

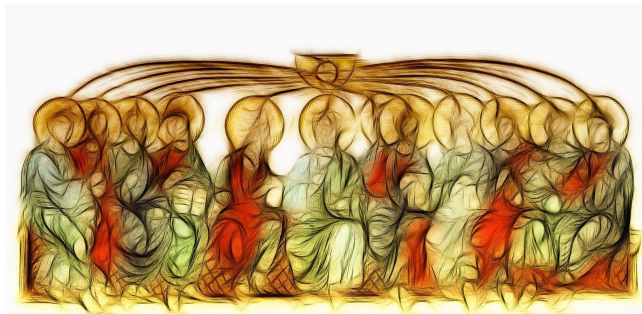
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Reflection Date: May 31, 2020 - Pentecost Sunday

With the Holy Spirit, Nothing is Impossible

Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

As I write this reflection, we are still distracted and at the same time somewhat attracted to these “new times of social distance”, worried about illness and hopeful that all things will work out. The [Vigil of Pentecost](#) shares with us a similar time in the History of Relationship between God and man.



In Genesis, we hear that the “whole world spoke the same Language” and in the midst of a common language they discovered how to make bricks. A great advance from building with stone, easier to build. So here we have a change in society with the use of a new technology for building. They also discovered mortar which holds the bricks in place.

This story reflects a growing awareness and concern for a higher good that replaces the past domination by the stronger. A real shift in society at that time. But it also challenged our dependence on God and made us proud of what we can do.

What does this have to do with the Feast of Pentecost?

Pentecost found the people of God, the Church, withdrawn, dug in, not certain of what was next or even to the point of what to do. Sounds like where we might be in the time of social isolation and fear of death.

Then, there was a stirring in their midst and more especially in their hearts. Jesus’s promise of the Holy Ghost which would bring power came into their midst and changed the Church forever. Instead of doubt, they had faith. Instead of fear they had courage. And instead of withdrawing into their sleeves they preached the Good News, in good and bad times.

Today, the Spirit of God continues to call and challenge us to share our lives, our stories and reach out to those on the margins and those in the center of our lives.

Without the Spirit this is impossible to do. But with the Spirit nothing is impossible!

Br. Paul Crawford, OFM Cap.
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

Take a minute each day to say a [prayer to the Holy Spirit](#) for guidance and compassion.

Suggested Petitions:

For all those who are in need of hope. May the gift of the Holy Spirit dwell deep in their hearts and help them to press forward, confident in God's intercession for us. We pray...

May all people of faith answer the call to live out our faith with greater commitment. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Almighty ever-living God,
who willed the Paschal Mystery
to be encompassed as a sign in fifty days,
grant that from out of the scattered nations
the confusion of many tongues
may be gathered by heavenly grace
into one great confession of your name.
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

Laudato Si Week Webinar Posted Online

FAN was proud to host a [webinar](#) last week in celebration of the 5th anniversary of Laudato Si'.

[Laudato Si](#), the environmental encyclical of Pope Francis, calls on all of us to take up our moral responsibility to defend, nurture, and care for all Creation as well as the people in poverty disproportionately affected by man-made warming of the climate system. On the anniversary of its release, we are reminded of its' powerful call to remember that Creation in all its glory belongs not to us, but to God – and that we are to be merely caretakers of the Creator's garden.

For those who had technical issues or trouble viewing it, we have posted the webinar in its entirety [online on our website](#). We encourage you to take some time this week to watch it and reconnect with God's Wondrous Creation. We encourage you to take two minutes to [tell your Members of Congress](#) to require the EPA to cease the complete dismantling of protections in place to care for our common home. Even if you've already sent a letter, please send another. If you enjoy these webinars, please [consider donating to support our continued work](#).



Child Asylum Seekers Being Deported; Some in the Middle of the Night

As we read [stories](#) in the [news](#) of hundreds of migrant children and teenagers being deported without the opportunity to speak to a social worker or to plead for asylum, we are



aghast, then heartbroken. Then we get angry. The Interfaith Immigration coalition, of which FAN is an active member, posted this [press release](#) urging Congress and the courts to “step in immediately to stop this child abuse.”

Every human being has the right to seek asylum and to do so in a safe, protective environment. Here are several resources we have found to be helpful and informative:

- The [Jesuit Refugee Service](#) recently released this [report](#) which shares the testimonies of people who are facing the real and often heartbreaking consequences of US asylum policies.
- Human Rights First have issued a [report](#) with key points and recommendations developed with input from public health, humanitarian, legal, and human rights experts and provides background on public health measures at the border.

