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Reflection Date: July 11, 2021 - 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Being Special in Ordinary Time

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Being chosen is the clear theme of the Scripture readings for July 11, 2021, [Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#). It is notable that ordinary people, not the rich and powerful, are most often chosen by God. Amos was a shepherd, chosen to be a prophet to Israel. Jesus chooses 12 ordinary men, not priests or scholars, and sends them out two by two to preach repentance and heal the sick. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul states emphatically, "In (Christ) we were also chosen. . ." In this 21st century, we followers of Jesus Christ are also chosen to share the Good News, to help bring about the reign of God on Earth.



Being chosen is special. As kids we wanted to be chosen to be on the team, an acknowledgement that we were good enough to be needed. Not being very skilled at softball, I was often the last chosen! Jesus says, "Forget about being good enough. I need you to carry on my mission. I choose you. You are special to me."

Some days are special to some people, even in "Ordinary Time." July 11th is my birthday, a special day for me. Although the number of candles weighs down my cake, all the more reason to count my blessings. It is also the feast of St. Benedict, one of the great chosen ones. Although he is bumped from the Liturgical Calendar by Sunday, Benedictine men and women all over the world, and those with the name "Benedict," will celebrate their very special founder or patron.

The fact that I was called—chosen—to be a Franciscan is evidence that God chooses very ordinary people to be "on the team." Jesus also instructs the Twelve to travel very lightly, taking only a walking stick. I can't manage to be that unencumbered physically, but how about traveling without being burdened by anxieties, ego, self-righteousness, judgmental and critical attitudes? That's a question to ponder on a special day in Ordinary Time.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

Reflect on Benedictine Sister Macrina Wiederkehr's advice: ". . . pray on your own birth. Have you discovered your prophetic voice? What were you born to say? Listen intently to that question."

Suggested Petitions:

For all Benedictines throughout the world, we pray...

That we may acknowledge that we are chosen, and act accordingly, we pray...

Prayer to St. Benedict for Peace (from Benedictine Daily Prayer)

St. Benedict, you were a man of peace. . . .

Help us to achieve peace:

peace in our hearts, peace in our homes, peace in our sorely troubled world.

Through your powerful intercession with God, help us to be peacemakers.

Aid us to work for peace, to take the first step in ending bitterness,

to be the first to hold out our hands in friendship and forgiveness.

Beg God to let peace permeate our lives

so that they may be lived in God's grace and love.

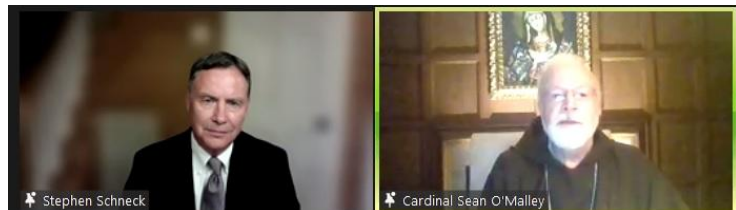
And at the end of our lives obtain for us the reward of peacemakers,

the eternal blessed vision of God in heaven.

Amen

Recording of Panel Discussion “The Covid Vaccine: A Franciscan Perspective”

Last week, Franciscan Action Network was honored to host four experts for our panel discussion on the [Covid Vaccine: A Franciscan Perspective](#). The panel's depth of knowledge and openness to answer our pending questions provided a very informative and supportive evening. Thanks to our panelists and attendee participation, the event was a great success, which we hope will continue to serve you and your communities as well.



We recorded the event, so if you missed it, you can [watch it in its entirety by clicking here](#).

We were blessed to have several portions of discussion paraphrased in Spanish by Cardinal O'Malley during the event. We also intend to **caption the video for Spanish-speaking audiences** in the coming days, so please keep an eye out for more information. *Pronto habrá una versión subtitulada en español*. May we continue striving to love our God and neighbors in all that we do.

Human Trafficking Webinars, Events, and Resources

Please find below a series of excellent opportunities and resources to continue deepening our knowledge about human trafficking:

We had informed you in this newsletter about the CCOAHT-sponsored webinar, *Catholic in Solidarity with Seafarers: The Price they Pay for our Wellbeing*, hosted on International Seafarers Day. If you missed the live presentation, you can [view the recording on](#)



[YouTube](#).

[The Freedom Fund](#) will be exploring the nexus between human trafficking and environmental destruction with their webinar, [Turning the Tide: Breaking the cycle of overfishing and labour abuses](#) on September 7, 2021. A spotlight will be placed on labor abuses in the fishing industry and its intersection with environmental degradation. Please pay attention to the time as they are based in London.

