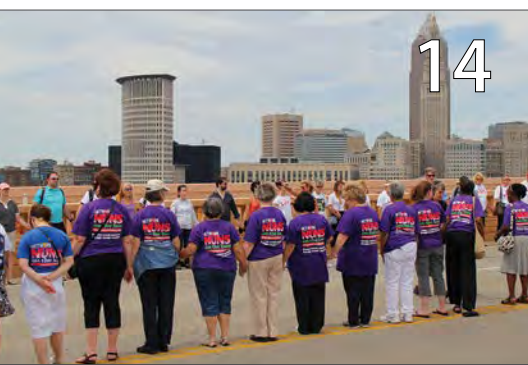


# WHO WE ELECT MATTERS



**On the Road  
to Vote for Justice**

**NUNS**  
on the bus  
THE VIRTUAL TOUR



# CONTENTS

## 3 ENVISIONING

### Seeking the Divine in the Darkness

*Braving this Time with Courage and Wisdom*

## 5 LEAD STORY

### Living Our Values in the 2020 Election

*Proclaiming Catholics Cannot Vote for Trump*

### Pope Francis Highlights Other Priorities that Are “Equally Sacred”

*Care for the Unborn among the Issues Catholics Should Weigh When Voting*

## 9 CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

### Mend the Gaps Election 2020 Policy Platform

*Election 2020: Our Policy Priorities*

## 11 CAPITOL VIEW

### An Agenda of Love and Inclusion as Election Day Nears

## 12 OUR SPIRIT-FILLED NETWORK

### Nuns on the Bus Is Back on the Road (Virtually)

Read about Sister Simone’s “Hunger for Hope”

Daring to Hope for our Nation

## GET REMINDERS TO VOTE

Get reminders to vote in this year’s election, and all elections big and small. Use NETWORK’s Voting Tool, powered by TurboVote, to sign up for election-related text message and email reminders.

Visit: [www.nunsonthebus.org/turbovote](http://www.nunsonthebus.org/turbovote)

## STAY CONNECTED WITH US!



[www.facebook.com/NetworkLobby](https://www.facebook.com/NetworkLobby)



[www.twitter.com/NetworkLobby](https://www.twitter.com/NetworkLobby)

Articles in NETWORK Connection may be reprinted. Please include the following on the reprints: “Reprinted by permission of NETWORK, advocates for justice inspired by Catholic sisters, [www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org).” Please send us a copy of the reprinted article.

Fourth Quarter—Vol. 48, No. 4, NETWORK Connection ISSN 0199-5723. Published quarterly by NETWORK, phone: 202-347-9797, fax: 202-347-9864, email: [connection@networklobby.org](mailto:connection@networklobby.org), [www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org). Annual dues: \$50/\$60 international.

Postmaster: Send address changes to NETWORK, 820 First Street NE, Suite 350, Washington, DC 20002-8065.



# Seeking the Divine in the Darkness

## *Braving this Time with Courage and Wisdom*

**A**s we approach these days before a national election, we are called to embody the Divine spark in a new and challenging way. For us here at NETWORK we have been walking in new ways this election year.

For the first time in our forty-eight year history, we have taken a position on a presidential candidate. We have opposed the re-election of President Trump because he does not embody any aspect of Catholic Social Teaching. (See page 5 for more.)

NETWORK has created a Pope Francis Voter website and created social media ads to promote it to viewers who might not otherwise see it. With the help of a NETWORK supporter, we have created this website in Spanish and created Spanish-language social media ads.

We have boldly spoken out about the fact that to solely support the criminalization of abortion or oppose a woman's right to make a moral choice is not embodying the fullness of the teachings of our Catholic faith. We have spoken the truth that we are pro-life in our support for pregnant women through health care, nutrition, housing, and myriad other pro-life policies. (See pages 6-8.)

We have created a virtual Nuns on the Bus trip that is focused on being a multi-issue voter. This is a multi-faceted trip focused on critical states to advance our democratic effort to bring the Gospel to life. (See pages 12-13.)

But, the whole experience is groping in the dark as the spiritual journey and politics converge. And then hearing of the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I was pulled into a deep sadness and sense of cataclysmic destruction. In the midst of tears, it led me to remember my August retreat where I had told my retreat director that I like the dark because the dark lets the Divine shine.

This led me to thinking about the Dark Night of the Soul and I began to consider that this is the dark night of our nation. Theologian Matthew Fox refers to this as "lucky darkness" where there is little or nothing to steer by but the fire deep in our hearts. Meister Eckhart calls this the "spark of God" urging us on to follow and learn.

In the midst of these dark nights, chaos reigns and there are no guideposts that are to be trusted. In the face of such darkness and worry, what are we to do?

This moment calls for spiritual courage to face the struggle and trust that the Divine spark is alive in our midst loving us into courageous action, wise words, and generous hearts.

