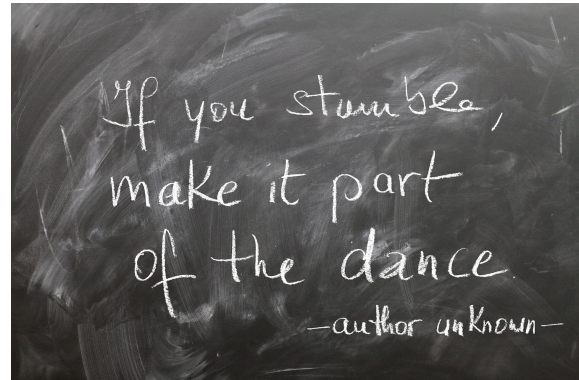


It's Okay to Be Human

Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

We are all called to holiness, right? For those of us who have been on this journey for a long time, it is tempting to become discouraged. We keep bumping into our weaknesses and failures. We keep confessing the same sins. We may take one step forward and two backward on this road to holiness.



For me, at least, [this week's Readings](#) offer encouragement. In the Gospel, James and John, members of the Chosen Twelve and close friends of Jesus, exhibit ambition, arrogance, and lack of self-knowledge. They ask Jesus for seats in a high place of honor. They say, "Sure, we can drink the cup offered to us." And, to be expected, the Ten are indignant. Instead of exclaiming "What's the matter with you guys?!", Jesus takes advantage of a teachable moment: the one who wants to be great, to be first, must be a servant. Why? Because he, "the Son of Man, did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, emphasizes that "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses," but one who was human, like us, "yet without sin."

I doubt if James, John, and the other apostles welcomed Jesus' message that they were to be servants, but eleven of them stayed the course of "continuous conversion," and became great servants as they witnessed to the good news of Jesus and drank the cup of suffering. The apostles were human. Jesus was human. I am human. "Human" and "humility" come from the same root word, "humus." We need to embrace our humanness, our "earthiness" with humility and gratitude. The way to holiness is service, focusing on the needs of others, not on our own limitations and failures. It's okay to be human.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

Hold some dirt in your hand and say, "I am of the earth; I am human. Thank you, God, for creating me. I want to be your humble servant."

Suggested Petitions:

That we may be of service to others in ways available to us, let us pray.
In embracing our earthiness, may we protect and serve our Sister Mother Earth, let us pray.

Prayer by Catherine De Hueck Doherty, Servant of God

Beloved, you know my impatience.

You know how quickly I tire of all resolutions; how impatient I am about lack of progress;

Amen.

We continue to be in awe of the wonderful support and well-wishes from you all, our members and friends. We are so glad to be able to connect with you, even virtually. Thank you so much for your prayers, we are grateful for them. If you were not able to join us, please [consider a donation so that we can continue to advocate](#) in the spirits of Francis and Clare.



On October 5, Franciscan Action Network staff joined a coalition of voting rights activists at the “[No More Excuses](#)” march from Black Lives Matter Plaza to the White House (*photo, top and [see more here](#)*). Marchers called on President Biden to ask the Senate to remove the filibuster as an obstacle in passing voting rights. Five peaceful activists were arrested by the Secret Service for crossing the barrier at the White House. This action occurred on the eve of the Senate’s debate on the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. **Take action by calling your Senators at 1.888.885.1748 to urge them to support the Freedom to Vote Act and John**



Lewis Voting Rights Act. Even Senators who support this legislation need to hear from us; it helps them validate their position. Finally, join West Virginia faith leaders in solidarity for a Season of Prayer and Fasting for a Faithful Democracy. Sign up here to [join them by clicking here](#).

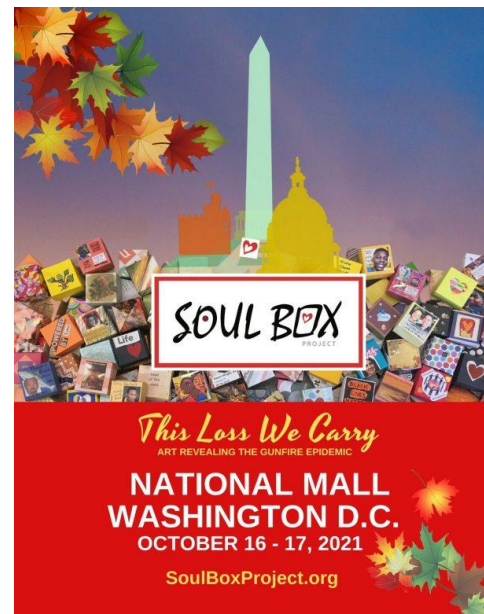
The following day, Franciscan Action Network joined the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team and West Virginia Interfaith Power and Light (IPL) and many other activists in front of the U.S. Capitol building (*photo, bottom*). Those gathered called on our Congressional Representatives, in particular Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) to hear “the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” by protecting our common home through strong climate provisions in the Build Back Better bill. Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT) joined us, urging us to advocate passionately for an infrastructure bill that would protect our earth and care for those who are vulnerable. The day following the rally, Senator Manchin’s office contacted the West Virginia IPL for a meeting. **Advocacy works!**

Soul Box Project Comes to Washington, D.C.

