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Reflection Date: November 1, 2020 - 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time/All Saints Day

“These are they who have come out of the great ordeal.”

Image by [Stefan Keller](#) from Pixabay

The [readings this week](#) seem to really speak to us through the lens of these unusual times of political and health concerns. Here we are just a week away from another national election and to not be outdone, during a time of great concern over safety in the midst of a health crisis. The current ordeal has been something we never expected, thought would happen, or worse that we would have to live in a different and unexpected time, as we have been doing since April of this year.



We as believers are always concerned when the readings seem to come from a similar time, yet also what a different time and experience.

We are a week away from a national election where the results may take days to tally before we know the outcome. So the readings appropriately remind us to trust in God and to depend on God in spite of how things may seem to be going.

In the Gospel, we hear Jesus say to the crowd: Blessed are the poor in Spirit, ...Blessed are the meek,...Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, ...Blessed are the merciful,...Blessed are the clean of heart,... Blessed are the peacemakers. Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven.

Our greatest threat today is a moral numbness that prevents us from seeing Christ in the other, the least, the poor, and especially in those with whom we disagree.

May we be blessed as a nation and learn from these rough and challenging times that we might disagree, but we are one in Christ. May the examples of the Saints and Blessed remind us of this and encourage us to love and to forgive again and again.

We pray for all those who are working this week to allow us to vote, and may we vote informed and with our FRANCISCAN Hearts.

Br. Paul Crawford, OFM Cap.
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

Take time this week to pray for the humility to recognize God in those with whom you disagree.

Suggested Petitions:

May we trust in the Lord that we will survive this time of great distress. We pray...

We remember all our “personal saints” and all those who have gone before us. May they intercede on our behalf. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Almighty ever-living God,
by whose gift we venerate in one celebration
the merits of all the Saints,
bestow on us, we pray,
through the prayers of so many intercessors,
an abundance of the reconciliation with you
for which we earnestly long.
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

Advocacy Opportunities to Welcome Refugees

We who work with refugees understand how woefully low the recent proposal of admissions is for the 2021 fiscal year. Despite this, as we come to the end of the first month of this fiscal year, the President has STILL failed to sign a refugee admissions goal, grinding the resettlement program to an indefinite halt.



Join us by [contacting your Members of Congress TODAY](#) and urging them to hold the administration accountable by signing a refugee admissions goal, expanding the categories of refugee populations. Our good friends at Church World Service have developed this [easy action alert](#) with a sample script.

Additionally, tomorrow, the [Interfaith Immigration Coalition](#), [We Are All America](#), [Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries](#), and [Refugee Council USA](#) are sponsoring an action-focused webinar recorded program demonstrating support for welcoming refugees.

On **October 27, 1pm ET / 10am PT** [Lift the Welcome Torch](#) will feature community and faith partners offering short testimonies from former refugees who have made the U.S. their home. Faith and community leaders will call for Congress and the Administration to recognize the contributions refugees make in our communities and to recommit our country to being a beacon of hope and a lifeline for people in search of safety. We encourage you to tune in to the Facebook event to watch the broadcast live by [clicking this link](#).

Conference: *The Infinite Within: Who We Are And What We Are Called To Be*

The mounting crises of our time show that we are exhausting our capacity to center our lives in the radiating power of



God. We are called to be more.

We are prodigal children of an infinite love. We have the capacity for a new world, and the energy for this world is already within us; it is the presence of God-Omega. We need to discover the vast inner layers of the human person, not merely to comfort ourselves in mystical depths, but to radiate out with the love from which we are made—to heal our world, save our planet, and bring justice to all.

The Center for Christogenesis has opened the [registration for their third annual conference, *The Infinite Within*](#), which will take place online December 4-8.

Speaking at the conference will be Ilia Delio, Cynthia Bourgeault, Barbara Brown Taylor, Rami Shapiro, and Catherine Keller. Six workshops will also be offered, on themes ranging from ecotheology and the climate crisis with Mark Wallace, to "Incarnational Engagement in Justice Work" with Alison McCrary. Find more information on speakers and schedules here: <https://christogenesis.org/conference2020>.