In this experience of liberating darkness during these last weeks and days before the polls close, let us commit ourselves to sacred action. Then in whatever follows, let us commit ourselves to be missionaries for the common good. Let us bring the truth of the Gospel and the strength of the Spirit with us into action so that the prayer I prayed on the last night of the Democratic National Convention might be realized:

*The very first paragraph of the Scripture that informs the three Abrahamic traditions tells us: "The Divine Spirit breathed over the waters of chaos and brought forth a new creation." Encouraged by this promise that a new creation can come from chaos, let us pray:*

*O Divine Spirit!*

*During the weeks and months ahead, stir our hearts and minds that we might fight for a vision that is worthy of you and your call to honor the dignity of all of your creation.*

*A vision of who we are as a people, grounded in community and care for all, especially the most marginalized.*

*A vision that cares for our earth and heals the planet.*

*A vision that ends structural racism, bigotry, and sexism so rife now in our nation and in our history.*

*A vision that ensures hungry people are fed, children are nourished, immigrants are welcomed.*

*O Spirit, breathe in us and our leaders a new resolve...that committed to this new promise, we will work together to build a national community grounded in healing, fearlessly based on truth, and living out of a sense of shared responsibility.*

*In the name of all that is holy, O Spirit, bring out of this time of global and national chaos a new creation, a new community that can — with your help — realize this promise that we affirm tonight.*

*With profound hope, let us the people say:  
Amen!*

**Go to [networklobby.org/2020dnc](https://networklobby.org/2020dnc) to watch Sr. Simone deliver this prayer.**



# Notable Quotables

What justice-seekers have been saying this quarter

"If you're afraid to think critically about race, it's probably because you directly benefit from racism."

Rev. Jacqui Lewis (@RevJacquiLewis) in a tweet following the Trump administration's September order for federal agencies to end racial sensitivity trainings

"When we learn to receive accountability as prophecy rather than hostility, we are starting to heed God's call."

Rev. Jen Butler, writing "A call to conscience for white Christian women" published in Religion News Service

"We've come to let you know that we will come out by these numbers in the heat and stand in the heat, that we will stand in the polls all day long."

Rev. Al Sharpton speaking at the 2020 March on Washington

"O Divine Spirit! During the weeks and months ahead, stir our hearts and minds that we might fight for a vision that is worthy of you and your call to honor the dignity of all your creation."

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS in the invocation for the fourth and final night of the 2020 Democratic National Convention

"Sometimes, you need to feel the pain and sting of defeat to activate the real passion and purpose God has predestined inside of you."

The late Chadwick Boseman in his 2018 commencement speech at Howard University

"A feeble pursuit of justice is no justice at all."

Tralonne Shorter, NETWORK Senior Government Relations Advocate, in her reflection ahead of the 2020 March on Washington

"Let's use our hearts, our love, and our intelligence to work together to show the rest of the world how humans are supposed to treat each other."

Julia Jackson, Jacob Blake's mother, speaking at a press conference after a Kenosha police officer shot her son multiple times.

"Public service is a noble cause and the fight for justice is a shared responsibility."

Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA) accepting the Democratic Party nomination for Vice President during the 2020 Democratic National Convention

"Keeping families housed is not just a matter of racial and economic justice, it's a matter of public health."

Representative Ayanna Pressley (@RepPressley) tweeting about evictions happening as a result of the COVID-19 economic crisis

"Church teaching on political participation emphasizes prudence, the need to apply broad moral principles to specific situations and imperfect choices, and informed consciences that can discern not only complex issues, but also the character and intentions of candidates."

John Gehring addressing differences in how Catholic priests and Bishops are approaching the 2020 election, published at [www.commonwealmagazine.org](http://www.commonwealmagazine.org)

"A virus that does not recognize barriers, borders, or cultural or political distinctions must be faced with a love without barriers, borders, or distinctions."

Pope Francis during his September 9, 2020 General Audience

# Living Our Values in the 2020 Election

## *Proclaiming Catholics Cannot Vote for Trump*

**O**n August 10, NETWORK published an unprecedented statement. Quoting Sister Simone, the statement read: “In this time of crisis we are called to speak clearly: Catholics cannot support another presidential term for Donald Trump and be true to our faith.” For almost 50 years, NETWORK had never advised our members and supporters who to vote for or against. We have always encouraged everyone to get involved in politics. We have educated and spoken about the issues, compared candidates, and equipped our members with resources and information to choose elected officials who support the common good. But, NETWORK’s Board and staff, and many of you our members, knew that our strategy needed to be different for this year’s election.

Catholics cannot be true to their faith and vote for Donald Trump in November, and failing to state this plainly would be rejection of our sacred call to love and care for one another. As Sister Simone said, “Every day, I see the cracks in our nation’s foundational values growing wider. President Trump is doing everything in his power to divide us, while our economy and health care systems collapse under the weight of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a spiritual crisis, and our faith and patriotism compel us to speak and to act.”

