

Publication Date: March 1, 2021

Reflection Date: March 7, 2021 - Third Sunday in Lent

God is the Center of Our Lives

Image by [Andrea Don](#) from [Pixabay](#)

The readings for the [Third Week of Lent](#) impress upon us that God is the Center of our lives. The commandments given through Moses to the Israelites are signposts meant to point the way toward authentically living out this reality. Jesus also reminds the people to make God the center of their lives when he encounters the sellers in the temple. In Matthew, Mark and Luke's gospels Jesus admonished the sellers by telling them that "This is a house of prayer." But John's retelling in his gospel is more forceful and goes



further, saying that Jesus made a whip to drive out the sellers with their goods and animals that were being sold and turned over the money changers' booths. Also, during John's portrayal, Jesus says that he will rebuild the temple in 3 days which was a reference to his passion and resurrection and not rebuilding the temple. The Jews did not understand his prediction and asked where he got the authority to throw out the sellers. But his prediction proved true in three days with his resurrection.

The scriptures that were written years ago are passed down to us today, so we can perhaps apply them to actions in the present time. When contemplating Jesus expelling the sellers for turning his house into a market place, I was reminded of the attack on the Capitol building on January 6th. In that attack, God was not the Center of the attackers' lives. Moses' prediction that the commandments were a signpost for authentic living also proved to have been forgotten. Several of the commandments were not revered on that day especially: Honor your father and your mother, You shall not kill, You shall not steal. What would Jesus have done if he had been at the Capitol building that day? During this attack, God was not the Center of the insurrectionists' lives.

In the Gospel event, the Temple is a sacred building but is a building that can be replaced. The Capitol is a revered building but it too is still a building. Memories of what happened here will never be forgotten by those living today and will go down in history as a violent event.

God never gives up on us and God's truest intention for creation is always aimed toward love and life. We read in Genesis that God looked on creation as very good. God's intention is to be the Center of our lives and hopefully in all our lives God wins that center space.

Sr. Marge Wissman, OSF
FAN Board Member

Suggested Actions:

That I will not allow any stumbling blocks to stand in my way of God being the Center of My Life.
That all my actions lead others to God's Center.

Suggested Petitions:

That all will accept that God's truest intention for creation is always aimed toward love and life, we pray.

That all of us never turn away from God's love, we pray.

Prayer: From Psalm 16 in the Psalms Now by Leslie F. Brandt

Let us pray:

I look to God as my chief counselor, even in the darkest of night. God is ready to teach and guide me. I need only to recognize God's perpetual presence. Because God continually surrounds me, I shall not lose my way. Is it any wonder that I am happy? Even my humanity, my tangible body, rests in the blessed realization of this security. God will keep even my human self from the destruction clutch of evil. You do show me the paths I must take. Within Your all-embracing presence there is genuine fulfillment. In my relationship with You I discover incomparable and eternal joy.

Amen

Take Action: Urge Support for Honduras Human Rights Bill

FAN was happy to see the Honduras Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Act of 2021 [introduced](#) in the United States Senate by Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR). The bill calls for the suspension of "United States support for the Government of Honduras until endemic corruption, impunity, and human rights violations cease, and their perpetrators are brought to justice."

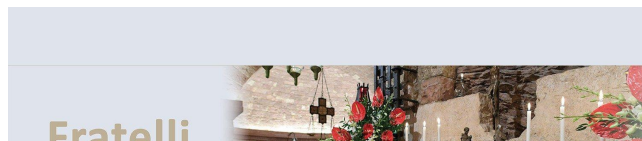
Honduras has been "plagued by endemic corruption and rights violations" since the 2009 military coup. In 2018, FAN's own Sr. Maria Orlandini [joined a delegation](#) (pictured) to the country to discover root causes of migration. Over the last decade, ever increasing levels of militarization and the steady weakening of oversight mechanisms and constitutional guarantees have been coupled with systemic corruption in the government and have collapsed the rule of law. Honduras has become, in effect, a narco-state and the most dangerous country in the world to defend human rights.



Please join us in advocating for The Honduras Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Act of 2021. [Contact your elected officials](#) and urge them to co-sponsor this important legislation.

Webinar: The Peace Dimensions of *Fratelli Tutti*

Pope Francis' new encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, has much to contribute to the theory and praxis of peace, but this is a theme that has received relatively little attention since



its release in October 2020. Franciscans International and Catholic Relief Services have partnered with the Catholic Peacebuilding Network in hosting a webinar on this topic **Thursday March 4 from 10am ET / 7am PT. Click here to [register for The Peace Dimensions of Fratelli Tutti.](#)**

How can it be a resource for peacebuilding and impact the practice of peacebuilding? Does it change teaching on just war? How does it open dialogue on peace with Muslims? How does its Franciscan influence deepen the understanding of peacebuilding?

