Support of the Climate Equity Act

Routinely, communities of color are more likely to live near coal-power plants and toxic sites, greatly increasing health risks caused by pollution. Historically, even landmark environmental laws have failed to adequately protect frontline communities from polluted air, toxic water, and more. As the climate crisis continues, these communities will continue to bear the brunt.



The [Climate Equity Act](#) was introduced to ensure that frontline communities have a seat at the policy making table and that nobody gets left behind when creating new environmental laws. Frontline communities are those that have experienced systemic socioeconomic disparities, environmental racism, and other forms of injustice.

We must hold Congress and the Executive Branch accountable in federal climate and environmental action as well as giving advocates a seat at the table. [Click here to sign a petition](#) to help ensure protections for communities impacted by environmental racism.

## Home is Here March Concludes at Supreme Court Building

Last week, the [staff of FAN joined](#) hundreds of people of faith, Dreamers, DACA and TPS advocates, and others in praying the rosary before marching to the rally in front of the Supreme Court. As the justices heard arguments on the Administration's unlawful attempt to terminate DACA, outside, the #HomelsHere marchers rallied and shared their stories with an enthusiastic crowd.



Our friends at the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium ([NAKASEC](#)) were lead organizers of the [Home is Here](#) march. We encourage you to watch the [video](#) they put together and take a look at the [photos](#) from the rally.

As a follow up, America's Voice released this [detailed piece](#) that offers a concise snapshot of the current situation for DACA recipients and what has happened to the good faith bipartisan proposals during this administration.

As people of faith, we will keep praying and advocating on behalf of Dreamers and their families.