



Franciscan Action Network

Transforming the World in the Spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare

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Happy Birthday, Church!: Practicing Pentecost

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again. As we await Christ's return in glory, we live in the age of the Spirit, who carries on Christ's work through each member of Christ's body, the Church. The mystery of Christ's Incarnation and ministry on earth prepared the way for the gift of the Spirit, whose work is alive and well in our midst if we have eyes to see, ears to hear, and tongues willing to participate in that work.

The readings for Pentecost describe the implications of life in the Spirit. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is traditionally known as the birthday of the Church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the life of each Christian provides a continual source of renewal and rebirth. As Paul explains, "you received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom. 8:15). We dare to call God "Father" because "the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16).

To live as a child of God through the Spirit is a great privilege: the Spirit brings the peace that the Risen Christ offers (cf. John 20:19, 21) and teaches us everything, including Christ's message (cf. Jn. 14:26). Life in the Spirit is also a great responsibility: immediately after the Risen Christ says, "Peace be with you" to his disciples, he adds, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). When Paul describes the many parts of the one body of Christ, he states that "we were all given to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). The different kinds of spiritual gifts, forms of service, and workings given to each individual as "the manifestation of the Spirit" are given specifically "for some benefit" (1 Cor. 12:7).

The powerful manifestation of the Spirit at Pentecost came through the gift of proclamation: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim" (Acts 2:4). The crowds in Israel's capital, Jerusalem, marveled to hear unexpected words in unexpected languages: "we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God" (Acts 2:11). The Spirit continues to call and enable us to speak of the mighty acts of God, such as God's love for Creation, in the capital of our own nation.

FAN exists to support Franciscan voices in effectively practicing the "Resurrection Politics" described below. As you prayerfully read this reflection, how is the Spirit leading you to respond? Perhaps by asking your Senators to support legislation that would facilitate better stewardship of the energy that serves our homes, or by connecting with Christ in Creation through a conference at the Center for Action and Contemplation, or by incorporating prayer resources for the Gulf oil spill into your individual and community worship.

However we direct our many gifts and works to the benefit of neighbor and Creation, let us pray together as one Church: "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth" (cf. Ps. 104:30).

RESURRECTION POLITICS in the Easter Season

By Dr. Maryann Cusimano Love, who spoke at FAN's founding in March 2008.

The Easter Season brings a challenge: Do we really believe in the resurrection? It seems easy to believe that Jesus was resurrected 2,000 years ago; after all, He was God. But the scriptures also tell us that we are called to be an Easter people, we are called to go out to all nations and perform wonders through the power of the risen Christ. Do we really believe that is possible? Do we believe the resurrection is something we are called to practice today? Do we believe new life is possible in the most seemingly dead, broken, and hopeless corners of our world, and that each of us can participate in bringing life and hope to what might seem "dead on arrival" causes? Do we believe the Spirit will come upon us, and nothing is impossible with God?

Read the full reflection on the FAN website.

CAULKING FOR CREATION: HOME STAR legislation

Simplicity, gratitude, and reverence characterized Francis and Clare's humble enjoyment of the created goods which support and enrich human life. The communities and persons who seek to imitate their example are called to relate to Creation with those same values in mind. Household energy use accounts for more than one-fifth of U.S. carbon emissions, which is almost twice the amount of emissions produced by passenger cars. The knowledge that basic efficiency improvements can reduce energy waste and greenhouse gas emissions in most American homes by 20% to 40% calls Franciscans and Franciscan-hearted persons to support better stewardship of energy resources.

Franciscans also value the dignity of all workers, including those whose skills could improve energy efficiency. Construction and manufacturing workers in particular have suffered during the economic recession.

Legislation that would assist efforts to reduce energy waste and lead to an estimated 168,000 construction and manufacturing jobs has passed the U.S. House of Representatives. Please contact your Senators and ask them to support the HOME STAR bill (S. 3177). Learn more about the HOME STAR program at <http://www.encyfirst.org/home-star/>.

"CREATION AS THE BODY OF GOD" Conference, July 16-18

The Center for Action and Contemplation invites FAN members to its summer conference, "Creation as the Body of God," at the Hotel Albuquerque from July 16 - 18, 2010. Speakers include two Franciscans, Sr. Iliia Delio, OSF; and Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM; as well as Pamela Wood, MA, Registered Art Therapist. Details are available at the CAC summer conference website (<http://www.cacradicalgrace.org/conferences/2010/creation/>). For every Regular registration of \$175, the CAC will donate \$10 to FAN. For every Concession rate of \$99, the CAC will donate \$6. Please use the code **FAN-SU10** at checkout. A separate offer for groups of 10 or more is also available, which does not include a donation to FAN.

PRAYING FOR THE GULF

FAN is grateful to the National Council of Churches for creating a prayer and information resource, available on our website, in response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.