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Reflection Date: January 24, 2021 - 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Listening Lifestyle

[Image by Couleur from Pixabay](#)

Our [readings this week](#) show that God calls us all to listen and come together, especially in turbulent times. Jonah, a foreigner, worked to bring the people of Nineveh together to save their city. St. Paul addressed not just the church of Corinth, but all churches to prepare for a better world. Of course, the disciples had to listen to Jesus in order to form a community for all of us.



The people of the great city of Nineveh had no reason to listen to a strange man from a distant land. But they heard Jonah and believed in God. Rather than suffer, they changed their ways. God spared them because the whole city heard Jonah and changed their ways. Who can we hear and how can we change our own ways?

When St. Paul wrote to fellow Christians, he addressed the local congregation, not just the local leader. He lays out clearly the importance of hoping in the Lord, especially in times of trouble, and in living as though we live in the new world to come.

Despite the love of our family, the sorrows we confront, the joy we experience, the objects we own, or the missed opportunities we regret, we should live knowing these things will pass. St. Paul tells not just the church of Corinth this, but all of us, the current world will pass, and God will come into our lives to fulfill them!

The first followers of Jesus, the first Christian community must have felt that fulfillment when they first listened. Jesus, out walking around the Sea of Galilee, sees some guys fishing and tending their nets, and tells them to come after Him. And they do!

Simon, Andrew, James and John. They all just stop their work and follow Jesus. Zebedee's sons even leave their father and workers in the boat. Hearing Jesus, they just up and walk away! Imagine listening so intently we are inspired to walk off our jobs like that for the greater good.

Listening allows us to come together and change everything!

A popular prayer associated with St. Francis asks that we seek to comfort rather than be comforted, understand rather than be understood and to love rather than to be loved. I wholeheartedly believe we also should seek to listen rather than be listened to and that we invite rather than be invited.

Only through listening can we come together to address the challenges our society faces today. Especially in the US right now, with such divisions, it is even more important that we listen to each other.

Listening may entail the hard work of quieting ourselves in order to hear, and changing our own lives that we may join with others to come together and live in God's peace.

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Suggested Action:

Listen to someone with whom you do not usually talk to, or read an article from a respectable publication you may not usually read. Try to understand the other point of view, or find some common ground.

Suggested Petitions:

May we seek to listen rather than be listened to, we pray...

May we seek to invite others, rather than be invited by them, we pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Almighty ever-living God,
direct our actions according to your good pleasure,
that in the name of your beloved Son
we may abound in good works.
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.

Franciscan Response to Insurrection at the Capitol

As promoters of peace, the staff of FAN has discussed our reaction to the insurrection at the Capitol on January 6th. As we continue to reflect and pray about the events and our response to them, we ask ourselves and the Holy Spirit for the courage to facilitate justice in a way that does not perpetuate divisions.

We offer the following articles and resources:

1. [Statement released by Franciscan Action Network](#) condemning the violent attacks
2. The Youth Minister of the Franciscan parish, Immaculate Conception in Durham, NC, Marcus Steer created a short video which builds upon the recent, prophetic [statement](#) made by the US-6 Franciscan Provincials in response to the insurrection. [Click here to watch and share.](#)
3. [Statement and Prayer video](#) by Bishop Michael Curry with text of his remarks



4. An article in US Catholic entitled, "[Attack on the Capitol must cause a change of heart for Catholics](#)"
5. An article by Fr. Bryan Massingale, "[The Racist Attack on Our Nation's Capitol](#)"
6. A [video interview](#) with Fr. Massingale regarding the events

As we continue toward inauguration day this week, we pray for the peaceful transition of power that the United States of America was founded on.

Some Detention and Asylum Good News

[Image by carlos pereyra from Pixabay](#)

There is always time for good news and FAN learned recently of some developments we have been following that fall into this category.

First, the Third Circuit Court granted stays of removal last week to both of the families in the Berks Detention Center in Pennsylvania. This was done right as one family was being released and is welcome news for the one long term family who remains detained.



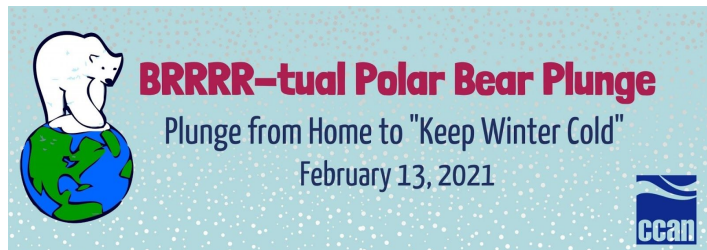
Secondly, we learned from our friends at CLINIC that a federal judge recently issued a [preliminary injunction](#) against the Omnibus Asylum Regulation. This ruling means that the final rule published by the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security that severely hindered asylum eligibility has been enjoined nationwide.