The Council for Foreign Relations has published a multimedia presentation exploring the root causes of human trafficking around the world. [Click here for access to this resource](#).

Latest Information on Immigration and Asylum Seekers

There is so much happening among our partner faith organizations working with migrants and asylum seekers. We want to bring you up to date on several meetings and offer available resources for use in your local communities.

During her visit to El Paso on June 25, 2021, Vice President Kamala Harris [met](#) with Bishop Seitz, as well as other faith leaders and representatives of nonprofits. Discussions centered on the important role that accompaniment plays in work at the border as well as the need for cooperation between the federal government and civil society. [Read the article](#).



Two reports were recently published from different organizations on various aspects of migration and its root causes. More info:

- The Root Causes Initiative hosted four dialogues in April 2021 with 197 participants from grassroots and faith-based organizations in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and the New York/New Jersey area. Also involved were US officials from various departments. The goal was to provide input from civil society into the root causes strategy being developed by the Biden Administration and to identify key priorities in each country for addressing the underlying conditions driving people to migrate. [Read the report by clicking here](#).
- Another report calling attention to the needs of unaccompanied migrant children without sponsors in the United States was released from USCCB/MRS who partnered with the Columbus School of Law's [Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Clinic \(IRAC\)](#) at The Catholic University of America. This report highlights the flaws in the system of care for unaccompanied children, particularly for Category 4 youth. [Read the report by clicking here](#). There will be a **webinar to learn more** about the report and its recommendations on **July 21 at 3pm ET (12pm PT)**. Register here: <https://bit.ly/2Ug1oEH> (Zoom)

Finally, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition is working to educate people on [asylum](#) protections. We continue to call for an end to the "Title 42" policy due to its harmful separation of families and for restoration and improvement of humanitarian processing of asylum seekers. Click here for access to the [Welcome with Dignity toolkit](#) to plan a prayer vigil in your community.

Announcing Faiths 4 Climate: A Global, Multi-Religious Action

Franciscan Action Network has joined a multi-faith initiative with our good friends at GreenFaith called [Faiths 4 Climate](#).

With most governments failing to meet the climate goals set six years ago, and investments in fossil fuel projects increasing since the Paris Climate Accord, we recognize a lack of leadership and commitment to reversing the trends that are destroying the planet. On October 17th and 18th, two weeks before the UN climate talks, people of diverse religions will rise together to send a clear message to governments and major financial institutions that their actions are against our religions. [Take action by clicking here](#).

[Join us and take action where you live](#). Plan to hold a public action at your place of prayer calling for decision-makers to act and gather outside of local, regional, and national governments and finance institutions en masse to deliver our demands to officials.

Together, we will show the world that people of faith are not going to stand idly by in the face of climate injustice.



Franciscan Federation Passes New Resolution for JPIC Work

The Mission of the [Franciscan Federation](#) is to promote exploration and study of Franciscan Evangelical Life and its implications for these times and for our world. To that end, each year the Federation passes a new resolution as a focus for their Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) work.

The resolution passed for 2021-22 is [Confronting Racism with a Franciscan Heart](#). With mentions of both *Fratelli Tutti* and *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis' two prominent encyclicals, the resolution reminds us of our calling to a "way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel" and of the connection "between praising the God of creation and recognizing our duty to care for each other by caring for the planet". Intended as concrete response to these directives, the call to action is to "a collective Franciscan voice to respond as peacemakers as we confront Racism with a Franciscan Heart."

Read the entire resolution by [clicking here](#).



Laudato Si and the US Catholic Church Conference

["Laudato Si" and the U.S. Catholic Church: A Conference Series on Our Common Home](#) is a biennial conference series sponsored by Creighton University and [Catholic Climate](#)



[Covenant](#). **The conference will be held virtually beginning Sunday July 13th through July 15th, 2021** and is meant to convene, equip, and inspire Catholics who can more deeply integrate *Laudato Si'* and its climate change teaching into the U.S. Church. [Click here for more information on the conference](#).

The 2021 conference will open on July 13th with keynote addresses by [His Eminence Blase Cardinal Cupich](#), Archbishop of Chicago, and [Maureen Day, PhD](#), Assistant Professor of Religion and Society at the Franciscan School of Theology. Together, they will assess why the U.S. Catholic response to *Laudato Si'* has not been commensurate with the urgency and gravity of the climate crisis. [Click here to register](#).