

Trustworthiness, The Bond of a Good Person

There is one sentence which stood out for me as I reflected on [this week's scripture on the Feast of the Holy Family](#).

In the letter to the Hebrews, the author of the letter is talking about Abraham's faith and how obedient he was to the commands of God. The letter points out that it was by faith that he received power to generate and this was possible because, and here is what struck



me, "... for he thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy." Is giving of the word still a value today? In our polarized world, when it seems we agree and listen only to people who think like us, how do we determine the trustworthiness of the other? How important is it to be able to trust the other in order to achieve good things together?

George P. Shultz, the secretary of State in the Reagan administration, was 100 years old on December 13th this year. In an op-ed in the *Washington Post* on that day he wrote about the 10 most important things he has learned about trust, saying: "When trust was in the room, whether the room was – the family room, the school room, the locker room, the office room, the government room or the military room – good things happened."

If Abraham did not trust, he would not be the father of many nations in a time when he thought to end his life childless. He would not have been able to look up at the stars and believe that one day he would have that many descendants. As Mary and Joseph listened to the words of Simeon in the Temple and the future he foretold of them and the child, they believed him because Simeon was trustworthy.

Our modern family unit is struggling in this world of rapid change. It seems that relationships of trust are paying the price for a desire for power, immediate satisfaction and results. In our government, trust has gone out the window. I believe that without trust in each other, in the good intentions of the other, nothing really can be accomplished.

Pope Francis has many times talked about the danger that today's family is undergoing. He has invited parents and all the adults in guardian roles to rediscover the gift of their call: "Because of their trust in God, Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the temple to dedicate Him to God. This is a call to all parents to recognize that their children come as a gift from God; parents, then, are custodians of their children's life, not proprietors". How great it will be if we take the time to teach our children to trust and respect people even if they are different from us.

This week, we pray for families, taking as example the family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, who also trusted the promise of God “as they grew together as a family in mutual love and trust in God.” (Pope Francis)

Sr. Maria Orlandini, OSF
FAN Director of Advocacy

Suggested Actions:

Let us reflect on St. Joseph and read what Pope Francis says about him as he proclaimed the [Year of St Joseph](#).

Read the Holy Family reflection (pg 12) in the [Lighting the Candles: A Journey with Black Migrants](#) Advent resource from the Interfaith Immigration Coalition and commit to taking one of the recommended actions to help Black migrants.

Suggested Petitions:

For families everywhere, but especially parents who are separated from their children because of our cruel immigration policies. We pray...

For families forced to wait at the border in unsafe situations, that God may protect them and give our government the heart to end their waiting. We pray...

For children still in detention in our immigration system; for a resolution to their inhumane situation. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

**O God, who were pleased to give us
the shining example of the Holy Family,
graciously grant that we may imitate them
in practicing the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity,
and so, in the joy of your house,
delight one day in eternal rewards.
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.

Merry Christmas from All of Us at Franciscan Action Network

We take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year!

The FAN offices will be closed from December 24th through the New Year. We



will reopen on January 4, 2021. Keep in mind, due to the pandemic, our staff will continue to work remotely. Please contact the staff directly via email or by using our [website contact form](#).

Immigration Good News, Cautions, and Bad News

Photo credit: REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst

About DACA:

Good News: On Dec. 4th, a NY judge vacated the July 20 [Wolf Memo](#), thus restoring the 2012 DACA Executive Order. On Dec. 7th, US Customs and Immigration Service complied, enabling the following: initial first time applications may be filed; renewal requests are accepted; current DACA recipients may apply for “advanced parole” to travel; renewals issued for one year are extended to the original two years, so the filing fee of \$495 is every other year.



Locally, the Washington DC Council passed a Sanctuary City bill on Dec. 15th that has more expansive language and includes a new set of safeguards to protect DC residents.

Cautions: The [Texas case with Judge Haren](#), questioning the legality of the DACA Executive Order, is still pending, with a summary judgement anticipated Dec. 22 and a decision at the end of December or early January. Control of the Senate may affect potential legislation to provide a permanent solution.

