

Publication Date: April 6, 2020

Reflection Date: April 12, 2020 - Easter Sunday: The Resurrection of the Lord

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## Jesus Saves

Image by [Jeff Jacobs](#) from Pixabay

I recently heard this story from one of the Religious Educators in the Parish.

“One day Jesus and Satan were having a heated debate about who was better in regards to using a computer. Finally the Father had heard enough and called them together and said that this has to stop and that they would both be given a challenge on their computers to end the fighting.



So, the day of the challenge came and both Jesus and Satan were showing their expertise and finishing different skill tests in Excel, Word, Access and then without warning there was a huge power surge and the lights went out in Heaven.

After the power came back on, both restarted their computers and Satan became very upset because all his work was gone, lost due to the loss of power. Meanwhile, Jesus printed out all his work to win the contest.

The Father turned to Satan and said, “You of all the fallen angels should know that Jesus Saves.”

For the past few weeks we have all been challenged to a contest of social separation, fear of the unknown, and yes we have to admit, fear of life itself to some extent.

Hopefully, in our current test, we can and must accept the challenge and find ways of embracing those who are distant from us. Perhaps our fear and concerns can be turned to a deeper concern for the “other”; our neighbor and those whom we find it hard to understand or agree with.

As I write this reflection, I have no idea how exactly this will play out, when we will get back to some type of "normal" or if we are still awaiting the peak. But what I do know is that Jesus saves us. I know that there is more to Life than what we can imagine or see.

[Easter](#) is a time of Hope and a time to realize and acknowledge that God has a plan and a purpose in our lives. Alleluia!

Br. Paul Crawford, OFM Cap.  
FAN Board Member

**Suggested Action:**

Take time this week to be silent and to meditate on Jesus' death and resurrection. Join in a virtual Stations of the Cross online.

**Suggested Petitions:**

For all those grieving for the loss of loved ones, may they be comforted by the promise of everlasting life through Christ. We pray...

For all the sick and for their caregivers, may they find strength and hope in the risen Lord. We pray...

**Collect Prayer:**

**O God, who on this day,  
through your Only Begotten Son,  
have conquered death  
and unlocked for us the path to eternity,  
grant, we pray, that we who keep  
the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection  
may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,  
rise up in the light of life.  
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**

## **Urge your Members of Congress to Oppose EPA Rollbacks**

In a [newsletter](#) I receive from the [Little Portion Farm](#) (a ministry of the Franciscan Friars Conventual, Our Lady of the Angels Province in Ellicott City, MD) the Farm & Outreach Coordinator, Matt Jones wrote about the coping we are all going through as our society deals with the coronavirus pandemic. However, he points out that "there is a strange normalcy still present: bluebirds are making homes for their eggs, trees are flowering and showing their first leaves of the season, the days are gradually getting longer, and spring weeds are still emerging (unfortunately they seem to have missed the memo to stay home)." God's wondrous Creation is moving on, ever growing, unperturbed by quarantines and social distancing. The EPA, however, is doing it's best to dismantle vital protections in place for the benefit of all living things.



Last week, we sent out a message alerting you to significant rollbacks the EPA issued to rules about auto emissions, opening the door for more pollutants directly related to respiratory health. These rollbacks are the latest in a series of [environmental de-regulations](#) including the announcement that the EPA [suspended](#) the enforcement of environmental laws while the COVID-19 pandemic is present.

As members of the family of God's creation, **we cannot sit by and watch as the EPA fails to live up to its mandate of protecting the planet, putting our lives and future at risk.** We urge our members and friends to use [our email tool to call on your members of Congress](#) to urge the EPA to cease the complete dismantling of protections in place to care for our common home.

It is our moral responsibility to care for all of God's wondrous creation, people and the planet. Thank you for taking [action today!](#)

## Various Opportunities to Participate in Virtual Stations of the Cross

Image by [Jeff Jacobs](#) from Pixabay

As we enter Holy Week, we recognize that this year will look and feel so very different from the typical celebrations we are accustomed to. While this can be sad, we hope that this humble offering of several opportunities for participation in virtual stations of the cross will bring some comfort to those struggling in our new normal.



- The Good Friday Way of the Cross for Economic and Ecological Justice will be on **Friday, April 10th at 12pm ET / 9am PT.** [Click here to register to join us.](#) Several FAN staff will be reading, including Sr. Marie Lucey and Sr. Maria Orlandini.
- The International Union of Superiors General will host the Station of Cross in the Spirit of Laudato Si: The Care of Our Common Home on **Friday, April 4, 2020 at 9am ET (3pm Rome).** [Find the text and link to participate here.](#)
- During these times which are particularly dark for asylum seekers stranded at the border, the Kino Border Initiative launched a moving interpretation of Stations of the Cross called [The Way of Asylum.](#)
- The mid-atlantic Coalition Against Modern Slavery put together this [Way of the Cross](#) which reflects on the suffering of Jesus and St. Josephine Bakhita and all who suffer slavery as victims of human trafficking.
- The 40th Annual Good Friday Pilgrimage for Peace with the theme, "The Way of the Cross; The Way of the Migrant," is sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, PA. This will be [available on Good Friday, April 10th at this link.](#)

We continue to pray for all of you, our members, friends, and partners during this difficult time.