The [Soul Box Project](#) is a non-profit organization which collects and exhibits thousands of hand-folded origami boxes to raise awareness of the U.S. gunfire epidemic. This visually stunning call-to-action influences the decisions of individuals and policymakers unlike any other gun violence prevention organization.

This weekend, on October 16-17, 2021 the Soul Box Project will be opening an exhibit titled [This Loss We Carry](#) on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., providing a dramatic visual representation honoring the lives torn apart by gun violence.

Visitors can examine 800 linear feet of Soul Boxes under an open pavilion spanning the width of the Mall. These **36,000 Soul Boxes will represent the number of U.S. gunfire deaths in just one year.** Visitors will be able to get up close to view these memorials personalized with names, messages and compelling artwork. [Learn more by clicking here](#).



Introduced: Commission Seeking Truth and Healing on Indian Boarding School Policies

In the mid to late 19th century, several denominations of the Christian Church collaborated with the government in adopting an [Indian Boarding School Policy](#) to assimilate Native children. The results of this era are still felt today in the loss of tribal languages and cultural resources and contribute to ongoing intergenerational trauma in Native communities.

On Thursday September 30th, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Congresswoman Sharice Davids (D-KS), and Congressman



Tom Cole (R-OK) [reintroduced](#) the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States Act. This legislation seeks healing for stolen Native children and their communities.

Our friends at FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) have developed an action alert to urge support for this legislation. We urge you to [raise your voice and urge Congress](#) to work with tribal nations to get this legislation passed into law.

We will continue to keep our members apprised as we hear of new developments.

Catholic Mobilizing Network Hosts Mercy in Action October

Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN) reminded us recently that October is [Respect Life Month](#) for the Catholic Church, a time dedicated to upholding the dignity of all human life. Last week CMN sent out a request to advocate on behalf of four men [scheduled to be executed](#) during Respect Life Month.



**CATHOLIC
MOBILIZING
NETWORK**

ENDING THE DEATH PENALTY.
PROMOTING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE.

CMN's [Mercy in Action Project](#) offers the tools needed to promote clemency for those on death row. We urge our members and friends to get involved by reading about the campaign and signing up for the Mercy in Action newsletter.

Join: Demand a Fossil Free Future & Faiths 4 Climate Justice Actions across the country

Beginning today, many will gather in Washington, DC for a wave of action from Oct. 11-15 representing the largest civil disobedience action in decades. The [People vs Fossil Fuels](#) will demand President Biden use his executive authority to hasten the end of the era of fossil fuels. "We are asking you to stand with us. As representatives of communities who have carried the brunt of the harm from fossil fuels for generations, we ask you to join us in solidarity...If we all come together, put our bodies on the line in the name of climate justice, we may be able to change the course of history." [See the full schedule of events here.](#)



In previous newsletters, we have made you aware about the invitation to participate in Faiths 4 Climate Justice events. This week on Sunday and Monday [people of diverse religions will rise](#) to send a message: destroying the planet is against our religions.

On October 18th, we invite those in the DC metro area to join us at a [faith vigil outside the Department of State](#) hosted by the Washington Interfaith Staff Community-Ecology & Energy Working Group where volunteers will read portions of a [joint appeal](#) from various religious traditions seeking to raise awareness of the challenges to our Common Home. [See what's happening in your area.](#)

We believe that the Earth and all people are sacred. See the demands we are making and get

involved in your community by [clicking here](#).

Take Action: We are All Part of God's Plan(et) Sign on Opportunities

Recently, the Catholic Climate Covenant and its partners announced a U.S. campaign to encourage and inspire participation in the Vatican's global [Laudato Si' Action Platform](#), scheduled to launch in mid-November. A new website has been developed offering tools and resources to educate, inspire and activate individuals and groups to advocate caring for the Earth. We urge our members and friends to engage with this effort by checking out the [God's Plan\(et\) website](#) and sign on to the petition and letter below.

[The Catholic Climate Petition for INDIVIDUALS: Click here to sign](#). We invite you to join your voice with thousands of individuals across the U.S. Catholic community in signing this climate action petition as a faith-filled appeal to President Biden and the U.S. Congress, to work beyond partisanship and create climate solutions to care for present and future generations and our common home.

[The Climate Action Letter for Catholic INSTITUTIONS: Click here to sign](#). We invite your institution to join hundreds of others across the country to send a faith-filled letter from the U.S. Catholic community to President Biden and the U.S.

