

Publication Date: September 28, 2020

Reflection Date: October 4, 2020 - 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time and Feast of St. Francis

Do What is Yours to Do in 2020

[Image by jdcovell from Pixabay](#)

This year the feast of St. Francis is bumped from the liturgical calendar because precedence is given to the [27th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#). But the Feast will not be overlooked by Franciscans. When I entered my Franciscan community many years ago, our postulant director prepared us for the celebration, telling us it was the next best day to Christmas, and we caught her excitement (which also lessened our homesickness!) Franciscans of every kind throughout the world still celebrate our common feast with excitement. Connections can be made between the Scriptures of this Sunday and the feast of St. Francis.



The readings from Isaiah and Matthew, the vineyard stories, bookend Philippians 4:6-9, a passage on joy and peace. Isaiah's "Vineyard Song" describes the House of Israel as a carefully tended vineyard which brought forth only wild grapes so it is made a ruin. The owner, "the Lord of hosts," looked "for justice, but, hark, the outcry!" In Matthew's parable of the vineyard, the tenants beat the owner's servants and even kill his son, foreshadowing the rejection of Jesus by the chief priests and Pharisees. It is not a huge stretch to correlate the vineyard images of wild grapes--injustice, and rejection of truth and mercy—with our country, and even Church, today, so deeply divided.

But in between the vineyard stories comes Paul's consoling message to the Philippians, to us: "Rejoice in the Lord always. . . The Lord is near. . . Keep on doing what you have learned and received. . . then the God of peace will be with you." As an itinerant preacher, consumed with love of Christ, Francis labored in the 13th century vineyard of wild grapes. Although the movement he initiated spread rapidly, he suffered pain of body and spirit; yet, his life was a song—a canticle—of joy and peace. Francis found "perfect joy" in suffering because it identified him closely with the One he loved totally. His final admonition to his community, to ask God what was theirs to do, strikes a similar chord to Paul's message to keep on following the Jesus of the Gospel, and "the God of peace will be with you."

As we labor in this 21st century vineyard, may we celebrate the feast of Francis of Assisi with joy and recommitment to the Gospel way of life. Let's heed Paul's instruction: "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice"!

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggestion action:

In the midst of so much that is wrong in the world, in this country, in the Church, make a list of what brings you deep joy on this feast of St. Francis.

Suggested Petition:

May we followers of Jesus and St. Francis have the strength and courage to keep on doing what is ours to do in this 21st century vineyard.

A Prayer Before the Crucifix: St. Francis

**O God, sublime and glorious,
come and enlighten the darkness of my heart;
give me an honest faith, a firm hope and a perfect love;
by your gift
may I feel and know your holy will,
that I may obey it and not go astray.**

Amen.

2020: A Franciscan Moment Videos Ready to Share

Our mission at [Franciscan Action Network](#) is to promote and advocate for Franciscan values in American public life and politics. Guided by the Gospels and the examples of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, our work is to engage the issues of our nation with Franciscan hearts.



In this challenging year of 2020, Franciscan Action Network has created three videos calling on Americans to be inspired by Franciscan values as they vote. Entitled [2020: A Franciscan Moment](#), each of these videos are impassioned pleas for voters to bring Franciscan compassion into the voting booth.

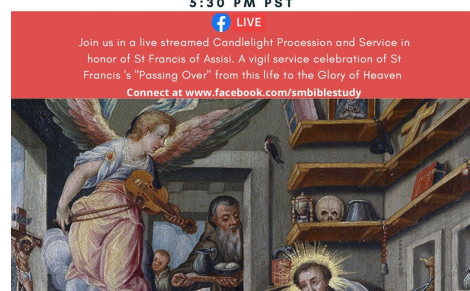
We are proud to announce that all [three videos](#) are complete and ready to share. We hope you will watch them, pray with them, and be guided to share them with everyone you know.

Celebrate the Feast of the Transitus with FAN

With a spirit of ecumenism the Franciscan Action Network, [Franciscan Solidarity Table of Southern California](#), the Order of Lesser Sisters and Brothers and Saint Matthew Ecumenical Catholic Church are co-sponsoring a [Transitus for St. Francis live streamed event](#).

This **Saturday, October 3rd at 8:30pm ET / 5:30pm PT**, we hope you will join us in a live streamed Candlelight procession and service in honor of St. Francis of Assisi to celebrate his "passing over" from

St. Matthew Ecumenical Catholic Church Presents:
The Transitus of St Francis
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2020
5:30 PM PST



this life to the Glory of Heaven.

The Transitus specifically remembers the Poor Man of Assisi at his holiness moment — the moment in which he met His God. It calls together the friars, sisters, nuns and secular members of the Franciscan family at which Francis might give us his one, last, perfect lesson.

