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Reflection Date: February 7, 2021 - [5th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

He drove out many demons

Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

In this [Sunday's Gospel](#), we hear of Jesus "driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee." There is nothing ordinary about driving out demons, not today nor even in the time of Jesus. In our world today, many use the word 'demons' to make fun of a believer. Or as part of a spooky movie or novel.



But in reading about the time of Jesus, his life had many remarkable things that confound our present world. His Conception, his parents being warned and told to go to Egypt. Again at his start of ministry, his Baptism was marked by a heavenly sign and hearing a voice say, "This is my Son for whom I am well pleased." Signs and wonders were a central part of Jesus's ministry. In fact He commanded the Apostles and Disciples to "Go and do the same."

"Salvation" in Greek translates into "healing" and "justice". What we do in Jesus' name is to help those who need help, either personally or as a group and to speak the Good News.

I recently read a study that Churches and Parishes made up mostly of people who had arrived as part of a migration from a few generations past, had never met a migrant, or listened to someone who is trying to make a better life for their families.

The Parish that our community worked in most recently was made up from the first Irish migration. Then there was a migration from Quebec of families looking to work in the mills. Years later, the migration from Central America arrived, followed by the Vietnamese and then the Bosnians. More recently, this Parish has welcomed African families as well as those from the continued migration from Central and South America.

Not all the immigrant groups were welcomed by the community. But each group has somehow held on. Some families have grown and moved away. But when new immigrants arrived, those who came before had forgotten their experiences.

We learned the need to bring the entire community together to Worship on special Feast Days and Holy Days. We learned to gather into small groups to hear the story of the recently arrived and to help them with their needs. It was a blessing, a miracle that many minds and hearts were touched and turned.

We lost some people who said this group or that other group got special attention. So, it's important to be able to share one's story and to be listened to.

Today's demons that need to be cast out from the midst of our society are greed, thinking others are different, and a resistance to having justice reign down to us all.

Pope Francis in his latest book, "Let us Dream" talks about how the Poor and those living on the margins are to help us move closer to God by their stories and their allowing us to become a collaborator instead of a helper.

May we see this come about, I pray.

For those on the margins of society that they may feel welcomed and show us how to live a better life.

For our struggle with a national dialogue that brings us together for the common good.

That you and I can follow the example of St. Francis to embrace the "lepers" in our lives.

That, like St. Clare, those who can not embrace and dialogue and fight for justice for all, can join us in prayer.

Br. Paul Crawford, OFM Cap.
FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

Try to seek out someone with a differing view than yours on a certain topic and see if you can practice dialog, listening to their opinion.

Suggested Petitions:

For those affected by the virus, may they see the healing hand of God in their lives. We pray...
May our hearts be open to the needs of the lowliest and may we insist on justice for all God's people. We pray...

Collect Payer:

**Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care,
that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace,
they may be defended always by your protection.
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

International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking

Four organizations have collaborated in organizing a [series of events](#) honoring the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human**

International Day
of Prayer and Awareness
Against Human Trafficking

February 8, 2021



Trafficking coming up on February 8th.

The John J. Brunetti Human Trafficking Academy at St. Thomas University College of Law and the [Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking](#) (CCOAH), the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Migration and Refugee Services, and Catholic Health Association of the United States together invite you to join one or all of three events which we are proud to offer free and open to the public. FAN Director of Advocacy, Sr. Maria Orlandini is our representative in CCOAH and will be part of the prayer service on February 8th.

PART I: Prayer Service for Reflection and Action against Human Trafficking (Virtual)
10:15 AM – 10:45 AM EST (7:15 AM - 7:45 AM PST)

PART II: Survivor Perspectives: Informing our Work against Human Trafficking (Virtual)
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST (8:00 AM - 9:00 AM PST)

Mass for Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking (In-person & Online)
12:15 PM – 1:00 PM EST (9:15 AM - 10:00 AM PST)

[Click here for more information and to register to attend.](#) “We cannot rest until trafficking in human persons is eliminated from the globe.” – Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, Archdiocese of Miami.

Bishops, Coalitions Work with Biden Administration on Immigration and Refugee Resettlement

With a [Letter to President Biden](#) last week, Catholic bishops from the U.S.-Mexico border region joined the Hope Border Institute (HOPE) and other border faith leaders in calling on the new president to re-imagine immigration, beginning at the border.

The coalition has called upon the President to work together to restore asylum at the border and listen to people on the move at the US-Mexico border in order to radically reform and rebuild our immigration policy with the needs and aspirations of migrants, asylum seekers and border communities at the center of the debate.

