

God is our Constant Hope

Photo by Rosie Kerr on Unsplash

“COMFORT, GIVE COMFORT TO MY PEOPLE
SAYS YOUR GOD”

WHICH GOD DOES WHEN WE HEAR:

“BEHOLD, I AM SENDING MY MESSENGER
AHEAD OF YOU;

A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE DESERT;
PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD;
MAKE STRAIGHT HIS PATHS.”



These messages give us HOPE! Someone referred to these messages as HOPE UNDER CONSTRUCTION. In the [Gospel this week](#), John the Baptist made it very clear that he was not the subject matter of his message. It was never about him but always about getting people ready, he is only the messenger. John the Baptist had charisma which influenced the people to listen to and follow him. He gave the people HOPE that Jesus will bring the baptism of the Holy Spirit-a form of empowerment. HOPE is not wishful thinking but an assurance that God is constant! John the Baptist ushers in HOPE.

God sends messengers into our lives to clear for us the path that leads to God. Do you recognize the messengers that God sent your way and still sends to you? Are you aware of what each has been or still is for you? There have been many in my life and I am grateful for each one. The messenger that is my most outstanding, I have only met through stories, visiting Assisi, and feeling his presence. And that, as you may have guessed, is St. Francis. I always knew about St. Francis but when I entered our Franciscan community, he became a part of me. He gave me HOPE in many situations. Leonardo Boff in his book *St. Francis* says: “Francis of Assisi, more than an idea, is a spirit and a way of life. The spirit and the way of life are only made manifest in practice not in a formula, idea, or ideal. Everything in Francis invites practice: an alternative act that makes real more devotion toward others, more gentleness with the poor and greater respect for nature.”

God not only sends messengers, God renews our HOPE by sending Jesus as our shepherd. In the concluding verses of the first reading, Isaiah gives us a vivid portrait of God as the good, loving and strong shepherd who sends Jesus, able to protect us from any threat. GOD IS OUR CONSTANT HOPE!

Sr. Marge Wissman, OSF
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

Spend some time remembering the messengers in your life and how they influenced you! Write a prayer or a poem of thanksgiving to them or for them.

Suggested Petitions:

May we be willing to listen and be alert to the messengers and messages that are sent to us from God, we pray.

Let us always remember that God is our shepherd and our HOPE in the midst of all crises that affect our lives, we pray.

Prayer: Excerpts from the song “Like a Shepherd” by Robert J. Dufford

**“Like a shepherd, God feeds the flock
and gathers the lambs in God’s arms,
holding them carefully close to the heart, leading them home.**

**Come unto me if you are heavily burdened,
and take my yoke upon your shoulders,
I will give you rest.”**

Amen

Tomorrow is Giving Tuesday: Help Us Advocate in the Spirits of Francis and Clare in 2021

Thank you for supporting the Franciscan Action Network this year. Our work is not finished, and we will continue to live out our Franciscan call to action as we conclude 2020 and begin anew in 2021. With hope for next year, we **appreciate your generosity this Giving Tuesday** so that we can expand our reach and spread Franciscan values.

In addition to our grassroots activism and Congressional advocacy, FAN pursued an aggressive agenda in 2020. We spoke out and demonstrated for [racial justice](#), expanded our [Franciscan Solidarity Tables](#), encouraged Franciscans to [vote their values](#), and celebrated the 5th anniversary of Laudato Si with a [series of webinars](#). We look forward to what we can accomplish together next year.

[Please start the giving season with FAN this Giving Tuesday with a gift of \\$25, \\$50 or \\$100.](#)

**Now more than
ever we are
called to make
a difference.**

#GivingTuesday

JFI Webinar: Border Realities and Migrant Protection

With an estimated 60,000 refugees trapped in unsafe conditions on the Mexican side of our southern border over the last few months, Catholic aid groups have stepped up to provide humanitarian and pastoral care for these vulnerable people seeking refuge, many of whom have been waiting for over a year.

Our friends at [Justice for Immigrants](#) (JFI) will host a webinar **TODAY, Nov. 30th at 3pm ET / 12pm PT**. Attendees will hear from the



Catholic lay people and members of religious communities on the ground serving these people and their families. Speakers will include:

- Fr. Sean Carroll, Executive Director, Kino Border Institute
- Teresa Cavendish, Director of Operations, Casa Alitas/Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, Inc.
- Dylan Corbett, Executive Director, Hope Border Institute
- Sr. Norma Pimentel, Executive Director, Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley
- Ashley Feasley, Moderator, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, USCCB/MRS

