

Limiting Negativity in Favor of Compassion

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Our [readings for this week](#) are very timely as we enter the busy season of the election campaign. Two months from now we will exercise our duty and cast our votes. Have you noticed an increase in negativity in your social media feeds? I know I have.



Our first reading from Sirach, addresses some of the attitude that we are witnessing in and out of our circle of contacts. “Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight.” Wow. In our fallen human nature, it is so easy to hug and hold onto our anger and often, the anonymity of social media is all too tempting a medium to express that anger and project it on others. “Can anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from the Lord?” asks the inspired author. “Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor.”

I do not believe that all the negativity we see expressed is a result of true hatred towards our neighbor. What often saddens me is how eagerly people spread negativity regarding those on the opposing side of the political, religious, or social aisle. I have made a conscious choice to only check my social media once per day to limit the amount of negativity that I am taking in, as I found that it started to rob me of my inner peace.

Our second reading from Romans, I believe, gives us a remedy to employ. “None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord.” If I am seeking God’s will for my life and humbly seek to live it out, then the peace of Christ will reign in my heart. If I put my trust in God and God’s providence, I can maintain my inner peace. Many put their trust and hopes in human institutions. If only we get the right judges appointed. If only we get the right candidates elected. If only our bishops would speak with one voice. If only everyone thought and acted like me. It is human nature to put our trust in human institutions over and above God, after all, I can see, touch, hear, and smell the human person. Trusting God requires eyes of faith, which is much easier said than done. I know that all too well from personal experience.

The Gospel from Matthew offers us a grim reality regarding compassion and forgiveness. Having been forgiven, the servant in the story goes forth and treats those who owe him harshly and does not exercise compassion. As a result, the master, who had once forgiven him, now imposes a more severe penalty because he did not show others the same compassion he received. The gospel standard for forgiveness and compassion is not easy. In these days running up to our elections, let us try to be more compassionate and forgiving to those that disagree with us. Perhaps we can be instruments of peace and compassion by refusing to spread the negativity. Let it stop in your social media feed.

FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

This week, take 10 minutes away from the time you would spend looking at social media or watching the news and spend it with God. Read the Bible, a favorite reflection, or take a [3 minute mini-retreat](#). Ask God for peace and compassion.

Suggested Petitions:

May we ease our grip on our own anger in favor of compassion toward others. We pray...

May our hearts be open to the peace and forgiveness of the Lord and may we feel compelled to share it with those in our lives. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel the working of your mercy,
grant that we may serve you with all our heart.
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.

Save the Date! FAN's Annual Benefit Celebration

Franciscan Action Network's annual benefit will be going virtual this year and we are planning an incredible program for you!

Please mark your calendars for **Wednesday, October 28, 2020**.

Let's make 2020 a truly Franciscan Moment!



Learn, Pray, and Act with FAN this Season of Creation

This is an especially important year to celebrate the [Season of Creation](#). The 50th anniversary of Earth Day was marked this Spring and Catholics all over the world celebrated the 5th anniversary of the publication of Laudato Si',



Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment.

This year's Season of Creation also brings an added sense of urgency as humankind continues to battle a global pandemic and earth's temperature continues to rise, time is rapidly running out to "hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." We run the risk of failing our directive as stewards of creation, not just for future generations but for our own.

That's why all of us at FAN urge our members and friends to [learn, pray, and act](#) with us during this Season of Creation. [Click here to find a variety of resources](#) including webinar recordings, a guided rosary on caring for creation, and advocacy alerts to take with your members of Congress.

Celebrate Labor Day with +John Stowe, OFM Conv.

In recognition of Labor Day, the [Catholic Labor Network](#) is excited to welcome labor defender, Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv. to celebrate their first annual livestreamed Labor Day Mass **TODAY, Monday September 7th at 2pm ET / 11am PT**. We hope you can join. [Click here to register](#).