Some saw this statement as inappropriate or mischaracterized it as a purely partisan attack. NETWORK has analyzed policy and advocated for policies that advance justice for decades. The truth is, President Trump’s policies have consistently hurt our nation and hurt the most vulnerable people in our nation, as well as our neighbors seeking refuge in the United States from violence and poverty. Over the past four years, NETWORK challenged the implementation of these harmful policies and tried to reduce their effects. Opposing the re-election of President Trump is not a partisan attack; it is a call for decency and morality from all leaders across our nation, at every level of society and government.

Pope Francis and Catholic teaching are clear about the sacred issues that voters must bring with them into the voting booth. Catholics are called to defend, promote, and protect the sacredness of human life in every way. To do that, we

must support candidates at every level of government who will protect people in poverty, the elderly and migrants, and reject racism. To be true to this holy call, we cannot be single-issue voters. Faithful Catholics are multi-issue voters.

This has been said many different ways across the Scripture and Church teaching, and lived out in the lives of holy people throughout history. In Pope Francis’s 2018 apostolic exhortation, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, he reiterates this sacred call to consider a wide range of issues in our care, naming economic inequality, the unjust treatment of migrants, and more issues as “equally sacred” to the defense of the unborn. Prayerful consideration of President Trump’s attitudes and actions on these issues make it clear that we cannot take to

---

To be true to this holy call,  
we cannot be single-issue voters.

---

heart the message of the Gospels and support this President’s policies of hate and division. To encourage this prayerful consideration, NETWORK published the “Equally Sacred Scorecard” to be shared and discussed ahead of our federal election.

Reflecting upon Pope Francis’s more recent message addressed to the United States this summer, Sister Simone remarked, “Pope Francis has been clear about the sacred issues that Catholics and all people of good will are called to prioritize. These include protecting people in poverty, the elderly, and migrants and rejecting racism. Donald Trump does not share these values or act on these principles. In a word, President Trump promotes racism. This evil cannot be ignored. I hear Pope Francis’s words: ‘We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.’ Dismantling racism in our country must be a foundational part of any pro-life agenda. President Trump’s attitudes and policies are contradictory to this holy effort.”

Dismantling racism, supporting all who are experiencing poverty, welcoming immigrants, caring for the sick, ensuring all who are involved with our criminal justice system are treated with dignity and with justice, and caring for the Earth are all part of the holy effort that we make every day. Thank you for being on this journey for justice with us. ☀️

# Pope Francis Highlights Other

## Care for the Unborn among the Issues

In recent years, Pope Francis has provided explicit instruction on the many ways we are called to defend, promote, and protect the sacredness of life. In his writing and speaking, Pope Francis makes it clear: **abortion is not the only issue that matters.**

Faith does not fit into political parties neatly. Still, we are called to engage in politics. This is no small feat. It requires us to be informed, to develop our conscience, to connect with like-minded people, and listen to those who think differently.

Here you will find a comparison of President Donald Trump and Vice President Joe Biden’s policy positions in the areas Pope Francis names as “equally sacred” to the defense of the unborn.



*We invite you to consider this information prayerfully.*

### WRITINGS OF POPE FRANCIS

#### Gaudete et Exsultate

March 2018

*101. Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm, and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development. Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born.*

#### General Audience

June 3, 2020

*We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.*

### Defense of the unborn is clear.

	Trump	Biden
Seeks to overturn <i>Roe v. Wade</i>	✓	✗
Would increase pregnant women’s access to health care and nutrition	✗	✓
Addresses maternal mortality, particularly for Black women	✗	✓

### Equally Sacred are those already born.

	Trump	Biden
Supports families in the tax code and family-friendly workplace policies	✗	✓
Advocates for domestic violence and sexual assault survivors	✗	✓
Rejects racism, xenophobia; supports policies that address systemic racism	✗	✓
Supports Native American tribes’ sovereignty and prosperity	✗	✓
Opposes discrimination against LGBTQ+ people and disabled people	✗	✓
Opposes the death penalty	✗	✓

# Priorities that Are "Equally Sacred"

## Catholics Should Weigh When Voting

Equally sacred are...

### WRITINGS OF POPE FRANCIS

#### Gaudete et Exsultate

March 2018

*101. Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection. We cannot uphold an ideal of holiness that would ignore injustice in a world where some revel, spend with abandon and live only for the latest consumer goods, even as others look on from afar, living their entire lives in abject poverty.*

#### Evangelii Gaudium

November 2013

*53. Today we also have to say "thou shalt not" to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills.*

### People and families on the economic margins.

	Trump	Biden
Believes housing is a human right	X	✓
Supports the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	X	✓
Would protect people from predatory financial practices	X	✓

### Those who are sick, disabled, and older adults.

	Trump	Biden
Protects the Affordable Care Act	X	✓
Opposes cuts to and restrictions on Medicaid	X	✓
Supports the priorities of the disability community	X	✓
Supports the health and wellbeing of older adults	X	✓