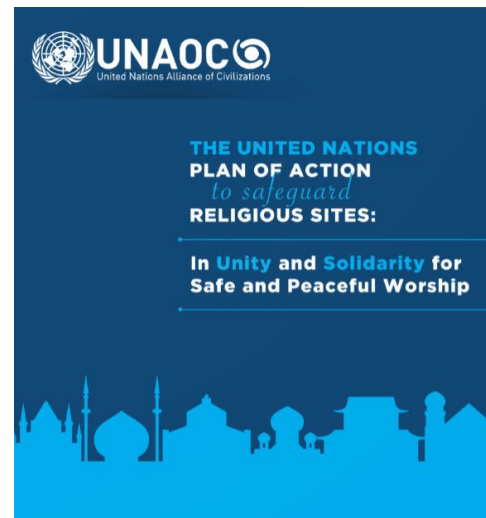
Join the webinar by clicking this link bit.ly/Border_Realities and using password: 441296

Join the Plan of Action To Safeguard Religious Sites

As we have witnessed the recent surge in anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred and vandalism of gravestones, mosques and other religious sites, we are called to engage in full support of safeguarding all religious sites. With the belief that people everywhere must be allowed to observe and practice their faith in peace, FAN has committed to promoting the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations' (UNAOC) [plan of action](#) to safeguard religious sites in unity and solidarity for safe and peaceful worship.

This multimedia campaign seeks to inspire people around the world to join the movement to safeguard religious sites [#forSafeWorship](#). If you are interested in knowing how you can help, start by reading this [simple 8-point guide](#) for just some of the many things that you can do to make an impact. You can also [spread the word on social media](#) and show how you stand [#forSafeWorship](#)

We urge our members and friends to join the global movement, share your story, educate yourself and your community, and connect on social media. [Click here for more information and resources.](#)



Catholic Mobilizing Network Hosts Virtual Prayer Vigils for Federal Executions

Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN) invites you to join in a series of [Virtual Prayer Vigils](#) as the federal government has executed Orlando Hall (Nov. 19), and prepares to execute Lisa Montgomery (Dec. 8), and Brandon Bernard (Dec. 10).

Together we will hold in prayer all the victims (Lisa Rene, Bobbie Jo Stinnett, Todd Bagley, and Stacie Bagley), their loved ones, and those who will be impacted by these acts of state-sanctioned violence.

[Click here to register](#) to join in lamentation of these attacks on human dignity. Your prayers are an act of hope.



**CATHOLIC
MOBILIZING
NETWORK**

**ENDING THE DEATH PENALTY.
PROMOTING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE.**

Save the Date: GreenFaith International Day of Action

[Sacred People, Sacred Earth](#) is the world's first multi-faith global climate justice network. Recently launched virtually, this effort brought together over 600 people of diverse religions and is the biggest and boldest mobilization ever seen on climate justice. Their first actions were the development of [this statement](#) -- available in 14 languages -- for people to sign and share and the organization of a worldwide day of action scheduled for March 11, 2021. [We hope you will join.](#)



By signing the statement, and checking the box to attend the day of action, you'll be the first to get updates, hear about different communities who are participating, and get resources and guides about how to plan an action in your community.

On March 11, religious and spiritual communities around the world will get together to ring their bells, sound their gongs and chimes, blow the shofar or conch, sound a special call to prayer - whatever sacred sound they make, calling out for climate justice and our bold set of demands. It's a mass mobilization, rooted in regional realities of COVID, and you are the key to making it happen. [Click here](#) for more information and to sign on to join the March 11th day of action.

Church World Service Offers "Lunch and Learns"

Our good friends at Church World Service (CWS) have let us know they will be hosting a series of "Lunch and Learn Webinars" in December. The webinars are free to attend by clicking the registration links below. All webinars will begin at 12 noon ET / 9am PT and will last approximately 45 minutes.



The first topic on [December 7th is Asylum Basics](#), where participants will get a basic overview of the U.S. asylum system. This will include the origin of the laws, the filing process and differences between an asylee and a refugee.

The second topic on [December 14th is Welcoming Refugees: Looking Ahead to 2021](#). At this webinar, attendees will hear about President-Elect Biden's immigration plan as well as a discussion on what it will take to build back the resettlement program over the next 4 years and how you can help.

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 is still taking [registrations 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>.

Abraham Jam: An Example of Harmony and Unity Through Art

Our mission as peacemakers brings us together with many folks trying to bridge divides in various ways. This is how we learned about the musical trio calling themselves [Abraham Jam](#). The group is made up of Billy Jonas (Jewish), David LaMotte (Christian), and Dawud Wharnsby (Muslim) – three “brothers” from the three Abrahamic faiths.



Filmmakers John Kennedy and David Saich have produced an 18-minute short documentary film entitled “[Braided Prayer](#).” The film has been screened at international film festivals this fall, and is coming out officially on Sunday, December 6th at 4pm ET/1pm PT.

At this time in our country, when we are experiencing so much polarization, the inspiring art and cooperation across lines that Abraham Jam models provides a truly compelling vision for a way forward. We hope you will join us for the public debut of ‘Braided Prayer’ on **Sunday, December 6th at 4pm ET / 1pm PT**. It's FREE just [click here to save your virtual seats](#).