The announcement late last week that Acting DHS Secretary Pecoske announced an 18-month extension and re-designation of [Syria's Temporary Protected Status](#) (TPS) designation, gives us hope that the administration is agreeable to this idea.

Additionally, the [We Are Home](#) campaign is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-generational coalition calling for a pathway to citizenship for 11 million undocumented people and a fair, humane, and functional immigration system. FAN works alongside many of the [coalition partners](#) and will be promoting actions as they become available.

Finally, our friends at Church World Service released this [action alert](#) last week in anticipation of the Biden administration taking executive action to protect refugees and restore refugee resettlement.



Take Action for a Faithful Democracy and Give Power Back to the People

For too long, our democracy has not been working for everyday Americans. Too many are locked out of our political process, and big money and corporate interests dominate our political system while ignoring those on the margins.

But right now, we have a chance to fix it. Last week, it was announced that the For the People Act will be introduced in the Senate as S.1; the top priority for the Senate. This legislation is by far the most sweeping democracy reform package seen in a generation. The companion legislation ([H.R.1](#)) has been reintroduced in the House and we must take action to set the stage for it's potential passage (and signing into law) in the 117th Congress.

[Email your Member of Congress now and tell them you support For the People Act.](#)

If enacted into law, the For the People Act would:

- Protect and expand access to the ballot, and break down barriers to exercising the right to vote through reforms like automatic voter registration and ending racially discriminatory voter purges.
- Make representation in government more fair by ending partisan and racial gerrymandering
- Amplify the voices of ordinary Americans in our politics, now overwhelmingly dominated by a wealthy few, by establishing a small donor matching system for federal races.
- Fight corruption by enacting new ethical standards for elected officials.

In order for any movement on the issues we care about such as climate, gun violence prevention and immigration reform, we must first give the power back to the people. [Make your voice heard today.](#)

Celebrate Black History Month with this Calendar

The Racial Justice Working Group of the [Sisters of St. Joseph](#) in Brentwood, NY has created this [calendar for Black History Month](#).

The calendar devotes each day in February to a single person of Color, contains a brief biography of the person, a quote and additional links to find out more about their area of interest.

Because the Sisters of St. Joseph are based in New York, they have made a disclaimer that some may find the profiles "heavy on the New York people", despite that however, we find it to be an informative, engaging way to participate in Black History Month.

[Download the calendar by clicking here.](#)



Lent is Coming! Find Various Resources Here

Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 17th and we want to make you aware of several resources being offered to help you



engage in the season with an open heart and mind.

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) will release a Lenten devotional from the Holy Days and Holidays committee. *Lenten Values: Springing into Action* will reflect on nine values that ground the work of immigration justice; each one features scripture, stories, and more. [Sign up here to receive the materials once they're ready](#). FAN's own Sisters Marie Lucey and Maria Orlandini contributed to the series.

Begin preparing for a spirit-filled season by picking up any of the [Franciscan-inspired resources](#) from our good friends at Franciscan Media. Here are two we think you'd like:

1. Father Richard Rohr has a book of meditations that begin with a single title or phrase that sums up the point. His book, [Wondrous Encounters](#) then offers the meditation followed by key passages from the readings.
2. Get a group of friends together for daily reflection using the booklet of [20th Century Saints](#). Each booklet features prayers and reflections alongside an introduction of a different saint who lived during the 20th century.

Additionally, keep watching this space for information on a video prayer resource from the FAN staff and friends using the [Franciscan Values](#) document which was developed at our founding.

Save the Date: Sacred People, Sacred Earth Day of Action March 11, 2021

Our good friends at GreenFaith are among the founding grassroots partners in 14 countries collaborating in a new era of global, multi-faith climate action. [Sacred People, Sacred Earth](#) is billed as the **biggest ever multi-faith climate day of action**. On **March 11, 2021** diverse, grassroots people of faith and conscience will [come together to demand real climate solutions and to lead by example](#).

United by a fundamental belief that all people, all living things, and the Earth are sacred, partner organizations from all over the world have come together to coordinate actions. Watch this [moving video](#)! There are **10 bold demands** that grassroots faith communities around the world have developed which seek to provide opportunities for people of diverse faiths and spiritualities everywhere to get involved.

We hope our members and friends will use this [helpful guide](#) to plan or join an action during [Sacred People, Sacred Earth](#). Let's mobilize our communities to a better world for the benefit of all.