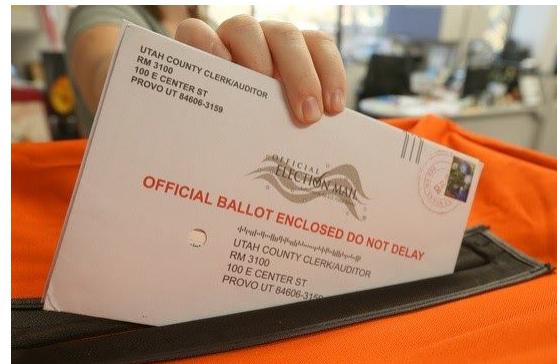
Pandemic or no, we must put an end to unreasonable [barriers](#) that make it nearly impossible to seek asylum in our country. **Here are two ways to take action:**

- FAN has signed on to this [letter](#) drafted jointly by Latin America Working Group, Human Rights First, the Women’s Refugee Commission and others opposing the indefinite suspension of protections for unaccompanied kids and asylum seekers at the US Border. We encourage you to add your organization’s name to this letter by [clicking here](#).
- Jesuit Refugee Services has an opportunity to [take action and urge your policymakers to protect asylum](#) during this time and restore US leadership in protecting the most vulnerable among us.

We urge you to speak up for these vulnerable children, our sisters and brothers. [Add your organization’s name](#) to the letter and [urge your members of Congress to protect asylum](#).

New Resources for up-to-date Voting Information

The COVID-19 outbreak has presented the world with terrible new challenges to public health and the basic operations of government. In a presidential election year, with many states still planning primaries, the **challenge to America’s election systems** is both urgent and critical. Elections were accomplished during a Civil War and two World Wars, and during crises big and small. Our fundamental right to vote is part of what defines us as Americans.



Last week, FAN’s own Jason Miller joined the Texas Impact podcast to talk about the importance of vote by mail and the need for election funding. [Listen here](#).

[We Can Vote](#) is a nonpartisan 50-State online resource that provides regularly updated information and opportunities for each of us to do our part in making the 2020 elections safe, secure, and successful.

Additionally, The [National Vote at Home Institute](#) is dedicated to ensuring the security of our elections and putting voters’ needs first. Vote at home is a growing trend across red, blue and purple states because it is a time-tested and proven way to bolster the security of elections, improve voter engagement, and reduce election-related costs.

At a time when governments are responding rapidly to the pandemic, we urge our members and friends to be aware of your state's voting options and work toward advancement for the good of all voters.

Just Faith Ministries Offers Advocacy Webinar

Our friends at [JustFaith Ministries](#) have announced they will be hosting a free one-hour video-conferencing event every two weeks that highlights how we can make a difference, even as we are limited by sheltering in place and social distancing.



On **Thursday, May 28, at 7p.m. ET / 4p.m. PT**, JustFaith will talk with Matt Gross, Director of Organizing for Bread for the World, discussing "[The Importance of Advocacy during the Pandemic](#)."

We invite those interested to [click the link to register](#) as space is limited.

Poor People's Campaign Moral March Goes Digital

Rally in Washington, D.C., May 2018

As we enter another election season that will likely be filled with political rancor and a distorted moral narrative designed to divide us, we must build a moral movement that revives the heart and soul of this nation.



On June 20, 2020 the [Poor People's Campaign](#) had planned an assembly and moral march on Washington, DC to dramatize the pain and prophetic leadership of the poor and build power to enact their demands. Now, due to the coronavirus pandemic, we will **unite online in the largest digital gathering of poor, dispossessed and impacted people, faith leaders, and people of conscience**. We hope you will [join us in the Poor People's Campaign: A National call for Moral Revival](#).

In a powerful [video](#) invitation to the gathering, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, one of the campaigns' national co-chairs, describes the need "to lift the voices and faces of poverty in the midst of pandemic for a massive historic online gathering that will embolden us, strengthen us and prepare us to fight for the type of society we know we so badly need and deserve." The program will include the stories, solutions and songs of movement leaders and artists.

We know that the coronavirus is awakening many to the political and economic crises that have long been buried under the surface: before COVID-19, nearly 700 people died everyday because of poverty and inequality in this country. Franciscan Action Network supports the Campaign's call that a moral fusion movement is necessary to not just weather this storm, but to transform the nation. **We encourage you to [sign up to participate in spreading the](#)**

[word](#).

Amidst Coronavirus Stay-at-home Orders, We Must Protect Against Violence

FAN has been seeing many disturbing news reports about the rise in gun purchases and domestic abuse during the stay-at-home orders resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. In a previous newsletter we included a story on [ghost guns](#), “do-it-yourself” firearms that are easily assembled from kits purchased online.

As a member of the Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, FAN supported this recent [statement](#), condemning the panic-buying of guns and urging us all to look out for our neighbors and communities during this time of upheaval.



While we can't control COVID-19, we can control how we respond to it. One good example is the mutual aid community of care that was started in response to COVID-19 called [Pandemic of Love](#). This grassroots, volunteer-led aid organization connects people in need with patrons who can help with that need and is a tangible way for people to give to each other, quickly, discreetly and directly. We encourage you to check out their [website](#) for more information. We deeply admire these acts of kindness and human connection and pray this will spread even faster than the coronavirus.

Take Part in Quick Survey from Ecumenical Advocacy Days

In this time of isolation and gathering restrictions, the organizers of Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) are taking some time to vision what the future of EAD might look like in 2022 and beyond. To that end, they are [collecting some data](#) from those who have attended EAD in the past or who were hoping to attend EAD for the first time this year.



[We are inviting you to participate in this survey!](#) All responses will be kept confidential and will only be reported in aggregate form. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete and will **close on Friday, May 29 at 11:59 p.m. EST.**