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Reflection Date: May 30, 2021 - The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

It's All About Community

Photo Credit: Nolin Ainsworth

I couldn't tell you much about the Trinity at the time.

When I started following Christ, I didn't have a clue how to articulate the three persons of the Holy Trinity. I didn't know about the hypostatic union or the story of St. Nicholas's staunch defense of the Trinity in the face of heresy at the Council of Nicea in AD 325 (it got violent).



But I did know something of Christianity's central mystery when I began attending Bible study as a wide-eyed sophomore at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Each week that I sauntered out of my room and over to the neighboring dorm for the meeting, I just understood the power of community founded on love and relationship.

The [Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity](#) finds the church back in Ordinary Time, ready to set out with Jesus on his preaching and teaching mission. Almost to prepare for the journey ahead, we are grounded in the central truth of the Christian faith as we recount the commissioning of the disciples to make disciples of all nations, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ..." (Mt 28:19)

What did my first Christian community have in common with the Trinity? It was deeply loving and deeply relational. Want to experience God? Build and maintain relationships through self-giving and self-sacrificial love.

"One discovers the presence of God by discovering the love that unites the community," says theologian Michael Himes. "That is our highest and best experience of God's presence."

It's no wonder that a fracturing church turns people away. To enter into the triune God is to enter into full union with ourselves, our local and global community, and the earth.

What started as just something to do – read and discuss and few Gospel passages with friends – became something much more: A catalyst for lifelong friendship; a catalyst for the very presence of God.

The ministry leaders accepted me for me. Their easy demeanor and many ways of relating to others drew me into the mystery of God. I still remember feeling tickled when one of the staff asked for permission to include a picture of me in one of her letters to fundraisers: "I am asking them to pray for student leaders and wanted to put a face to the name."

"Wow," I thought. "She must really treasure me." Wrapped up in my gratitude was another realization: I'm treasured by God.

This is surely the realization that St. Francis had in his life, probably many times. Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF says intimacy with God is the springboard from which we strive for justice. It is what powered St. Francis's mission, and it can power ours too.

"The more (Francis) could, in a sense, be at home with that love of God within him, the more he found a creative way to deal with the oppositions in his community, to deal with the conflicts with the church, with those around him," [she said](#). "Conflict requires creative resolution, it does not require more conflict."

Nolin Ainsworth
FAN Intern and OFM Postulant

Suggested Action:

While holding a portrait of yourself and friends, meditate on your friendship with God and how he treasures you infinitely more than any individual could.

Suggested Petitions:

May we remain faithful in our relationship with ourselves, those around us, and God. We pray...
May we restore fractured relationships and renew weakened ones. We pray...

Collect Prayer:

**God our Father, who by sending into the world
the Word of Truth and the Spirit of sanctification
made known to the human race your wondrous mystery,
grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith,
we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory
and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty.
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

Belonging Begins with Us Campaign Kicks Off with Homily from Bp. Stowe, OFM Conv.

We've all had moments where we've felt we didn't belong, but for people who moved to this country, that feeling lasts more than a moment. We all want to feel safe and included in the community we call home, but today, too many of our neighbors experience exclusion, isolation, harassment, and even violence on the basis of their identity.

Franciscan Action Network is proud to be a part of the [Belonging Begins with Us](#)



campaign to foster a more welcoming nation where everyone - regardless of background - feels they belong. Using video homilies from priests all over the country, we aim to help in finding points of connection and shared experiences to create a more welcoming nation where everyone can belong. See the [inaugural video from Bp. John Stowe, OFM Conv. by clicking here](#).

If you or someone you know would like to get involved in making a homily video, please [contact us](#). We can all play a part in making sure everyone feels like they belong.

Sign up: #WeAreEssential Faith Fast for Citizenship

As part of the We Are Home campaign, Franciscan Action Network will join faith leaders and directly-impacted immigrants in the [#WeAreEssential Faith Fast for Families](#) starting June 7th to shine a spotlight on our nation's moral obligation to provide relief, protection and a pathway to citizenship for the country's 11 million undocumented immigrants.

#WeAreEssential
Faith Fast for Citizenship



A core group of fasters will gather in Washington, DC to hold the Faith Fast for Families and amplify the moral claim of undocumented immigrants and their families. There are a variety of opportunities for faith institutions and communities to stand in solidarity with the [Faith Fast for Families](#) and with the call for immigrant justice.

Here are some example actions:

- **Organize a Solidarity Action** in your community with your local elected officials and Members of Congress to support the call for a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrant workers.
- **Hold a prayer service or vigil** to support those fasting in Washington and to pray for a pathway to citizenship for immigrant workers.
- **Set up a meeting with your Members of Congress** to advocate for a pathway to citizenship for immigrant workers
- **Organize a local Faith Fast for Citizenship** with faith groups in your own community.
- **Fast as an individual** or invite individual members of your faith community to do their own fast at home for 1 or more days.

