

Publication Date: July 6, 2020

Reflection Date: July 12, 2020 - 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

How Does Your Garden Grow?

FAN friends at their local community farm

Jesus sat by the sea to [teach with an agricultural parable](#). Why not? All Creation is home to him, and he likes to do the unexpected. So from a boat, he begins: “A sower went out to sow.” The parable is familiar to us, and while we acknowledge our rocky and thorny patches, we all want to be rich soil. But what the parable doesn’t describe is the consistent, patient work needed to produce abundant fruit.



Our small veggie garden is green and healthy. It has offered lettuce and arugula and will soon be more abundant. I’m not the gardener, but I know from watching that “sowing” involves more than throwing a seed on the ground. The gardener turns the soil, provides nutrients, plants seeds, fences for protection from squirrels, waters and weeds faithfully. In our spiritual gardens, Jesus is the sower, and we must hear and understand, listen and practice; i.e. do the work needed to bear fruit.

In this liturgical Ordinary Time, the circumstances in which we live and garden are anything but ordinary. Coronavirus unabated in this leaderless country; political divisions; protests against police brutality against people of color, especially Black men; a teetering economy with hardest impact (as always) on people who are poor, people of color, immigrants and refugees, disabled and elderly people--those who struggle to survive in what Pope Francis calls this “throwaway culture.” And yet-- and yet-- there are signs of new life sprouting. “. . . all creation is groaning,” not in despair, but “in labor pains.” Something new is trying to be born. Feel its heartbeat. See the promise in well-tended gardens. Do the work needed to have Jesus say, “But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears because they hear.” And by implication, “your hands because they work to produce abundant fruit.”

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

Consider ways in which you tend your garden in order to produce fruit for a hungry, suffering world.

Suggested Petitions:

In the upheaval of this time, may we be encouraged by the ways in which all creation is groaning in labor pains, let us pray.

May we not be discouraged by our rocky and thorny patches, but persist in striving to be rich soil, let us pray.

Prayer by Pope St. John XXIII

What have I done for Christ? Little, little or nothing.

What am I doing for Christ? Something, but badly, like a sluggard.

What should I do for Christ? Everything, O Lord, if you but help me with your holy grace.

God is all; I am nothing. Let this do for today.

Amen.

FAN Joins Catholic Orgs in ‘Free the Children’ Immigration Statement

One year ago this month, FAN helped lead a group of Catholic national advocacy organizations in launching a [campaign calling for an end to child detention](#) in U.S. immigration facilities. Large public witness events were carried out in Washington, D.C. (*pictured*), Newark, New Jersey, and on the border in El Paso, Texas. All together, more than 1,000 participants and Catholic leaders joined in prayer and nonviolent civil disobedience at these events in an effort to put pressure on Congress and the Trump Administration to end the immoral and inhumane practice of detaining immigrant children.

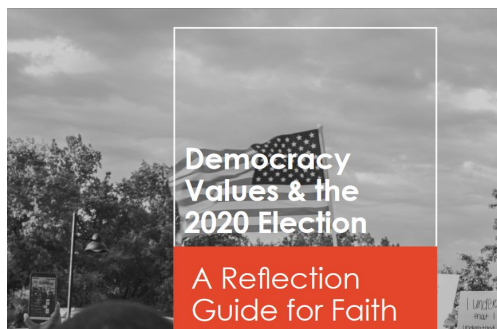


Last week, a federal judge [ruled](#) that all children currently held in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody for more than 20 days must be released by July 17th, however, the judge only has jurisdiction over the children, not their parents who are in custody with them. In response to this, the organizers of the Catholic Campaign to End Immigrant Child Detention, developed a [joint statement](#) urging ICE to “Free the Families” continuing our call to keep families together. We invite our members and friends to read the statement and join your voice with ours by [signing this petition](#).

As Pope Francis urges in his [July Pope Video message](#), “The family ought to be protected.”

