

Publication Date: May 3, 2021

Reflection Date: May 9, 2021 - 6th Sunday of Easter

Love is of God

"Let us love one another, because love is of God;

everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God."

(1 Jn 4:7)

What beautiful and appropriate readings we have this [sixth Sunday of Easter](#), a day in the United States when we remember and celebrate Mothers. This year, we are drawn to remember those mothers who are among the over 560,000 people who have died from the Coronavirus.

Sadly, we also need to remember the mothers among, or impacted by, the over 43,500 people who died from gun violence this past year in our country. Many children are grieving the loss of their mothers this past year. Many mothers are grieving the loss of their children.

According to the [gun violence archives](#), we are on track this year to surpass the number of deaths last year due to guns. In the first four months of 2021, over 12,800 people have died from guns, including over 400 children under the age of 17. Why are children and teens living in the United States fifteen times more likely to die from gunfire than their peers in 31 other high-income countries combined? When did the right to purchase a gun override a child's (or any person's) right not to be shot?

"I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain." (Jn 15:16)

Even after all too many mass killings of children, our society cannot find the political will to change laws to protect our children. As of the middle of April, there were 147 mass shootings in our country this year, more than one mass shooting a day. Let us pray that the latest mass shooting may prove not to be just another tragedy from which we learn nothing.

Whenever we advocate for legislation that addresses gun violence, we witness to the tradition of peacemaking handed down to us from Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi. Let us create a society not only safe for every child but also worthy of each Mother's child.

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF
FAN Member and Advocate

Suggested Action:

Please take one minute and [click here](#) to urge the U.S. Senate to take action on background checks.

Visit the [Franciscan Action Network](#) webpage to view the latest statements on gun violence.



Suggested Petitions:

May we take to heart God's commandment to love one another without condition. We pray...
May we who know God, reflect the love we have been given on everyone we meet. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

**Grant, almighty God,
that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy,
which we keep in honor of the risen Lord,
and that what we relive in remembrance
we may always hold to in what we do.
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

Take Action: Urge Lawmakers to Pass Background Check Legislation

Our country's gun violence takes the lives of more than 100 people, on average, every single day. We need more than thoughts and prayers from our lawmakers. We need action now, starting with [background check legislation](#).

This sampling of shootings is just a fraction of the gun violence that occurred over one recent weekend, according to [Everytown for Gun Safety](#):

- At least 24 people were shot in Chicago, three fatally, including 7-year-old Jaslyn Adams who was shot and killed as she and her father were getting food at a McDonald's drive-thru. Her father, Jontae Adams, was critically wounded.
- In Omaha, Nebraska, a man opened fire inside Westroads Mall, fatally shooting one person and wounding another.
- At a vigil for a homicide victim in Truro Township, Ohio, one person was shot and killed, and five people were wounded.
- In Austin, Texas, three people were shot and killed by the same person.
- A five-year-old was shot and injured in Baltimore, Maryland.
- In LaPlace, Louisiana, six people were shot and wounded at a 12-year-old's birthday party. A neighbor said that all of the victims were children.

Background checks save lives but loopholes in the current laws have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, meaning more guns sold to people without a background check, and more guns in the hands of people who should not have them.

It's **past time for our lawmakers to take action** on this crisis and listen to the will of the



American public. We need life-saving gun safety legislation now, [starting with background checks](#).

This Wednesday: *Fratelli Tutti* Series Begins

This week, Franciscan Action Network will host our first in a [series of discussions](#) that will unpack the directives in Pope Francis' latest encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*. If you haven't yet registered for Wednesday's discussion on *Fratelli Tutti* on Culture and Society, you can do so by [clicking here](#).



Each topic of discussion will enrich our understanding and reflection on the encyclical.

Please note: You must register for each topic individually. Once you register you will be emailed a unique link to join the event(s). The remaining topics and dates are listed here:

- [Fratelli Tutti on Racism and Anti-Racism](#), with Olga Segura & Ralph McCloud on May 19
- [Fratelli Tutti on Economics](#), with Tony Annett & Meg Clark on May 26
- [Fratelli Tutti on Governance and Politics](#), with Amy Uelmann & David Cloutier on June 16

If you are unable to join us in person, we will be making recordings of the discussions available for viewing.