### Victims of human trafficking and economic slavery.

	Trump	Biden
Upholds the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act	X	✓
Supports raising the minimum wage	X	✓
Protects workers' right to organize	X	✓

(continued on page 8)

**"A good Catholic meddles in politics."**

— Pope Francis

# If we are pro-life...

## WRITINGS OF POPE FRANCIS

### *Gaudete et Exsultate*

March 2018

*102. We often hear it said that, with respect to relativism and the flaws of our present world, the situation of migrants, for example, is a lesser issue. Some Catholics consider it a secondary issue compared to the “grave” bioethical questions.*

*That a politician looking for votes might say such a thing is understandable, but not a Christian, for whom the only proper attitude is to stand in the shoes of those brothers and sisters of ours who risk their lives to offer a future to their children.*

## We cannot ignore economic inequality.

	Trump	Biden
Seeks to accurately measure and address poverty	X	✓
Supports a just tax code	X	✓

## We cannot overlook the situation of migrants.

	Trump	Biden
Opposes expanding the U.S.-Mexico border wall	X	✓
Supports DACA protections	X	✓
Bases immigration policy on family unity	X	✓
Ensures humane treatment at the border and by interior enforcement	X	✓
Extends support to immigrant families in the U.S. and treats them with respect	X	✓
Respects and observes international laws on asylum	X	✓

President Trump and Vice President Biden’s positions were taken from their campaign websites, the official White House website, Vice President Biden’s voting record as a six-term Senator, public speaking engagements, and their verified Twitter accounts. Citations are available online.

Pope Francis quotes were taken from (1) *Gaudete et Exsultate* “Rejoice and Be Glad” (2) *Evangeliium Gaudium* “The Joy of the Gospel” and (3) his June 3, 2020 General Audience.

### Learn More!!

Go to [www.networkadvocates.org/EquallySacred](http://www.networkadvocates.org/EquallySacred) where you can

- Download a full digital copy
- Download a one-page pocket guide
- Descarga la guía en español
- View sources and citations
- Read the full text of the Papal documents





# Mend the Gaps Election 2020 Policy Platform

## Election 2020: Our Policy Priorities

Our nation faces important choices up and down the ballot in this year's election. The 2020 election is crucially important for correcting our nation's trajectory and altering the structures that cause poverty and inequality. The COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting health and economic crises, as well as the ongoing racial equity crisis in our nation reveal the urgent need for just policies that address systemic gaps and injustices in our nation.

### WE WORK FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Pope Francis calls on us to say "thou shalt not" to an economy of exclusion and inequality. This should be at the foundation of any presidential campaign. A just society values people over the accumulation of profits. While economic competition creates winners, it also causes harm. It is the federal government's role to provide support to those pushed to the economic margins.

Since 1996, the number of children living on \$2 a day has tripled.<sup>1</sup> Government spending on social programs has reached historic lows and its share of GDP is predicted to continue dropping through 2029.<sup>2</sup> President Trump deliberately exacerbated the assault on social spending through his proposed budget plans, which cut the discretionary spending of every agency, excluding the Department of Defense, by approximately 10%.<sup>3</sup> These systematic cuts, as well as other strategic administrative attacks on programs, have destroyed the ability of our federal human needs programs to meaningfully reduce poverty. Our nation needs a comprehensive movement to fully fund, revamp, and renew beneficial human needs programs. Without a coordinated effort to increase the capacity and efficacy of social programs, millions of families will continue to struggle with poverty.

### WE WORK FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

This election is a crucial opportunity to reject President Trump's harmful white supremacist rhetoric. The United States was built on structural racism, and institutional barriers continue to bar people of color from wealth, education, and equal protection of their constitutional rights. Our nation's continued legacy of racism directly contributes to the racial wealth and income gap, police brutality, and voter suppression, among other issues. The U.S. immigration system is turning its back on immigrants and asylum seekers, and now inflammatory rhetoric and fear mongering pushes undocumented immigrants further into the shadows and threatens their safety. White supremacy continues

to perpetuate the unjust treatment of Native Americans. This election represents an opportunity to advocate for racial justice and continue the work of dismantling oppressive institutions; presidential candidates must demonstrate their commitment to ending structural racism in our nation.

## Mend the Gaps Policy Platform

**We urge 2020 candidates at every level of government to join our movement to mend the gaps and transform our country.**

### Mending the Wealth and Income Gap

- **Tax Justice:** We are called to invest in our shared society to meet the needs of all, especially those at the economic margins. Every person belongs to a single and interconnected human family; this is a core tenet of our faith teaching. When making individual and collective decisions, we have a responsibility to consider the good of the whole community over the interests of the few.

Right now, our tax policies favor the wealthiest in our nation and keep them from paying their fair share. Raising taxes on wealthy corporations and individuals will allow us to invest in key priorities, such as lowering healthcare costs, improving education, and protecting Medicare and Social Security from budget cuts.

