

Honor God by Committing Acts of Love

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The 7th chapter of Mark (where our [Gospel this week](#) is taken) begins with Jesus admonishing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes saying they "disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition." This was said in response to their questioning of Jesus' followers eating without performing the ritual cleansing taught by their ancestors. They are too caught up with the rules set in place by humans instead of the commands to love set by Jesus himself.



This week's Gospel story sees Jesus healing a deaf man with a speech impediment. It struck me that Jesus "took him off by himself away from the crowd." (Mk 7:33) He didn't perform this miracle in front of everyone, but rather chose to commit this act of love in a quiet, more humble way.

In the Letter from James we hear a warning to "show no partiality" (Jas 2:1) toward those we meet. Indeed, the entire letter emphasizes the importance of action, showing love of the poor, alongside our faith and practice of Christian religion. James reminds us:

Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom (Jas 2:5)

All these concepts serve to further drive home the importance of honoring God by following Jesus' teachings: Love God, love thy neighbor as yourself. I would go so far as to say in order to love God, we must love our neighbor.

I recently read an article (soon to be published) on the similarities between St. Francis of Assisi and Blessed Charles de Foucauld. In it, the author explains how both men deepened their own Christian spirituality by studying Islam. As a result, they both developed a profound belief in the importance of the mystery of the Incarnation with an understanding that God didn't need to create, rather God created out of love. Creation itself is an act of love. Therefore both men understood that our every action should also be an act of love. Isn't this, after all, what Jesus taught?

This week, I hope you will join me in honoring God by committing acts of love. At the coffee shop, pay for the coffee of the customer behind you. At the grocery store, let the person with fewer items go ahead of you in line. Donate time or resources to agencies that help newly arrived refugees. Bring a neighbor a meal. Random acts of love and kindness have a way of spreading. Imagine a world filled with people committing acts of love and kindness.

Janine Walsh
FAN Communications Coordinator

Suggested Action:

Choose one small act of love and kindness to carry out this week. Suggestions are in the reflection.

Suggested Petitions:

For all migrants who encounter “partiality” in the attitudes of those they meet. May our loving God protect them in their quest for safety and security. We pray...

For those who take action on behalf of the marginalized. When they face opposition, may their hearts be open to receive the strength to continue. We pray...

Collect Prayer

**O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption,
look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,
that those who believe in Christ
may receive true freedom
and an everlasting inheritance.
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

Final Week: “Pathways Prayers for Citizenship”

A reminder to join us for the last [Pathways Prayers for Citizenship](#). Today, Monday, August 30th at 12 noon will be the final week with Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) as our host leading us in prayer with DACA Recipients. [Register today](#) to receive a zoom link.

During these virtual gatherings we share prayers for pathways to citizenship and hear testimonies from DACA & TPS recipients, farmworkers, and essential workers. Attendees will receive resources for actions that you and your faith community can use each week to urge long-awaited opportunities for citizenship for immigrant friends, neighbors, and congregation members.

We encourage our members and friends to continue to pray and act on behalf of our immigrant sisters and brothers. One great resource is the **Interfaith Immigration Coalition Newsletter**. [Check out the latest issue by clicking here](#).



More Resources for Supporting our Afghan Sisters

and Brothers

Last week in this newsletter, we mentioned our friends at LIRS were developing a resource to which FAN was a proud contributor. We have received word that the toolkit is finished and [ready for download at this link](#). It is meant to equip individuals and communities to enter into a time of sacred silence through reflection, guided prayer, and meditation. We encourage its use as a guide to your communal prayer and reflection in solidarity with our Afghan neighbors.



Additionally, **TOMORROW, Tuesday, August 31st, at 4pm Eastern (1pm Pacific)**, LIRS will be hosting an [Interfaith Prayer Vigil](#) to hold space for ourselves and our Afghan neighbors. This special vigil will honor the struggle of our Afghan neighbors, acknowledge the difficult emotions that we face as people of compassion, and help our communities prepare to welcome those who are coming. [Register to attend by clicking here](#).

Finally, our good friends at [Refugee Council USA](#) have launched a new landing page on their website to help direct Afghans in need of services along with those individuals, organizations, and elected officials hoping to join support and advocacy efforts in the right direction. Find the [new page by clicking here](#).

Plan now to Celebrate National Migration Week

This year we will celebrate National Migration Week from Sept. 20 - Sept. 26. The theme chosen by Pope Francis, [Towards an Ever Wider “We”](#), echoes his appeal in *Fratelli Tutti* that, in the future, “we will think no longer in terms of ‘them’ and ‘those’, but only ‘us’”.

The [Migrants and Refugees Section](#) of the Vatican website is once again providing a communication campaign. Every month the communications package includes a new video of the Holy Father, multimedia aids, informational material, and reflections by theologians and experts to help in understanding and conveying the Message.



We encourage our members and friends to participate in some way that is in alignment with your available time and talents.

Join us for a Season of Creation Lecture: Creation Care - What & Why?

Franciscan Action Network invites you to join us on **September 9, 2021 at 7pm ET (4pm PT)** for a lecture in celebration of the Season of Creation: [“Creation Care - What and Why?”](#)



We will welcome William D. Dinges, Professor of Religious Studies in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America who will offer us some moral theology on addressing climate change. [Read more about our speaker here.](#)

As the earth continues to get hotter and hotter, people of faith have a unique opportunity to evangelize the importance of addressing climate change as a moral imperative. We urge you to [click here to register](#) for this engaging lecture.

Action Opportunities from the Catholic Climate Covenant

Human activity is warming our planet at an unprecedented rate which in turn is contributing to the tragic wildfires, heatwaves, droughts and floods harming people and communities all over our country and world. Solutions exist now that can help slow and even reverse this climate warming and people of faith can lead the efforts urging our government to enact bold policies that care for the common good.

Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC) and their partners have developed TWO critical advocacy initiatives that call on President Biden and our U.S. Congress to support science-based climate policies that dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prioritize poor, vulnerable, and marginalized people.

Signatures will be delivered to U.S. leaders ahead of the 26th U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change that begins on Nov. 1st. [Click here to sign the petition as an individual](#) and share with others. Then, urge your [church leaders to sign the Letter for Institutions](#).



Additionally, at **11am Eastern (8am Pacific) on September 1st 2021**, the World Day of Prayer for Creation which kicks off the Season of Creation, CCC will host an online [ecumenical dialogue](#) in celebration of the Ecumenical and Interreligious Guidebook: On Care of Our Common Home. [Click to register](#).

Take Action: Join 11 Days of Global Unity

[We, The World](#) and organizations worldwide are taking part in programs and calls to action in September in observance of, and in alignment with, [11 Days of Global Unity](#) (September 11-21) and the [UN International Day of Peace](#) September 21.

This emerging international movement consists of more than 3,500 civil society organizations in nearly every country that are presenting concerts, conferences, festivals, forums, marches, broadcasts and other programs in September to address local and global social, political, economic and environmental challenges to humanity and all life on Earth.

What You'll Experience during the 11 Days:



- A chance to volunteer & help spread the word on global unity
- Opportunities to connect with leaders & change makers
- Learn from experts all over the world on campaign subjects
- Community and collaboration on topics to bring global change
- Join the conversation and make your voice heard

We urge our members and friends to learn more and consider joining this movement to help [WE](#) change the world through [11 Campaigns for Change](#).