

Publication Date: June 8, 2020

Reflection Date: June 14, 2020 - Solemnity of the [Body and Blood of Christ](#)

We are Eucharistic People!

Our readings for this Sunday's [Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ](#), especially in this new reality of the COVID pandemic, challenge us to reflect and deepen our understanding of what it means to be and to participate in the Body of Christ, to be Eucharistic people.



Like many of you, when I began the mandated stay-at-home orders issued by our state government, one of the great absences I experienced was the opportunity to participate in the daily Eucharist. The lyrics of a Joni Mitchell song comes readily to mind, "Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got till it's gone." The transition to online Masses and Spiritual Communion is essential in preventing the spread of this deadly virus, yet they truly lack the communal and vibrant encounter that invites us to be Eucharistic people.

In our current reality, people are transitioning to important services like tele-health and tele-counseling. These are important as they offer healthcare providers and people the opportunity to check-in and monitor medical needs in these unprecedented and difficult times. However, personally, I believe that tele-spirituality, though essential at this time, does not have the same benefits and it also leaves much to be desired. Perhaps this is because of our spirituality and our being Eucharistic people, the Body of Christ, is not about providing or receiving services or "checking-in" with one another. Our life and spirituality is more of a sharing of oneness and being united in Christ.

The reading from the Book of Deuteronomy reminds us that the People of God have suffered great hungers and afflictions, yet God provides sustenance and nourishment. In this text we are reminded that "not by bread alone does one live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God."

As Franciscans, our life and our spirituality is not about bread alone, it's about presence, participation and *fraternitas*, living in relationship that promotes the dignity, the integrity and the Christic presence that dwells in every human being. Christ is the living bread, the living Word and nourishment that we receive sacramentally and also in our interactions and relationships with one another.

Perhaps this new COVID reality provides us with lessons that our Eucharistic life is not limited and should not be limited to what happens inside the church building. St. John Chrysostom (347 – 407), Archbishop of Constantinople and an Early Church Father, taught that honoring Christ's body must not only happen by adorning church buildings or while celebrating the Eucharist. More importantly it must happen on the streets, "Would you honor Christ's body? Do not neglect Him when naked; do not, while you honor Him here [in the church] with silken garments, neglect

Him perishing outside in the cold and naked. For what is the profit, if His table indeed is full of golden cups, but He perishes with hunger? For he who said: This is my body, and made it so by his words, also said: You saw me hungry and did not feed me, and inasmuch as you did not do it for one of these, the least of my brothers, you did not do it for me.”

As we reflect on our current reality, or what some refer to as the “new normal,” let us be attentive to what and who we are called to be for a world that is suffering and hungering for hope. Let us truly embody and be the Body of Christ, Eucharistic people, the nourishment, the life and courageous hope needed in our world.

Sr. Margaret Magee OSF
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

This week, pray and meditate on the [Act of Spiritual Communion](#), which many have been saying at Mass during the pandemic in lieu of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ.

Suggested Petitions:

During this time of upheaval in our world, grant all believers the gifts of unity, compassion, and peace toward our fellow humans. We pray...

In gratitude for the gift of the Eucharist, may it serve to remind us of your presence within each heart. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Oh God, who in this wonderful Sacrament
have left us a memorial of your Passion,
grant us, we pray,
so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood
that we may always experience in ourselves
the fruits of your redemption.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

Amen

Pray, Reflect, Take Action: How to Support Our Brothers and Sisters of Color

As we once again grapple with our nation's original sin of racism, the staff of the Franciscan Action Network continues to stand for Justice for George Floyd and all victims of police brutality, and reflect and pray on our own shortcomings when it comes to race. We



encourage all Franciscans to do the same as we persist in supporting a consistent ethic of life that stands in solidarity with people of color. If you missed [our email from last week about this, be sure to check it out.](#)

Pray: this [Litany for Racial Justice](#) once each day.

Reflect on what is happening, using varied resources. Here are some suggested links:

- Fr. Bryan Massingale in NCR: "[The Assumptions of White Privilege and What We Can Do About It.](#)" (corrected link)
- Various articles in the [Washington Post](#), [NCR](#), and [Crux](#) about peaceful protests and vigils in D.C. FAN was quoted in each.

Take Action: FAN staff are working on a specific action to take, so please keep an eye out for that email. In the meantime, read this blog by Sr. Desiré Anne-Marie Findlay, "[A Letter from the Only African-American Felician Sister](#)" and sit with any discomfort you may experience.

We will continue to bring attention to the issue of racism as it pertains to our mission of upholding human dignity and a consistent ethic of life.

Immigration Update: DACA Decision from Supreme Court Still Pending

FAN Staff at a Defend DACA Rally, Nov. 2019

Last week, on June 4th we marked the one-year anniversary of the historic House passage of [H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act](#). This legislation, if passed, would protect and provide a pathway to citizenship for immigrant youth, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) holders.

In the midst of the continued uncertainty of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the growing unrest in our nation due to the institutionalized white supremacy and racism against Black lives and communities of color, **DACA**

recipients continue to await a Supreme Court decision that could change their futures. The justices will decide whether to uphold the highly successful program or put immigrant youth at risk of deportation.