- **Livable Income:** Catholic Social Justice affirms work as a means of both fulfilling and expressing the inherent dignity of every human person. Ensuring just and livable compensation for work is a fundamental component of a just economy. Jobs in our nation must enable workers to provide for themselves and their families.

- **Family-Friendly Workplaces:** Catholic Social Justice teaches that workplace and labor policies must recognize and respect the need and responsibility of individuals to be part of community. Family life is important and work must coexist with and accommodate the human needs of all members of our community. Instead, workers today struggle to keep up with the demands of caregiving for children and other family members. These demands are especially pronounced for women of color, which further expands the racial wealth and income gap.

## Mending the Gaps in Access

- **Access to Democracy:** We have a responsibility to participate in politics out of a concern for, and commitment to, the common good. Our democracy is founded on the principle of representative government—every person counts equally. This is the only way to realize the common good. NETWORK supports policies that ensure that everyone in our nation can fully participate in our democracy and that no individual or community of color is disenfranchised by federal policy.
- **Access to Healthcare:** Our faith tells us that it is our moral responsibility to guarantee access to healthcare for all people, regardless of social or economic status, race, or ability to pay. Presidential candidates must be willing to take steps to expand healthcare affordability and access, eliminate disparities in health outcomes based on race and economic status, and curb the exploitative behavior of the pharmaceutical industry.
- **Access to Citizenship:** As people of faith and a nation of immigrants, we are called to love our neighbor and welcome the stranger. Our immigration system is unjust and outdated. Immigrants and asylum seekers have been villainized and scapegoated by an Administration intent on upholding white supremacy. We must enact policies that reunite families, provide meaningful opportunities for undocumented immigrants to apply for citizenship, welcome asylum seekers, and grow compassion in our communities.
- **Access to Housing:** Housing is a basic human right and a foundation for a person's ability to meet their needs. By failing to ensure affordable housing for all members of our society, we harm family development and prevent millions from feeling the peace of this security. We support federal policies that enable everyone to have access to safe, affordable housing.

## Additional Concerns

- **Trade Policy:** Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. The rules of the global economy must work for the benefit of all, not just a privileged few. U.S. trade policy must promote the well-being of workers, the rights of indigenous communities, and the health and safety of people and the environment. The current NAFTA agreement must be improved to be mutually beneficial for the common good.

- **Equity in Criminal Justice:** Our Catholic faith and social justice tradition affirm the dignity and sanctity of every person, no exceptions. Unfortunately, those values are not present in our current criminal justice system. People of color, women, and people experiencing poverty are disproportionately and systematically subjected to overcriminalization, harsh sentencing, and economic discrimination that destabilizes families and communities, as well as imprisonment that emphasizes punishment rather than rehabilitation. This has deepened the racial divide and created a situation of structural poverty for many individuals, families, and communities. To overcome this, we must ensure equal justice under the law through reforms to the federal criminal justice system.

## Protecting and Improving Programs Serving the Common Good

While working to mend the gaps in the policy areas above, NETWORK continues our advocacy to ensure that existing critical federal programs with demonstrated success are protected and enhanced to adequately respond to our current reality. A basic moral test for our nation is how our most vulnerable members fare.

Over the past few years, human needs programs as we know them have been attacked on multiple fronts. The next administration must reverse the devastating cuts and rollbacks so many critical human needs programs have experienced. Modifications to administrative rules have threatened basic safety net programs that provide housing, nutrition, and healthcare to millions of vulnerable individuals and families. These federal programs are the foundation of a moral society. Our next administration must make the restoration of these programs their top domestic priority.

### Sources:

1. <http://www.twodollarsaday.com/blog/2017/3/20/the-magnitude-of-the-change-in-2-a-day-poverty-since-1996-is-even-larger-after-reducing-survey-bias>
2. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/program-spending-outside-social-security-and-medicare-historically-low-as-a>
3. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/2020-trump-budget-a-disturbing-vision>



# An Agenda of Love and Inclusion as Election Day Nears

On Wednesday, September 23, Sister Simone was joined by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, as well as Senator Cory Booker to kick off the 2020 Nuns on the Bus tour.

## SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI



out the nuns we would never have saved the Affordable Care Act.’

And I say that because, in our own Catholic faith, when we are taught the Gospel of Matthew, ‘When I was hungry, when I was naked, when I was homeless, when I was sick, when I needed comfort, when I was in prison,’ sometimes that is forgotten by some in our faith, but never forgotten by Sister Simone.

Our budget should be a statement of our national values. What is important to us as nation should be reflected in our budget. That has not always been the case with some of the budgets that the other side has put forth, and Sister Simone and Nuns on the Bus have made that clear, whether they’re dealing with the tax bill or whatever it is, to make sure we stick to our values.

When we talk about immigration: that is who we are as a people, a nation of immigrants. Unless you’re born a Native American, which is a blessing for you, those of us who love you, and our country. But by and large, we are a nation of immigrants, and Nuns on the Bus has always advocated for reforms that protect family.