[View the event on Facebook.](#)

Join the Faithful Citizenship Webinar

Join FAN and the NYC Franciscan Solidarity Table for a webinar on Tuesday, October 6th from 7:30-8:30pm ET, [Faithful Citizenship: Voting to Ensure the Common Good for All Our Brothers and Sisters.](#)

Attendees will be invited to explore our moral obligation, as people of faith, to vote and consider:

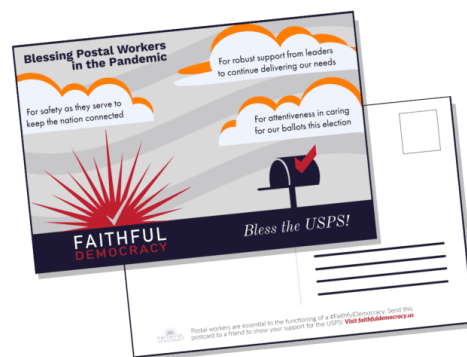
- Implications that policies enacted by those we elect into office have on society, especially on the most marginalized
- Vivid instances of voter suppression
- Franciscan call to action with steps we can take to make sure as many of us as possible are able to vote Franciscan values and assure our votes are counted for the November 2020 election.



You must [register in advance for this meeting by clicking this link.](#) After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Take Action: Save USPS

The United States Postal Service (USPS) has provided mail delivery as a public service in the United States since it was established in the U.S. Constitution. The USPS connects Americans to life-saving medicines, important products, and to each other across distant and sometimes remote locations--and in 2020 the USPS will connect millions of Americans to the ballot box. Our postal workers offer an essential service in this pandemic and support a faithful democracy that enables Americans to vote safely in COVID.

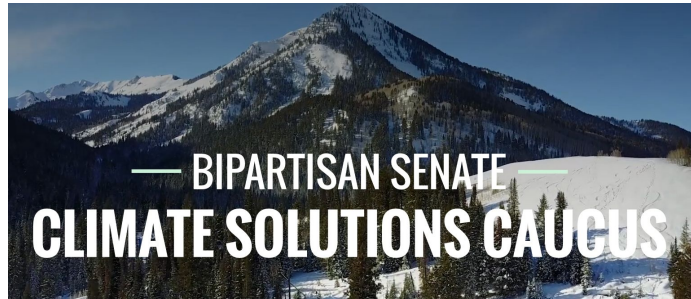


In this pandemic, the USPS needs emergency funding to maintain delivery services that meet the needs of the nation. The [Faithful Democracy](#) coalition has developed a [postcard campaign](#) to take action and show our postal workers how much we care about them. [Click here](#) to download or order a pack of postcards (for free!) that offer a blessing to our postal workers. Send them to your Senators urging them to provide the \$25 Billion in emergency funding critical to maintain the USPS.

Catholic Leaders Convening with Senate Climate

Solutions Caucus

Five years ago, Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* focused on connecting the care of the natural world with justice for the poorest and most vulnerable people. Today, the Bipartisan [U.S. Senate Climate Solutions Caucus](#) acknowledges our climate is changing, human activity is contributing, and Congress must play a central role in developing strategies for mitigation and adaptation.



In celebration of the five year anniversary of Pope Francis' environmental encyclical, please join an [event](#) hosted by the co-chairs of the Senate Climate Solutions Caucus, Senator Mike Braun and Senator Chris Coons, and organized by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities USA, and Catholic Relief Services.

Join this **Thursday, October 1, 2020, from 9:15 AM - 10:45 AM Eastern** for an important environmental policy discussion that will reflect on *Laudato Si'* and the climate issues our country continues to face. [Click here to register.](#)

Take Action on Expansion of Immigrant Surveillance

The Trump administration has [proposed a rule](#) to dramatically expand its surveillance over immigrants as well as U.S. citizens sponsoring immigration cases. The proposal includes collecting DNA, voice prints, iris and face scans as well other personal characteristics for virtually all immigration and citizenship applicants to be stored in government databases, potentially forever. Even survivors of trafficking and domestic violence, including children, would not be excluded.



Our friends at CLINIC Legal have developed this [simple way to submit your public comment](#). The Department of Homeland Security has given a 30-day period — instead of the standard 60 days — for the public to submit comments on the massive, 328-page rule. Comments are due by Tuesday, Oct. 13th. We urge our members and friends to [speak out against this dehumanizing proposal](#).

Take Action: Sign Petition Demanding Funds for Vote-By-Mail for All

Election Day is just around the corner -- and we need your help to make sure voters who want to cast their ballot via mail are able to, despite any efforts to stop them. No one should have to choose between risking their health at the polls or forfeiting their right to vote during the COVID-19 pandemic.



FAN has joined with good governance partners in a [petition urging the Senate to immediately step up to defend our rights](#) -- by funding and protecting the U.S. Postal Service, expanding vote-by-mail options wherever possible, and approving the \$3.6 billion experts say states need to hold safe and accessible elections this fall.

Mail-in voting is a paper-based system that is safe and accessible, it can easily be audited to make sure election results are correct -- and it has already been tested and proven secure in states across the country. [Sign the petition demanding the Senate take action.](#)