- Because of this uncertainty, DACA recipients are encouraged to consider renewing their DACA protections now. [Find more information here.](#)
- A campaign to ring church bells is planned for noon in local time zones on the DAY AFTER a decision is rendered. [Find more information here.](#)
- The Migrant Center of New York & The Franciscan Network on Migration are hosting a webinar tomorrow, **June 10th at 2p ET / 11am PT** to help understand the basics and begin to plan for a response. [Register here.](#)
- Continue to **contact Congress at U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121** urging automatic extensions of work permits and protection from deportation in the

next COVID-19 relief bill for DACA and TPS holders.

As always, we persist in our advocacy and prayers for our immigrant sisters and brothers.

June Issue of Stop Trafficking Newsletter Looks at Art and Human Trafficking

Art therapy helps survivors of human trafficking give voice to the trauma of trafficking and helps in their rehabilitation process. The power of art is also used to raise awareness about human trafficking. To access the current issue [please click here](#).



The focus of this month's Stop Trafficking Newsletter is [Art and Human Trafficking](#). ArtWorks for Freedom engages art in all its forms to raise awareness about human trafficking. Working locally and globally, ArtWorks for Freedom educates individuals, communities and policy makers about modern-day slavery. Through exhibits, performances, film series, lectures, and creative opportunities for dialogue, they help transform public perceptions and inspire people to action.

You can access previous issues of the Stop Trafficking Newsletter on our [website](#).

World Refugee Day 2020 Toolkit and Resources

The theme for [World Refugee Day 2020](#) is: Celebrating, Protecting, and Standing in Solidarity with Refugees. On Saturday, June 20th - and throughout the month of June - we invite our members and friends to join people across the world in celebrating the courage and resilience of refugees while recognizing the hardships they have faced and the new lives they have created.



Crises test who we are as a nation – and we know we are stronger when we are united. We stand in solidarity with our refugee neighbors and commemorate World Refugee Day. This year is also the 40th anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1980, which formalized the U.S. resettlement program and asylum system.

This comprehensive [toolkit](#) contains an action alert, social media posts, tips on how to prepare and organize virtual meetings with policy makers and much more. We urge you to

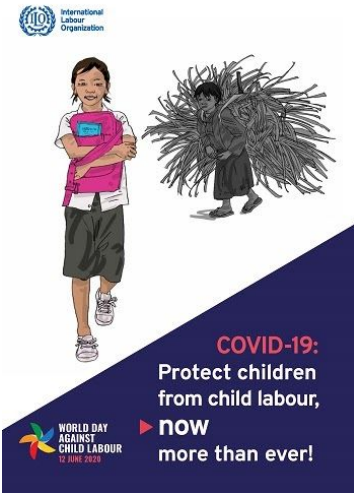
download the [World Refugee Day Toolkit](#) and participate.

International Labor Organization Hosts Webinar on Covid-19 and Child Labor

The International Labour Organization invites you to a virtual high-level Debate to commemorate the 2020 World Day Against Child Labour, entitled "[COVID-19 and Child Labour: Looking forward in times of crisis](#)" this week, **Friday, June 12, 2020, from 3pm – 4:15pm ET / 12pm - 1:15pm PT.**

The high-level debate will stimulate dialogue on the importance of protecting children from child labour in COVID-19 response and recovery plans, while looking forward to the International Year on the Elimination of Child Labour, 2021.

Watch live on YouTube here: https://bit.ly/12June2020_Debate



JFI Action Alert to Senate on Further COVID-19 Relief Actions

As an active member of the [Justice for Immigrants](#) (JFI) campaign of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, FAN received the action alert below. We want to share it with our members and friends with an invitation to participate:



Migration & Refugee Services
Renewing Hope. Seeking Justice.
UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

We as a country continue in our struggle against COVID-19 and stand by all who are impacted during this difficult time. Many of the people who are working in jobs deemed essential - including in agriculture, package delivery, food processing, and in medical care - are immigrants and refugees. They work long hours to ensure that you can put food on your table, receive your mail and online deliveries, and provide high level healthcare. They need to be protected. While there have been several legislative efforts to help our country address COVID-19, immigrants and refugees have largely been excluded from this assistance. We must do more to ensure that no one is left behind and that everyone is safe.

We note the House's efforts to move additional COVID-19 support to the country through the HEROES Act and we now urge the Senate to move forward with legislation. It is vital that you reach out to your Senators and urge them to move forward with legislation that will assist those most in need.

What you can do to support immigrants and refugees:

- Please fill out our [action alert](#) to let your Senator know that protections for immigrants and refugees need to be included in the next COVID-19 relief package.

- Use these [talking points](#) when engaging your Senators, whose support is needed to pass further life-saving legislation.
- Visit the Justice for Immigrant's [Coronavirus resource page](#) to learn more about COVID-19's migration impact and the ways in which you can help.
- Set time aside to [pray the Rosary for Vulnerable Migrant Populations](#).

During this difficult time immigrants and refugees need your support in the effort to ensure passage of further, much needed, COVID-19 relief. Please feel free to reach out to Tony Cube should you have any questions at acube@usccb.org.