Justice for Immigrants' 15th Anniversary Webinar Series

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the [Justice for Immigrants](#) campaign, USCCB President Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, and USCCB Migration Committee Chairman Bishop Dorsonville of Washington issued a statement, writing:



"We celebrate 15 years of the Justice for Immigrants initiative and the amazing accomplishments of Catholic organizations to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate immigrants and refugees coming to and living in the United States. While we are pleased to highlight the work that has been done by the Church and Justice for Immigrants to advance the humane treatment and legalization for immigrants, we note that the work is far from done."

In celebration, JFI has been hosting a special [webinar series](#) with topics including a Brief History of the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons and different ways to support migrants and asylum seekers. Last week's webinar, [The Role of Race in Immigration Policy](#) was attended by FAN staff and offers excellent points of view. Brief descriptions of each webinar can be found [here](#) and recordings of each can be found on the [webinar page](#).

This week, Rebuilding Refugee Resettlement during the next Four Years and the final webinar on Nov. 12th will look at the big picture: What does the Election Mean for Immigration Policy? Register for these final webinars by [clicking here](#).

JustFaith Offers Information on Advocacy Module

Our friends at JustFaith are having an [information meeting](#) on **Thursday, Nov. 5 at 12p ET / 9am PT** on their advocacy module, *Just Engagement: The Power to Change*.

An 8-session program grounded in the Christian justice tradition, [Just Engagement: The Power to Change](#) equips small groups for advocacy and grassroots organizing, no



matter what issue they decide to address.

The meeting will include an introduction to the program, a walk through of the session, information about how to use the topics to create your own program, and time to get your questions answered. You must [register to attend by clicking here](#).

CMSM Webinar, The Next Step: Implementing Antiracism Policies and Procedures

While we know that racism and its effects have impacted this country for over 400 years, the urgent call to action issued this summer demands a response from all people of faith and good will. Many have spent the past few months reading books on U.S. history, encountered new terms like "antiracism," and held listening sessions within their organizations, schools, and parishes.



The [Conference of Major Superiors of Men](#) will host a 60-minute [interactive webinar](#) this **Wednesday, Oct. 28, 4pm ET / 1pm PT** designed to explore the next step, the movement from learning to doing. Denis Okema, the inaugural Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Cristo Rey Philadelphia and a longtime advocate for human rights and peace building--will lead a discussion on key topics such as: combating biases, assessing organizational culture, pursuing equity in hiring and human resources, training staff, cultivating affinity groups, and retaining under-represented groups. **This event is free, but you must [pre-register to get the Zoom link](#).**

Poor People's Campaign: A More Prophetic Vote

The [Poor People's Campaign](#) is calling on faith leaders to commit to a week-long witness for democracy. Beginning on October 27th and continuing through Election Day, they are gathering virtually for daily prayer and action at 12p ET / 9am PT for just 15 minutes each day until November 2nd and then will host a 12-hour prayerful action on Election Day, November 3rd. [Sign up here to join in](#).



We join our voices to say clearly that the fight for every vote to be counted is still our sacred duty. Though we represent different communities and faith traditions, we stand together as our ancestors did at Selma and call people of faith to another march—a moral march to the polls. The integrity of a free and fair election in which every eligible voter's rights are protected is a critical matter of public concern. This is about something more fundamental than partisan loyalty or any individual's campaign. It is about acknowledging in our political practice the dignity of every person that our faith traditions teach.

There are several ways to participate. [Click here for more details](#) and to sign up and join us!

Election Integrity Webinar Recording

[Faithful Democracy](#), the Washington Interfaith Staff Community, and the Religious Action Center recently held a webinar for religious and congregational leaders on election security. If you missed that webinar, [you can watch it by clicking here](#).

This election season our nation is facing unprecedented challenges. As faith leaders, we have a unique and important role to play helping strengthen democracy, caring for our congregants, and strengthening the communities of which we are part.

As we get closer to November 3rd, it is imperative that all people of faith have the information necessary in order to vote safely and securely. As faith leaders, we must ensure that elections are protected.

For additional information or for how to get involved, [please reach out to us](#) at the [Faithful Democracy](#) coalition.