## Take Action: Sign Petition to State Elected Officials Urging they Do Even More to Curb Climate Change

The largest and most imminent global threat is climate change — yet, many elected officials continue to deny this and assure the U.S. will not take any climate mitigation efforts.



Because the federal government has failed to pass effective climate legislation, going so far as to pull the U.S. out of pertinent global climate agreements, it is up to [elected officials at the state level to get things done](#). Each state must continue to enact measures and make further commitments to curb climate change.

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, FAN has committed to collecting signatures on a [petition to state elected officials](#) urging they do even more to help curb climate change. We encourage our members and friends to [sign](#).

## Brady Action Urging States to Stop the Surge in Gun Purchasing

As we see the panic buying of guns in this moment of our story, FAN continues to monitor the evolving situation. With weapons purchases still on the rise, coalitions are finding different ways to bring attention to this issue.



We know these purchases are a reaction to the fear and uncertainty we are all feeling. But extensive research shows MORE guns don't make us safer.

**The Brady Campaign is urging people to [take action by asking their state governors](#) to enact lifesaving measures in response to surging gun sales, including:**

- Temporarily closing gun stores when in the interests of public safety, with exemptions for law enforcement needs.
- Restricting the sales of unserialized and unregulated “ghost guns,” which can be purchased without a background check.
- Using their platforms to educate the American public about safe firearm storage and the risks of introducing guns in the home.

We must all work together to protect our families and communities from the effects of coronavirus, and that includes keeping our homes and children safe from easy access to guns. We encourage our members and friends to [reach out to your governor today](#).



## Thoughts on Earth Day by Br. Coyote, Gary Nabhan

Gary Nabhan, also known as Brother Coyote, is an Agricultural Ecologist, Ethnobotanist, Ecumenical Franciscan Brother, author and "veteran of the first Earth Day" 50 years ago come April.

In his [recent blog posting](#), Br. Coyote offers a bit of his personal observations on Earth Day, reflecting upon how creation care initiatives have changed over 50 years. He points out that historians call it the largest annual secular celebration in human history, while the specific reasoning behind caring for Creation has typically been based in faith. He observes that many faith-based community members hold long-term interest in the sanctity of sacred landscapes and argues that today's advocacy requires a restoration of dialogue and on-ground practice across the historic schism between science and faith. [Read more.](#)

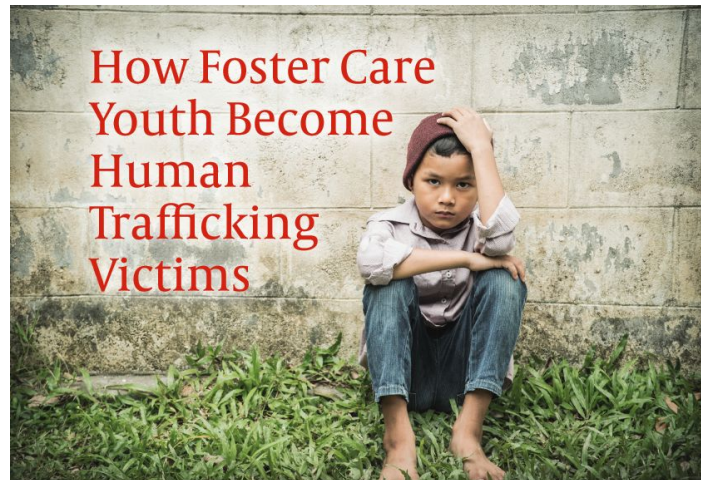


## Human Trafficking and Foster Care

On any given day, there are nearly 443,000 youth under the age of 18 in foster care in the United States. The National Foster Youth Institute estimates that sixty percent of child sex trafficking victims have a history in the child welfare system. Human traffickers always prey on individuals who are vulnerable and children in foster care have a greater risk of becoming victims.

The [April issue of the Stop Trafficking Newsletter](#) explores these realities offering a personal story from a survivor, a state-by-state evaluation and ways advocates can help.

Previous issues of the Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking Newsletter can be accessed [here on our website](#).



## Update on Immigration, Refugee, and Asylum Status

Along with partner advocacy organizations, FAN continues to monitor the ongoing issues for our immigrant, refugee and asylum seeking sisters and brothers as we navigate the coronavirus pandemic. Following are some updates.



- On the eve of its expiration on March 30, the White House announced that Deferred Enforced Departure, or DED, for Liberia is extended until Jan. 10, 2021. Our friends at CLINIC released [this statement](#) upon the announcement.
- USCIS offices are temporarily closed because of COVID19. This will change some procedures around appointments and renewals. Our friends at United We Dream have the [most updated information on their website](#).
- The Interfaith Immigration Coalition, of which FAN is a member, is urging folks to submit Letters to the Editor about delaying the DACA decision in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. This [Pre-Decision Toolkit](#) was developed to help make this easy to do. Please consider writing one!
- FAN is watching out for considerations being made in the upcoming 4th relief package from the federal government, ensuring there are provisions made for vulnerable populations.