Additionally, Bp. Stowe will join the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) in a webinar this **Thursday, September 10 at 3pm ET / 12p PT** on why Catholic civic participation matters. "Catholic Social Teaching, Politics, and the Fullness of Faith," is the first in a five-part series on the Common Good and our Common Home. Participants will learn how Catholic Social Teaching guides us in our civic responsibilities. [Click here to register](#).

Laudato Si' Revolution Offers Online Courses

The Laudato Si' Revolution campaign, an effort of the JPIC office of Franciscan Friars, will offer [online courses](#) in four languages on the encyclical Laudato Si' under the theme of "integral ecology." Each course consists of 10 lessons spread over 10 weeks and beginning on various dates, depending on the language. The English speaking courses begin today, Sept. 7th.

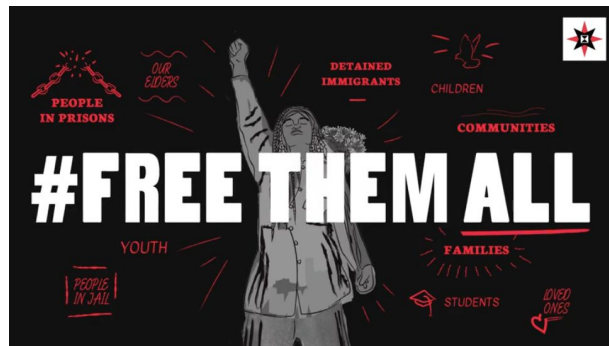
The courses are designed for everyone who wants to gain insights into the major themes of Pope Francis' groundbreaking encyclical and who desires to become a part of the global Franciscan movement towards ecological conversion and systemic change. **They are free of charge upon registration.** [Click here for more information and to register](#).



Join National Days of Action to #FreeThemAll

Everyone deserves dignity and justice. But in the United States, 2.3 million people are locked away in prisons, jails, and detention centers, where they are subject to civil and human rights violations and a lack of access to adequate health care.

With the pandemic, the dangers of imprisonment have multiplied exponentially, making every sentence a potential death sentence.



We encourage our friends and members to join the good people at American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and communities across the U.S. for [National Days of Action to #FreeThemAll](#) from Sept. 9th to 13th with in-person local actions across the country, and national virtual events and advocacy.

The dates mark the 49th anniversary of the [Attica uprising](#), when more than 2,000 people incarcerated in upstate New York took over the yard of Attica Correctional Facility, demanding freedom, wages, education access, medical care, and more.

Good Trouble for a Healthy Planet

A coalition of interfaith partners will convene on the anniversary of the 2019 Consultation "Climate Emergency: Faith-based Organizations Raising Ambition - Leaving No One Behind" to host a virtual webinar on ["Good Trouble for a Healthy Planet."](#) It will address the impact of human activity on the planet, the urgent need for action to obtain sustainable and resilient communities globally, and develop strategies for moving forward to address climate change.



WHAT: "Good Trouble for a Healthy Planet" Webinar based Consultation

DATE: Thu. Sept. 24, 2020

TIME: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. ET / 7 a.m. - 10 a.m. PT

REGISTRATION: <http://bit.ly/2020FBOclimateconsultation>

Two keynote presentations and eight concurrent workshops will be supported with web-based materials and social media tools to equip participants. For [descriptions of the workshops, click here](#).

Reflecting and Re-imagining: A Virtual Conversation Series

Our good friends at [Shoulder to Shoulder](#) are celebrating 10 years of work collectively addressing the anti-Muslim rhetoric and hate in the United States. To mark the occasion, they are holding a public conversation series featuring a number of inspiring faith leaders and changemakers who will help us look back on the last decade of engagement on this issue and (re)imagine what the next decade holds.

Tomorrow, Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 2pm ET / 11am PT, join in on [Facebook Live](#) for a conversation with Eboo Patel, Founder and President of Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), a non-profit organization that is working to make interfaith cooperation a social norm in America. We've come a long way in equipping, connecting & mobilizing faith and community leaders in their work to address the problem of anti-Muslim bigotry & discrimination in the United States. And yet, it's 2020, and the need for this work has only intensified. We still have a long way to go.

[Register for more updates here.](#)