And again, right now our very democracy is threatened by those who would undermine the right to vote, and so the theme of this tour is very important because it addresses the importance of this election. **Who We Elect Matters.**

Understand your power for us. A vision, a plan, always an inspiration. Relentless, persistent, dissatisfied until you get the job done. Thank God, you are a blessing to all of us.”

“I’ve always said ‘Thank God for the nuns, without the nuns we would have never passed the Affordable Care Act. With-

## SENATOR CORY BOOKER



“This is a painful period. I live in the central ward of Newark, New Jersey. My census tract, the median income,

according to the last census was about \$14,000 per household. The dignity of my neighbors, many of them who work longer hours than my parents did, still, at the local grocery store at the local Bodega, they have to use food stamps to provide for their families. Many people are facing evictions. Many of our food banks are oversubscribed. There are challenges. We still live in a nation where too many people are fearing for things that, in the wealthiest nation in the world, should be fears of the past. Can I provide for my children? Can I make the next rental payment? Can I afford my lifesaving prescription drug?

This is about character. Not the character of any politician, but the character of the collective. About the defining characteristics of our country. Will we be a nation where 1 out of every 5 children live in poverty? Will we be a nation that leads industrial nations in infant mortality and maternal mortality? Will we be a nation where too many people are still declaring bankruptcy because they can’t afford their medical expenses? This is a nation that is in a state of moral crisis amidst a pandemic, and an economic downturn that only deepens that crisis....

This is a moment that calls for a more courageous and a more radical love for our nation. What is patriotism but love of country? And you cannot love your country unless you love your fellow countrymen and women. We know what the agenda of this president is, but the deeper question is, what is our driving agenda? And I say now, more than ever, our driving agenda must be love. Love that is made manifest in the only way that love is in a society: It is made manifest in justice, justice for all. So, I thank everyone involved in this urgent moral crisis.”



# Nuns on the Bus Is Back on the Road (Virtually)

*Online activity in 2020 includes live events, interactive experience, and online store*

In September, NETWORK kicked-off its 2020 Nuns on the Bus campaign, this year with a host of online activity focused on spreading the message that Who We Elect Matters. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we are not able to physically travel on the bus, but through a series of live events and an interactive online experience, we all get to go places together and learn about the various needs and gifts of so many communities.

We get to exercise “holy curiosity” as we have discussions with our neighbors, meet some Nuns on the Bus via Zoom or through short videos, visit interesting social service sites, and come together for virtual rallies. So while our physical travel may be limited, through the Nuns on the Bus Virtual Tour, this year we can travel to every state in the union to learn about the different realities and similar stories.



## The Virtual Tour:

*60+ Live Events through October 23*

This year’s Nuns on the Bus Virtual Tour has the theme “Who We Elect Matters” and the tour will highlight the most pressing issues in our nation, elevate the lived experiences of those facing the greatest challenges, and prepare participants to vote for the common good.

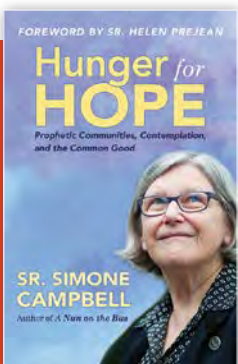
The month-long tour will have five national rallies, five roundtable dialogues, and 25 “site visits” across the country that everyone can participate in. The rallies will lift up our issues, raise the voices of those harmed by the current Administration’s policies, and call on everyone to vote for the common good. The roundtables — which we are calling Dialogues Across Geographic Divides — will bring folks from rural communities, suburbs, and cities together to listen to each other’s experiences, learn from everyone’s wisdom, and talk about policy solutions that benefit all communities. And the Site Visits will be discussions with social service agencies and community organizations to learn how changes in federal policy since 2016 have affected their work and their communities.



SEPTEMBER 23 – OCTOBER 23, 2020  
[www.nunsonthebus.org](http://www.nunsonthebus.org)

Participate in live events at [nunsonthebus.org/live](http://nunsonthebus.org/live) and see a full schedule at [nunsonthebus.org/events](http://nunsonthebus.org/events)

In addition to these national events, there will be more than 25 geographically-specific Town Halls for Spirit-Filled Voters which will highlight the importance of being a multi-issue voter and equip participants to share this critical message with loved ones. These Town Halls will be focused on key states including Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Florida, Kentucky, Arizona, and Missouri. You must register for the Town Halls online to participate. Find the links to register at [nunsonthebus.org/events](http://nunsonthebus.org/events).



## Read about Sister Simone’s “Hunger for Hope”

*New Book Released in September Explores Reasons to Be Hopeful*

In the lead up to the 2020 election, Orbis Press released Sister Simone Campbell’s second book, *Hunger for Hope: Prophetic Communities, Contemplation, and the Common Good*. The book shows how a three-fold spirituality of contemplation, community, and hope feeds the commitment to work on behalf of people in need, no matter the challenges of the times.

