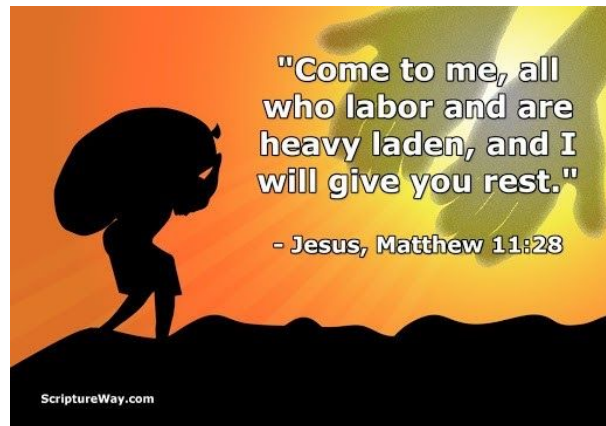


Learn From Me

As I reflect on the [Readings of the 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) that we celebrate the day after the Fourth of July this year, the country is in the midst of protests led by Black Lives Matter. The national unrest has been sparked by the latest killing of an unarmed black man, George Floyd, at the hands of militarized, cruel police.

It is a moment of reckoning in our country, and one, I hope, that will bring change in our society, not only in the way police deal with black men but also a change in the way all people of color are treated and discriminated against for many generations.



It is also a moment of examination for me personally. As a follower of Jesus and Francis, I am reflecting and coming to terms with the fact that without being fully aware I have taken advantage of the privilege given to me by the simple fact that my skin color is white. My/our silence as white people and our lack of outrage at what has been happening for too long, has allowed the suffering of so many people of color to continue to go unpunished.

It is with these feelings that the invitation of Jesus in today's Gospel, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest," sounds like just what I need after days of unrest and soul searching, watching TV reports, reading newspapers and searching together as FAN staff, the best way to raise our voice in support of people who continue to be discriminated against. We need Jesus' words and the reassurance that we can always take refuge in Him, that He will welcome us back, no matter what, even with our hearts heavy with guilt.

Jesus continues: "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden light." Do we really learn from Jesus? Do we share the yoke of meekness and humility as he told us to? How do I share in it? Do I feel that I am in the Father as Jesus is and love the Father above everything else as He does and then love others as He loves us? I wonder.

Would there be so much injustice and inequality if we really had internalized the teaching of Jesus? If the Gospel values of the Sacredness of all life were our guide? What does it say of us, we who pride ourselves on being a country with Christian roots, really?

Words are cheap, prayers are not enough, faith without works is dead.

"Some people," Aunt Emily answered sharply, "are so busy seeing all sides of every issue that they neutralize concern and prevent necessary action. There is no strength in seeing all sides unless you can act where real measurable injustice exists. A lot of academic talk just

immobilizes the oppressed and maintains oppressors in their positions of power.” - Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*

Sr. Maria Orlandini, OSF
FAN Director of Advocacy

Suggested Actions:

If you have not yet, find a way to work for justice in your area; get involved in pressuring your local leaders to act to eradicate racial injustice.

Urge your Senators to co-sponsor and support S. 874, the DREAM Act, which would protect Dreamers and provide a path to U.S. citizenship

Suggested Petitions:

For DACA recipients: we rejoice with them for the latest Supreme Court ruling and pray with them that a permanent solution may be soon reached. We pray...

For an end to racial inequality, that the dignity of each person may be upheld in our country. We pray...

Prayer by Bishop Desmond Tutu

**Bless our beautiful land, O Lord,
with its wonderful variety of people,
of races, cultures, and languages.
May we be a nation of laughter,
and joy, justice and reconciliation,
peace and unity, compassion, caring and sharing.
We pray this prayer for a true patriotism,
in the name of Jesus our Lord.**

Amen

Take Action: Public Comment Needed on Proposed Asylum Rule

After years of chipping away at the asylum system and the rights of those in need of protection, the Trump administration is [proposing a rule](#) that would effectively end asylum once and for all. This is a crisis moment and historic low point with literal life or death consequences for some of the most vulnerable people in the world.



In the proposed rule, the administration would allow judges to decide cases before people have had the chance to present their full case in court and deny asylum for reasons that have nothing to do with the need for protection. FAN, as a member of the Interfaith Immigration coalition, is urging our members and friends to **take action now, during the public**

comment period.

Use this [click-to-comment campaign](#) tool from [Clinic Legal](#) to learn more and submit your comment to the administration today. To leave a comment, one does not have to be an expert. What is needed now is volume to slow down the process. We do urge personalization of comments, and if someone has a connection with a refugee family, all the better, however speaking from our faith and Franciscan beliefs and values is also helpful. We encourage each person who writes a comment to ask 3 others to do so.

The click-to-comment campaign will close **1 p.m. ET Wednesday, July 15.**

Join in Virtual Advocacy Days for Refugees and Asylum-seekers

America has long represented a beacon of hope and safety for people fleeing from violence and persecution, as enshrined in international and U.S. law. In recent years, the Trump administration has implemented numerous policies and enacted procedural hurdles, such as the “Remain in Mexico” program, that make it practically impossible for asylum-seekers to access the protection they desperately need and is their right. Now the President is trying to tighten those restrictions, using the Covid-19 pandemic to further his inhumane policies against asylum seekers.



The Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC), of which FAN is a member, is hosting [virtual advocacy days](#) from **Tuesday, July 14 - Thursday, July 16** to demand that Congress defund the administration’s harmful anti-asylum policies and restore asylum protections. A series of legislative meetings are being organized along with an accompanying training to equip community members and advocates with tools for change.

Our goal is to educate Members of Congress about the systematic destruction of asylum protections and the impact the administration’s anti-asylum policies have had on asylum seekers, immigrants, and unaccompanied children - for those on both sides of the southern U.S. border. Participants will receive:

- Detailed webinar training on Virtual Legislative Meetings -- date to-be-confirmed
- Schedule of Meetings with Your Members of Congress -- on July 14th, 15th, or 16th
- Sample Talking Points and Asks for Your Meeting -- you will receive resources to help guide your meetings and we encourage you to share your personal stories and experiences
- Asylum Working Group and IIC Support -- each meeting will include an accompanier to provide support
- Advocacy and Social Media Toolkit -- the toolkit will include a call-in action, sample social media posts and graphics, and additional advocacy resources that you can share with your constituents

We hope that you will join us and participate, please [RSVP here](#) by **July 1st.**

While all allies are welcome, we are prioritizing participants from [these key states and districts](#) based on their Members of Congress (note that there are two tabs at the top, one for target Representatives and one for target Senators). Please prayerfully consider participating!

Tangible Hope for No Nuclear War 75 Years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki

One panel from 1985 Peace Ribbon

[The Peace Ribbon](#) is one woman's vision that inspired tens of thousands. After being deeply affected by a visit to Hiroshima in 1975, Justine Merritt used her Christmas card list to invite 100 friends and relatives to join in wrapping a "Ribbon" around the Pentagon as a reminder that life is precious and nuclear war is unthinkable - a symbol of peace to surround a symbol of war.



The idea grew to include tens of thousands of people of all ages, faiths, and backgrounds, across all 50 states and a number of countries. On August 4, 1985, 25,000 – 30,000 ribbon panels held by about 15,000 people were joined together to wrap the Pentagon, White House and Capitol, about 15 miles of panels in all. It was the largest ever event of its kind, and mostly women-led. [Read about FAN's own Sr. Marie Lucey's experience as she was in attendance.](#)

The [Peace Ribbon 2020](#) invites all of us who have experienced the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic to reflect on the urgent need to prevent even greater loss of life and all we love in the unthinkable event of a nuclear explosion. We invite you to join us in preparing to recognize the 75th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 2020 by [creating a Peace Ribbon](#) with messages depicting what we hold dear and want to protect by abolishing nuclear weapons, ending wars and preserving the environment. [Find ideas for your panel here.](#)

Ribbon pieces created by individuals and groups will be displayed virtually via social media, as well as on porch railings, apartment windows etc. between August 1 and 9. If possible they may be brought together to create a physical "Ribbon" in New York, Washington DC and elsewhere.

Join the Call for a Truth and Conciliation Commission

America is broken. The most recent murders of Ahmaud Aubrey, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd amid the global pandemic of COVID-19 brings to fore the [original sin of racism](#) in America and we are forced to contend again with answering how much Black life in America matters.



But we are reaching a turning point in our collective spirits to finally begin fixing that which ails us. As we witness the outcomes of uprisings sweeping the nation, we must ask ourselves, "What happens next?" When the protests have ended, where will we be as a people? We can be a better nation if we are willing to [commit to the work](#).

Join the growing national movement calling for a [Federal Truth and Conciliation Commission](#), where we can uproot and heal from the racism that has plagued our nation. Join the work to help us become who we have desired to be. Take and share the pledge at www.truthandconciliation.org today.

FAN Celebrates DACA Decision by Ringing Bells for Justice

Last Monday, [#DACABells4Justice](#) rang out in celebration of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn the administration's unjust termination of DACA, in front of the court and all across the nation.

A total of 1,638 faith partners in eighteen states and the District of Columbia signed up to ring bells for DACA in their communities. Bells tolled in KY, NC, IL, CA, TX, MA, IN, PA, KS, WI, OH, NY, CT, NJ, IA, MI, AZ, GA, and Washington, DC.



Disciples of Christ, [Franciscan Action Network](#), Congregation Action Network, and Faith in Public Life rang the bells in front of the Supreme Court, while the [Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary](#) (IHM) sounded their celebration in Scranton, PA. [School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Pacific Province](#) in St. Louis, MO and [School Sisters of Notre Dame](#) along the border in Douglas, AZ also participated, as well as so many others who posted videos on their social media.

The Challenges Facing America's Election Systems

If you enter the words "voting, elections, primaries" into a search engine, the news story results number in the millions. The COVID-19 outbreak has presented the world with terrible new challenges to public health and the basic operations of government. In Georgia's primaries, long wait times and fewer polling locations were deemed a "[giant warning siren](#)" and the expanded use of mail in ballots due to the continued concerns of COVID-19 clearly demonstrates the need for funding for November.



Past elections were accomplished during a Civil War and two World Wars, and during other crises, both big and small. Our fundamental right to vote is part of what defines us as Americans. As people of faith, we are reminded of the need to continuously make our voices heard about this challenge to America's election systems. We urge you to **call your Senators at (888) 415-4527 and ask that the \$3.6 billion for safe and secure elections be included in the [Heroes Act](#).**

Here are some resources to assist in educating yourself on this topic:

- Recently, 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.