This webinar will examine these questions and more as it probes the peace dimensions of the encyclical. Fr. Michael Perry, OFM, Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor is one of the speakers. Get [more information and register to attend by clicking here.](#)

FAN Partners with American Immigration Council on 'Belonging Begins With Us' Campaign

FAN is excited to announce that we are partnering with the [American Immigration Council](#) this year on a new weekly Catholic homily video series as part of their [Belonging Begins with Us](#) campaign. Beginning this Easter season, weekly homilies on belonging that are connected to the gospel reading will be recorded and posted online for distribution to a network of priests. Any priests who want to participate in the video series and/or receive the weekly homily helps, [contact Jason Miller.](#)



Recently, the American Immigration Council hosted a webinar discussion on a report they published examining how the values we hold sacred impact our perceptions of immigration. The basis of the report was the question: How and why do U.S. citizens hold the immigration attitudes that they do? We invite you to read more about this interesting report by [clicking here.](#)

Call-in Action: Faith on the Phones Urging #Citizenship4All

As an active member of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC), FAN invites you to join our partnership with NAKASEC (the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium) and many other immigration advocates for "[Faith on the Phones.](#)"

The next few months are a critical time to seek headway through legislation that can offer protections for DACA recipients, TPS recipients, and immigrant Essential Workers, and can help build pathways towards citizenship for all 11 million currently undocumented individuals.

Bring your values to the phone lines **every Thursday from 5-6 pm ET/2-3 pm PT, February 18-April 29** to urge Congress and Administration officials provide

JOIN FEB 18TH - APRIL 29TH

FAITH ON THE PHONES

THURSDAYS • 5-6PM ET

Register: <http://bit.ly/FaithonthePhones>

#CITIZENSHIP4ALL

INTERFAITH IMMIGRATION COALITION

NAKASEC

#Citizenship4All. Immigrant leaders from NAKASEC will provide training, call information, and community partners for support.

[Click here to sign up](#) to make weekly phone calls calling for citizenship for all.

Take Action: Urge your Member of Congress to Support the WATER Act

Water is a human right. From Flint, MI, to Texas, we've seen the crises that can happen when people don't have clean water. We need dedicated funding to keep our water systems up-to-date and affordable, protecting our drinking water for generations to come.

Last week, [75+ members of Congress](#) had cosponsored the WATER Act, critical legislation that would allow investment in our public water systems, create nearly 1M jobs & guarantee clean, affordable drinking water for everyone.

Food and Water Watch has developed this [action alert](#) to contact your members of Congress urging them to cosponsor and support the WATER act. We urge our members and friends to [take action](#) to ensure that every person has access to safe, clean water.

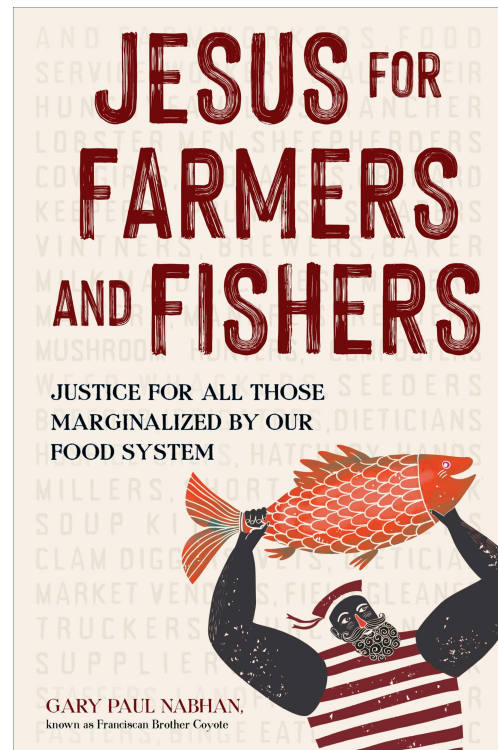


New Book: Parables for Farmers and Fishers

Climate disasters, tariff wars, extractive technologies, and deepening debts are plummeting American food producers into what is quickly becoming the most severe farm crisis of the last half-century. Yet we are largely unaware of the plight of those whose hands and hearts toil to sustain us.

Agrarian and ethnobotanist Gary Paul Nabhan (a.k.a. Eccumenical Franciscan Brother Coyote) offers a fresh, imaginative look at the parables of Jesus to bring us into a heart of compassion for those in the food economy. In his new book, [Jesus for Farmers and Fishers](#), Nabhan offers palpable scenes from the Sea of Galilee and the fields, orchards, and feasting tables that surrounded it, and contrasts the profound ways Jesus interacted with those who were the workers of the field and the fishers of the sea with today's events occurring in American farm country and fishing harbors.

Tapping the work of Middle Eastern naturalists, environmental historians, archaeologists, and agro-ecologists, [Jesus for Farmers and Fishers](#) is sure to catalyze deeper conversations, moral appraisals, and faith-based social actions in



each of our faith-land-water communities. [Click here to learn more and purchase.](#)

Church World Service's New Lunch and Learn Webinars

Our good friends at [Church World Service](#) have released a new schedule of Lunch and Learns; a series of webinars for community sponsors and volunteers.



All webinars will begin at 12noon eastern time and last approximately 45 minutes.

This month's webinar topics are as follows:

- March 01: Welcoming Refugees in 2021: Creative Welcoming Initiatives
- March 08: Immigration and Refugee Policy & Advocacy
- March 15: CWS Ration Challenge
- March 22: US-Mexico Border Update and Asylum Seeker Support
- March 29: Refugee Resettlement in 2021

Each webinar has a separate registration link. [Click here for more information and access to all registration links.](#)