*Hunger for Hope* weaves together Simone’s background as a long-time advocate for people in need, and for the first time offers her own experience and practice of contemplation and communi-



## The Nuns on the Bus Interactive Experience: Create Your Own Tour

In 2020, everyone can be a “Nun on the Bus” and ride the bus through our online interactive experience. This online resource (and game!) is an additional way for you, your family, and friends to learn and have fun being part of our 2020 Nuns on the Bus Virtual Tour.

### Nuns on the Bus 2020: The Interactive Experience

We are giving you a ticket to ride this year's Nun on the Bus! Explore the stops on the map to learn the importance of being a Multi-Issue Voter and why Who We Elect Matters.



Take part in the Interactive Experience at [nunsonthebus2020.org](http://nunsonthebus2020.org)

Enjoy the experience of choosing your own stops: meet Sisters, go on site visits, and learn about voting in your state. You map your route — and if you complete 30 or more stops, you’ll receive a token of gratitude for your participation in this year’s tour.

Once online, make sure you register for the site! When you create an account, you’ll receive your bus “ticket” that allows you to tour the United States with us (virtually). With each stop you make, your bus ticket will start to fill in, until you have a complete bus — and that’s when you receive your reward!

## The NETWORK 2020 Election Store: Show Your NETWORK Pride with T-Shirts and More

As part of our election work of spreading the importance of being a multi-issue voter and sparking conversation, NETWORK also launched an online store filled with NETWORK, Nuns on the Bus, and Election 2020 products for you to choose from. All products are Union made.

The store has t-shirts, masks, buttons, stickers, and more ... including some of our trademark mischief-making messaging. Order now so you can show off your new NETWORK gear, help us spread the word about being a multi-issue voter, and show the world that you support the Sisters — especially between now and Election Day!

So whether through the Live Events, the Interactive Experience, or the Election Store, NETWORK invites you to come along with virtually in 2020 as we explore our nation and learn about the common good from a variety of perspectives — and prepare to vote for the common good in this upcoming election. ☀️



To get your NETWORK merchandise, go to [networklobby.org/store](http://networklobby.org/store)

ty as the bedrock of her work. She explores in turn the values of meditative practice, active listening, and sensing the Divine. She describes the ideals and challenges of living and building communities that provide meaning and support in the light of the toxic individualism of modern American society. Finally, *Hunger for Hope* offers ‘expressions of hope’ for vexing issues such as income inequality, human dignity, and the protection of life.

In the foreword, Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., the anti-death penalty advocate, writes that *Hunger for Hope* is “rich with Simone’s

spiritual encounters with Christ... The real-life engagements to which those encounters lead her couldn’t be shared with us at a better time.”

Order signed copies of the book, download the reflection guide, and watch for more *Hunger for Hope* book events from Sister Simone: [www.networkadvocates.org/hungerforhope](http://www.networkadvocates.org/hungerforhope).



# Daring to Hope for our Nation

## Joining Nuns on the Bus in 2020

Sister Susan Rose Francois, CSJP

Four years ago, it was my honor and privilege to be a Nun on the Bus. You remember that election, I'm sure. I was on the bus from Janesville, Wisconsin to Cleveland, Ohio. Along the way, I met some amazing people and heard incredible stories about the joys and struggles of our sisters and brothers across the country. My leg on the trip ended at the Republican National Convention where we passed out lemonade to attendees and asked them three questions:

1. Who is difficult to talk to about politics in your family and why?
2. What concerns you about the election?
3. What gives you hope for our nation?



Susan and two other sisters listen to a story shared during a 2016 site visit to Vincent Village in Ft. Wayne, IN.

Four years later, I still remember those conversations. As I wrote in 2016, "Our diversity is our strength,' one man from Wisconsin told me. 'It can be scary, but over time our country will heal based on our strong values.' Another from Tennessee said, 'We have overcome a lot before as a nation and can do it again.'"

For that to be possible, we need to bridge the growing political divide. We need to sweeten the sour conversations in our body politic, in our families and in our communities. We need to talk with people with whom we do not normally engage. If we want to mend the gaps and reweave the fabric of society, then we need to move beyond trading barbs, attacks, and presumed facts, and focus instead on our hearts, probe our fears, and dare to hope for our nation.

Sadly, the divide has deepened and the gaps seem even wider today. I believe that this 2020 election comes at a critical time



Susan and other sisters on the 2016 Nuns on the Bus trip link hands outside of Cleveland ahead of the Republican National Convention for the "Circle the City with Love" event.

in our nation's story. The theme of the 2020 Nuns on the Bus Tour is therefore quite fitting: *Who We Elect Matters*. For this reason, I decided to get back on the bus this year to talk about how I feel called to be a multi-issue voter.