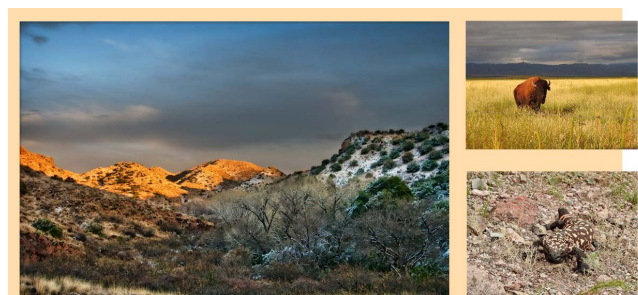
Bad News: Deportations continued this week to Guatemala and El Salvador, and the tragic deportation of Mory Keita to Guinea, a country he hasn't seen since he was three, he does not speak French and has no money. Mory was deported despite a favorable ruling won by the efforts of Ohio Immigrant Rights. Please pray for all who are being deported.

TPS Good News: By court orders, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) has been automatically extended to people from El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua, Sudan, Honduras, and Nepal through October of 2021, with no need to register or make any payments. The orders remain as long as litigation continues.

Caution: These orders are being appealed.

Franciscan Consults on Borderlands Restoration Policy Recommendations

Gary Nabhan is an Ecumenical Franciscan and a member of FAN based in Arizona. Gary works with indigenous peoples in relation to climate and the border wall. He offered his expertise on a new report titled, [Restoring Nature, Economy, and Security at the U.S.-Mexico Border](#). The report offers recommendations for the new



administration in hopes of reversing polarizing trends that have put border cultures and nature at risk.

Laid out with 5 specific recommendations, the document goes through various problems, lists goals and detailed solutions while offering a cost assessment and investment opportunities. The hope is that a dialogue will begin about concrete actions that can be taken to heal both the diverse borderlands damaged by wall construction, and also the broken relations that our Mexican and indigenous neighbors have suffered because of the counter-productive policies and lawless practices in recent years.


[Download and read the report here.](#)

Greening the Parish Webinar Series

The [Department of Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations](#) is tasked with cultivating professional relationships with faith-based organizations, academic institutions, and NGOs. It coordinates the ecumenical and interfaith dialogues of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America on a national level and is responsible for pan-Orthodox activities through the Office of the Chairman of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA.

Launching in January, they will be hosting a four-part webinar series on Greening the Parish. The series will feature conversations between expert panelists on what it means to be a steward of creation through the lens of Orthodox Christian theology, best practices, and daily action. Find [details and more information on each webinar here](#).

Participants are asked to register once for all webinars through this [one registration form](#).



The poster for the 'Greening the Parish' webinar series features a central graphic of a tree with a church building as its trunk. The text is arranged around this central image. At the top, it reads 'Greening the Parish' and 'A four part webinar series to equip faithful & parishes to be stewards of Creation'. The series is divided into four parts, each with a date, time, and topic. The first part is on January 7, 2021, at 6 PM ET, titled 'Orthodox Initiatives' with panelists Frederick W. Krueger, Dr. George P. Nassos, Hieromonk Michael, and Francesca Duval. The second part is on January 8, 2021, at 6 PM ET, titled 'Ecumenical Practices' with panelists Shantha Ready Alonso, Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, and Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade. The third part is on January 14, 2021, at 6 PM ET, titled 'Communities at Work' with panelists Karena Gore, Rev. Fletcher Harper, Patrick Carolan, and Martin Palmer. The fourth part is on January 15, 2021, at 6 PM ET, titled 'Hopeful Aspirations' with a message from Dr. Jane Goodall and panelists Nike Pappas, John and Alexios Touloupis, and Steven Christoforou. A registration link is provided at the bottom right.

Greening the Parish

A four part webinar series to equip faithful & parishes to be stewards of Creation

January 7, 2021
6 PM ET
Orthodox Initiatives
What is happening in parishes, what is possible and effective
Frederick W. Krueger
Dr. George P. Nassos
Hieromonk Michael
Francesca Duval

January 8, 2021
6 PM ET
Ecumenical Practices
Insight into best practices in ecumenical partner churches
Shantha Ready Alonso
Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas
Rev. Dr. Jim Antal
Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade

January 14, 2021
6 PM ET
Communities at Work
Ways and practices to put creation care into action in our communities
Karena Gore
Rev. Fletcher Harper
Patrick Carolan
Martin Palmer

January 15, 2021
6 PM ET
Hopeful Aspirations
Young adult hopes for now and the future to protect God's Creation
Message from Dr. Jane Goodall
Ephemia Nicolakis
Nike Pappas
John and Alexios Touloupis
Steven Christoforou
[Register Here](#)

Questions? ecumenical@goarch.org