Faith in Public Life and Interfaith Power and Light Release Voter Reflection Guide

The 2020 elections could not be more significant. We are in the midst of a global pandemic, a major recession, record joblessness, and our nation is in turmoil over police killings that have once again shown the deep inequities and racial injustice in our nation.



Interfaith Power and Light (IPL) and Faith in Public Life have partnered to release [Democracy, Values & the 2020 Election: A Reflection Guide for Faith Communities](#) to help people of faith align their vote with their values.

From Faith in Public Life:

The nonpartisan guide offers timely sections that address urgent moral issues at stake in this election and beyond. Topics include justice for immigrants, economic dignity, care for creation and climate change, racism and criminal justice reform, democracy and voting rights, health care and the coronavirus pandemic, and global peacebuilding. Reflection questions are included to help spark conversation in your faith communities and to help prime questions addressed to candidates running for office.

[Click here to download the voter reflection guide.](#)

FAN Hosts First in a 3-Part Series of Webinars on Laudato Si'

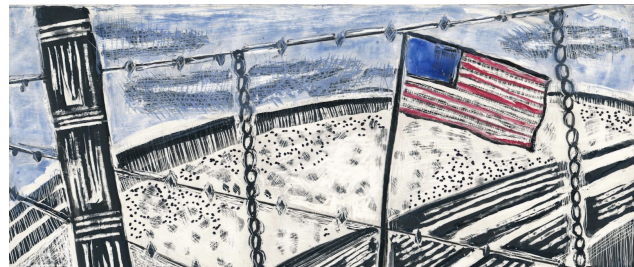
As we continue to join Franciscans and others all over the world in celebrating the 5th anniversary of Laudato Si', FAN is partnering with the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities (AFCU) to engage young adults around the messages and calls for action in the encyclical. We've planned a [3-part series of 1-hour online events](#) focused on understanding these messages and discussing concrete ways to live out the directives presented by Pope Francis.



Our first gathering took place last week where we hosted an interactive discussion on rising to these challenges with Fr. Daniel P. Horan, OFM and Meghan Clark, Ph.D. Find resources and [watch the recording of the webinar here.](#)

Join in Virtual Advocacy Days for Refugees and 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. **There is a current need for advocates to commit in AK, HI, MS, MT, OK, VT, ND, and SC. If you live in or know people in these states, please [consider taking action.](#)**



The goal of the campaign 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 -- 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 take action](#).

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.**

Laudato Si' Revolution Voices of the People Webinar

The [Laudato Si' Revolution](#) is a global campaign from the justice, peace and integrity of creation office of the Order of Friars Minor. Their aim is to encourage and promote environmental, economic and social ecology conversion using human and social dimensions so as to embed the values of

f LIVE
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"CLIMATE CRISIS AND ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION"

JUNE 20, SATURDAY
10 AM, WASHINGTON DC | 3 PM, DUBLIN
4 PM, ROME | 5 PM, NAIROBI
9 PM, JAKARTA | 10 PM, MANILA

Br. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM
Br. Joseph McKee, OFM

The banner features three circular profile pictures of speakers: a man in a dark shirt, a man with glasses in a yellow shirt, and a woman with glasses.

social and environmental justice, care and respect for creation and intergenerational solidarity in our daily lives.

Last month, Br. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM, led a webinar discussion on the climate crisis and ecological conversion. As Franciscans, we believe that listening to “the [Voices of the People](#)” from around the globe, their struggles, and aspirations are critically important. The Holy Spirit speaks to us through them. Br. Jacek was joined by Br. Joe McKay, OFM from Australia, Junghee Min from South Korea, and Steeven Kezamatima, OFS from Kenya. Moderated by Russel Testa, the panel spoke about the impacts of the climate crisis on the vulnerable communities and what is being done in response.

A [recording of the webinar is available to watch by clicking here](#). We invite you to watch it and check out the resources available at <https://www.laudatosirevolution.org/>.