In many ways, the voter I am today is because of my mom. My mom knew in her bones that who we elect matters in the lives of real people, especially those who are poor and vulnerable. She taught me to care for life at all stages, to promote human dignity and the common good, and to bring all those concerns into the voting booth (or onto the pages of a mail-in ballot, as the case may be).

I hope you participate during our 2020 Nuns on the Bus tour or find time to watch events that have been recorded and saved online. However, most importantly, I pray that all voters will take this election seriously, follow their conscience, and vote for the common good.

Susan Rose Francois, CSJP is a Sister of St. Joseph of Peace and a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph congregational leadership team. This reflection was originally published on Sister Susan's blog "At the Corner of Susan and St. Joseph" ([www.susanandstjoseph.com](http://www.susanandstjoseph.com)). You can also find her on Twitter, tweeting a daily prayer for President Trump at @susanfrancois.



NETWORK—a Catholic leader in the global movement for justice and peace—educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation.

## NETWORK LOBBY FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rachelle Reyes Wenger (Chair)  
 Erin Zubal, OSU (Vice Chair)  
 Catalina Adorno (Treasurer)  
 Robbie Pentecost, OSF (Secretary)  
 Regina Ann Brummel, CSJ  
 Leslye Colvin  
 Catherine Ferguson, SNJM  
 Bridget Flood  
 Patricia Mullahy Fugere  
 Alice Gerdeman, CDP  
 Gladys Guenther, SHF  
 Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ  
 Alice Kitchen  
 Anne Li  
 Sarah Marin  
 Alejandra Marroquin  
 John Noble  
 Ann Scholz, SSND  
 Jerry Zurek

## NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ (Chair)  
 John Noble (Vice Chair)  
 Alejandra Marroquin (Treasurer)  
 Gladys Guenther, SHF (Secretary)  
 Catalina Adorno  
 Regina Ann Brummel, CSJ  
 Leslye Colvin  
 Catherine Ferguson, SNJM  
 Bridget Flood  
 Patricia Mullahy Fugere  
 Alice Gerdeman, CDP  
 Alice Kitchen  
 Anne Li  
 Sarah Marin  
 Robbie Pentecost, OSF  
 Ann Scholz, SSND  
 Rachelle Reyes Wenger  
 Erin Zubal, OSU  
 Jerry Zurek

### STAFF

#### COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Audrey Carroll, Caraline Fearheller,  
 Taylor Miller, Lee Morrow, Colleen Ross

#### DEVELOPMENT & MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Aramide Awosika, Maggie Brevig,  
 India-Grace Kellogg, June Martin, Kristin Schol

#### EXECUTIVE TEAM

Simone Campbell, SSS,  
 Danielle Johnson, Paul Marchione

#### GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM

Quincy Howard, OP, Gina Kelley, Laura Peralta-Schulte,  
 Mara Rutten, Tralonne Shorter

#### GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION TEAM

Catherine Gillette, Meg Olson, Emily TeKolste, SP

#### FELLOWS

Nancy Groth, Eilis McCulloh, Joan Neal, Patricia Sodo



## You can make a difference to ensure that we elect leaders who value the common good.

Chris Avery, a NETWORK member since 2017, has been inspiring his friends all around the world to act now during this critical election.

*I am a U.S. citizen but most of my career has been spent abroad as an international human rights advocate, starting at Amnesty International headquarters in London. I have been appalled by President Trump's attacks on fundamental human rights overseas and in the U.S., and have been volunteering with others to ensure he is defeated and replaced by an administration that will stand up for social justice.*

*When I heard about NETWORK's Pope Francis Voter initiative, I was struck by the simple but powerful message it sends to Catholic voters, invoking Pope Francis's words about the importance of rejecting racism and protecting the poor, the elderly, and migrants — and concluding "Prayerful consideration of the candidates for President make it clear: Catholics cannot be true to their faith and vote for Donald Trump in November."*

*I have made it my priority between now and Election Day to donate, and to encourage others to donate, to enable NETWORK to disseminate that message in Spanish to Latinx voters in key states and congressional districts. Catholics — including Latinx Catholics — may decide this presidential election, and I am confident that NETWORK's groundbreaking outreach to them in English and Spanish is having a significant impact.*

**Who we elect matters. You can have an impact on this election by supporting our work with a donation before November 3 to our Spanish-language campaign at [www.networklobby.org/spanishcampaign](http://www.networklobby.org/spanishcampaign).**

Or give any time to help us continue to educate, organize, and lobby for justice at [www.networklobby.org/donate](http://www.networklobby.org/donate).



820 First Street NE, Suite 350  
Washington, DC 20002  
phone: 202-347-9797  
fax: 202-347-9864  
[www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org)  
[www.networkadvocates.org](http://www.networkadvocates.org)

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 6962  
WASHINGTON, DC

# You're Invited on the Road with Nuns on the Bus



Join the interactive Nuns on the Bus tour experience.  
Get your ticket to ride at [www.nunsonthebus2020.org](http://www.nunsonthebus2020.org).