Finally, our friends at RCUSA are hosting an [inauguration week of public education](#) on asylum, refugee resettlement, and statelessness. [Click here](#) to find resources to learn more about issues of humanitarian protection and take action in support of people seeking asylum, refugee resettlement, or are facing statelessness.

As we continue to work toward a more humane and just system of immigration, we will continue to keep our members and friends updated on any new information.

Franciscan Action Network Takes the Polar Bear Plunge...from Home!

On February 13th Franciscan Action Network (FAN) staff and friends will be taking the [#PolarBearChallenge](#) to Keep Winter Cold, draw attention to the critical issue of climate change, and support the important work of both FAN and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN). [Join our team and plunge from home with us!](#)



You're probably thinking we are a little nuts (or, maybe you knew that already) but we believe in the good work of CCAN, an organization that's making a real difference. We will be joined by hundreds of other climate activists (including Bill McKibbin of 350.org) as we choose our challenge, whether the ice bucket challenge or jumping into a freezing cold body of water. To

learn more about the 16th annual “Keep Winter Cold” Polar Bear Plunge visit keepwintercold.org.

What does the Polar Bear Plunge have to do with helping FAN and CCAN? Well, that's where you come in! Just like people do for a turkey trot or 5K run, we are only agreeing to take this challenge if you support us. You pledge, we freeze, and together we raise money to continue the work of caring for God's Creation.

Can you help out by donating \$35, \$50 or \$100 to sponsor us? [Simply pull out your credit card and visit our donation page](#). How's that for easy?! If you prefer to sponsor our plunge by check, make it out to “Franciscan Action Network” and send to P.O. Box 29106, Washington, DC 20017. Just make sure to write “POLAR BEAR PLUNGE” on the memo line.

Thank you so much for supporting us in our efforts to care for Creation.

Catholic Climate Covenant Two-Part Webinar Series

The Catholic Climate Covenant is hosting a two-part series on “[A Laudato Si' Focus on Environmental Justice](#).” The first of this series will take place Thursday, January 21st at 2pm ET / 11am PT.

In the first part of the series, presenters will unpack the meaning of environmental justice and how Catholic Social Teaching gives us a helpful lens to view and act on this timely issue. You will also hear one organization's first-hand stories living with the daily impacts of fossil fuel extraction.

The second part of the series will be scheduled in February and will also include more presenters sharing stories of how their communities are addressing environmental injustice. Find [more information and register here](#).



Fratelli Tutti Resources from Justice for Immigrants

In October 2020, Pope Francis released his most recent encyclical, [Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship](#), in which he commented extensively on the issue of migration. We continue to get various resources and study guides developed by different partners within the faithful immigration sector.

Justice for Immigrants (JFI) has developed a [series of resources](#) highlighting his commentary on this issue, including a [discussion guide](#) for use with immigration-focused and parish teams.



Fratelli Tutti and Migration

With excerpts from the encyclical in both English and Spanish, along with the aforementioned

discussion guide, we urge you to check out all the [Fratelli Tutti resources from JFI](#) on their website.

Take Action in Support of Asylum Seekers at the Border

Asylum seekers have risked everything to flee danger in their home countries but have been forced to wait in Mexican border communities for months and now years.

Tomorrow, Tuesday, January 19th at 3pm MST, asylum seekers and immigration advocates from Mexico and the U.S. will [gather](#) on both sides of the border wall to call on the Biden-Harris Administration to fulfill the promises they made to asylum seekers during their presidential campaign.



We urge our members and friends to take action in solidarity with asylum-seekers. Our friends at Kino Border Institute and Ignatian Solidarity Network have developed [this sign on letter](#) to join voices with asylum seekers to the Biden-Harris administration. We urge you to add your name. Additionally, if you are in the Nogales, AZ area, attend the [event at the border](#) in person. Across the country, folks can watch the Live Stream on the [#SaveAsylum Website](#).

Next week is the anniversary of the implementation of “Remain in Mexico”, the protocol which forces asylum seekers to wait months or years in Mexico for their U.S. asylum hearings. Now, with hope and rejuvenation, we must hold the new administration accountable and urge them to follow through with their campaign promises to restore the dismantled asylum process.