Each event will follow the same format with moderated discussion followed by Q&A, where attendees will be encouraged to submit questions for the panelists. The four events will each begin at 7pm ET (4pm PT) and be moderated by our own Executive Director, Stephen Schneck. [Click here to learn how to sponsor these events](#).

We hope you will join us for these enriching discussions.

Sisters Join Chester, PA Residents calling to “Ban the Burn”

On Saturday, April 24th five Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia (FAN Institutional Members) participated in a protest led by [Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living](#) calling to “ban the burn” of the Covanta trash incinerator. Covanta is the largest trash incinerator in the nation and it is polluting the air. Local residents who live near the incinerator are forced to watch and smell the daily trash coming from a line-up of trucks.



According to the Environmental Justice Network:

"Trash incineration is the most expensive and polluting way to manage waste or to make energy. It's dirtier than coal and is more polluting than direct landfilling of trash. For every 100 tons burned, over 70 tons becomes air pollution and nearly 30 tons end up as toxic ash that is dumped in the county's landfill, making it more dangerous than if waste were placed there directly." [Learn more here.](#)

We applaud the work of Chester Residents for Quality Living and the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia for joining the fight. If you or your community have an action you would like to see lifted up in our newsletter, please contact our communications coordinator, [Janine Walsh](#).

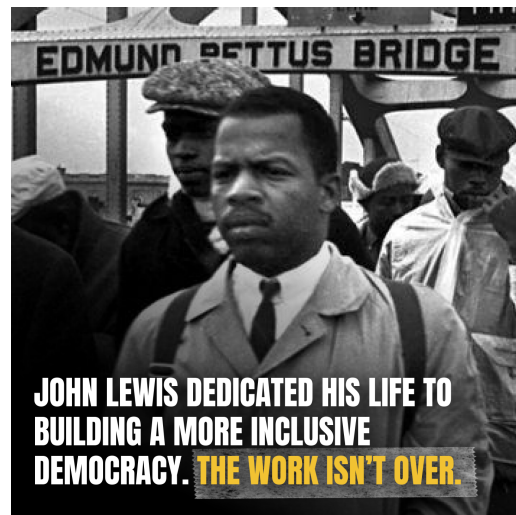
Take Action: Join the John Lewis Day of Action this Saturday, May 8

The late Congressman John Lewis shed his blood crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge to fight for Black voters and Voters of Color to participate in America's electoral process and the enactment of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Today voting rights are under attack nationally by state legislators introducing and passing laws to put up barriers to our participation in elections. Americans are coming together to fight back by joining 100 Covid-19 safe VoterCades in 100 different cities to make sure our voices are heard.

[Join us on May 8](#) to demand the passage of the For the People Act, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

[Find an event near you by clicking here.](#)



JOHN LEWIS DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY. **THE WORK ISN'T OVER.**

Join in the Campaign to #FreeThemAll

Our good friends at [American Friends Service Committee](#) (AFSC) are once again honoring mothers and caregivers and highlighting their strength and resilience through the #FreeThemAll campaign. [Learn more about the campaign here.](#)

We take this moment to recognize the mothers in immigration detention who are separated from their children, mothers whose loved ones are in jail, and all the mothers and caregivers who are leaders in the struggle for a more just world.

On May 6, at 7pm ET / 4pm PT join the AFSC for their [Care Across the Walls Webinar](#), a teach-in featuring learnings and calls to action from those of us confronting the unique challenges of trying to maintain the mother-child bond when separated by walls of incarceration. [RSVP here.](#)



Join “Spring Up for Earth” meeting this Wednesday

Last week, we made you aware that the Franciscan Action Network has joined an open association of activists, organizations and coalitions dedicated to uniting through grassroots advocacy in support of strong federal legislation to address the climate crisis.

Within this association, over 170 [faith leaders](#) have mobilized to bring our moral voices together to organize around the [Earth Bill](#) and the Adopt-A-District grassroots work. Participants share resources and organize with interfaith or denominational members in key states and districts.



This week, the CCP/Earth Bill & Network Faith Team meeting “Spring Up for Earth” scheduled for **Wednesday, May 5 from 3:30pm-5:00pmET** promises a mix of musical performance, inspiration, learning and discussion. We encourage our members and friends to join to [learn more](#) about Earth Bill: A 2030 Moonshot, the Earth Bill Pledge and more.

For more information contact the Faith Team Lead, Lavona Grow at lavona@uusj.org or Genie Cooper, ecooper@centerforearthethics.org.