We urge our members and friends to use this form to [sign up and participate in any way you can](#). Together, we deny ourselves to raise our voices and prayers in support of our immigrant sisters and brothers.

Take Action - Tell USPS & Its Regulator: Don't Slow Down the Mail

After a year when unprecedented mail delays outraged much of the country, the USPS has announced slowdowns to their "service standards", which are the on-time delivery targets for different kinds of mail.

Today, First Class Mail is supposed to be delivered within 1-3 days, depending on the delivery distance. Under the new proposed rules, this delivery time could be as long as 5 days for both first class and



periodicals delivery.

The [Save the Post Office Coalition](#) is asking for individual members to submit personalized comments about how mail slowdowns affect you and/or your community. Instructions and [sample language can be found here](#). Comments will be considered during two public reviews.

How to File a Comment:

- Email comments, containing the name and address of the commenter, may be sent to: PCFederalRegister@usps.gov with a subject line of "**Service Standards for Market-Dominant Mail Products.**"
- Mail hand written comments to the Manager, Product iClassification, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 4446, Washington, DC 20260-3436.

All comments must be submitted by this Friday, May 28th.

Recording: *Fratelli Tutti* on Racism and Anti-Racism

Last week, on May 19, 2021, Franciscan Action Network hosted the second in our [series of four panel discussions](#) on *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis' latest encyclical. Our panelists, Olga Segura and Ralph McCloud guided participants through some thought-provoking aspects of what racism looks like in our systems and policies and what we can do to begin to address it.

If you missed it, you can [access the recording here](#).

We hope you will join us for our **third panel discussion of the series**, [Fratelli Tutti on Economics](#) on **May 26, 2021 at 7pm ET (4pm PT)**, where our panelists will be Anthony Annett and Meghan Clark who will discuss how our modern economics divide us as a nation and people. They will take us through the alternative economics offered in the encyclical and how we can come together. **Please note, even if you joined us in last week's discussion, you must register separately for the next in the series.**

Register for our third panel discussion by clicking here: <https://tinyurl.com/tf5nwzuc>



Webinar: Catholic Sisters Impact on Helping Trafficking Survivors Thrive

The [U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#) (USCSAHT) have dedicated their work to this modern form of slavery. This week, on **Tuesday, May 25th from 1p-2:30p ET (10a-11:30a PT)** they are hosting a webinar on "[Catholic Sisters' Impact on Helping Trafficking Survivors Thrive](#)."

The event will host a panel of human trafficking advocates and former victims who will engage in discussion, telling their own stories and describing how they worked through their enslavement and transformed into survivors. Read more [about the panelists by clicking](#)



[here](#). There will be an opportunity for Q&A from attendees.

This webinar is open to the public. **To reserve your spot, please [register by clicking here](#).**

Additionally, we urge you to please continue to disseminate the [online petition](#) to Walmart to protect Seafarers designed and hosted by the USCSAHT. The sisters are about half way to their goal of 1,000 signatures by the Day of the Seafarer on June 25th. [Please sign and share](#).

Webinar Recording: Pope Francis' Visit to Iraq

Pope Francis' [visit to Iraq in March](#) of this year was very significant and not just because it was his first international journey since the Covid-19 pandemic began. While there, the Holy Father drew attention to the martyrdom, displacement, and destruction experienced by Christians, Muslims, and Yazidis and offered messages and prayers for peace and reconciliation.



The visit was a pastoral success for the diverse Christian communities there and a game-changing step in relations with Muslims. The [Berkley Center for Religious, Peace and World Affairs](#) at Georgetown University recently hosted a [webinar](#) looking into the Pope's visit and its significance for religious relations.

Franciscan Jason Welle, OFM, who is director of studies for the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI), moderated the discussion. The recording of the webinar has been made available [by clicking here](#).

Faith Leaders Sign-on in Support of Workers' Rights

Image by [Peggy und Marco Lachmann-Anke](#) from [Pixabay](#)

As people of faith, we believe in the sanctity of work alongside the sacred worth and dignity of all workers in their chosen professions.

Over the past five decades, the declining protection of US labor laws has been devastating for America's working families. Workers' right to organize and to be heard is a critical part of any healthy democracy, and is essential to ensuring that human beings are treated with dignity and not as mere objects or means to others' ends.



We hope you will join Franciscan Action Network in signing on to this [letter](#) in support of the PRO Act to Advance Workers' Rights. The PRO Act would be a deterrent to unethical employers, empower workers, and help end workplace exploitation. We invite our members and friends to [sign on by clicking here](#).