

Franciscan Action Network

2020 Annual Report



Dear Friends, Greetings of Peace and all good!

In January, I was honored to become part of Franciscan Action Network. This Annual Report coincides with the start of my tenure as Executive Director – and I am proud and excited to be part of this extraordinary community. Since my childhood education by the Sisters of St. Francis, I have been inspired by the charism of Sts. Francis and Clare.

At Franciscan Action Network we engage in public life with prophetic witness to that charism. Supported by religious communities representing all the orders of Franciscan life, in public life we work to advance laws and policies that provide for those in poverty, that welcome migrants and refugees, that care for Creation, that accompany the marginalized and those on the periphery, that oppose racism and injustice, and that promote solidarity and seek to overcome polarization.

Within the Franciscan world, we work to mobilize, inform, and educate Franciscans and Franciscan-hearted people around these same justice and peace concerns. In all of this – in the work of our terrific staff, our board, our member communities of sisters, friars, and secular Franciscans, and in all our Franciscan-hearted supporters – that special charism is everywhere present.

Our mission is clear. Because, today's political, economic, and social environments pose profound challenges for those inspired by the spirit of Clare and Francis.

Those in poverty, migrants, refugees, the discriminated, and all who live on the margins of America's economy and society are much ignored by policymakers. Amidst the crisis of COVID-19 the fraying of America's safety net is seen everywhere. Ugly new instances of racial discrimination, food insecurity, increasing poverty, rising suicide rates and gun violence, federal reinstatement of the death penalty, addiction, homelessness, and high abortion rates are all evidence of the neglect of the vulnerable among us, neglect of those whom Pope Francis has called the "thrown away." Creation itself – water, earth, and air – is poisoned, corrupted, and abused as more communities suffer the effects of droughts, floods, fires, and storms devastating the landscape. All while Washington politicians and policymakers seem unresponsive to the desperate needs.

We are called to action by the words of Saint Clare, "Love that cannot suffer with, is not worthy of that name." Franciscan Action Network, accordingly, stepped up its engagement in 2020 and we hope to increase our engagement even more in the year ahead. Thank you for your prayers and support.

From the Executive Director, Stephen Schneck, PhD.

***Opera Christi, non deficient sed proficient.
Christ's works do not go backwards but forwards.***

This phrase comes from our Franciscan brother, Saint Bonaventure, who found himself defending the newness of the Franciscan Order that was changing the face of the church and the world in his time. In that same spirit, Franciscan Action Network works to make an impact in our time by changing policy and old, stagnant attitudes, thereby bringing justice and peace to people's lives here in the United States.

As we begin to emerge from the pain and uncertainty of a global pandemic, we find ourselves changed. We are scarred by the violence done to our health and scandalized by the amplified negative effects shouldered by the poor and disadvantaged. At the same time seeds of hope began to grow within us as we saw clear skies in Los Angeles and dolphins returned to the cleaner waters of Venitian canals. All the while we are continually inspired by the heroism of individuals who daily rise to the occasion of loving their neighbors.

The work of FAN, rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, does not go backwards but forward. Having completed our work in 2020, FAN also has changed, shifting much of our advocacy work online, while responding in person to injustices of racism that have caused us all to pause and consider new paths of justice and peace in our land.

May the lessons we've learned, the burdens we have carried, the harsh realities we have come to know, as well as the hopefulness we have found in our work this past year, inspire us all to continually change for the good.

Our brother Bonaventure, whose name means 'good fortune', reminds us that better days are ahead, and that it is ours to participate in the Work of Christ as we walk confidently forward, along the path that lies open before us now. With the help of FAN may we be inspired along the way, to share the Good News that has been written anew on our hearts: a message of mercy, justice, and peace.

From the President, Friar Michael Lasky, OFM Conv.

2020 Accomplishments

Even with the challenges of 2020, FAN continued the normal work and increased efforts to capture the Franciscan Moment we've all experienced this year. We spoke out and demonstrated for racial justice, expanded our Franciscan Solidarity tables, encouraged Franciscans to vote their values, and celebrated the 5th anniversary of Laudato Si with a series of webinars.

Human Dignity/Consistent Ethic of Life

Consistent Ethic of Life

- FAN participated in [March for Life](#) rally in Washington, DC alongside the [Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province](#). (Pictured, top, right)
- Participated in [Black Lives Matter](#) rally in Washington DC.

Immigration

- Took part in a **faith vigil** marking the anniversary of the "Remain-In-Mexico" policy: [Photos on Facebook](#). (Pictured, top, left and bottom)
- Participated in [strategic support](#) with immigration advocacy groups as we [waited](#) for SCOTUS decision on DACA.
- Celebrated SCOTUS decision to uphold the DACA program by [ringing DACA Bells for Justice](#).



Peacebuilding

Peacemaking:


- White House **Vigil: No War with Iran** - Many media hits as well. [Facebook Photo](#)
- Alongside Pax Christi USA, used the [75th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki](#) to recommit ourselves to advocate for a world free of nuclear weapons.
- Jason Miller invited by to make presentation on an interfaith panel discussion on: "[How Catholicism addresses peace and justice.](#)" (Pictured, top)

All Issues:

- Developed three videos collectively named [A Franciscan Moment](#), calling for Franciscan Values to be taken to the voting booth. (Pictured, bottom)
- Hosted **6 conversations** with numerous voters in strategic parts of the US to show videos and discuss themes.

EXAMPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES: NUNS

- Nuns or Sisters have taken vows to live in poverty and in service of others as teachers, nurses, or in a variety of occupations.
- In addition to working with those as Pope Francis says "on the margins" nuns are often fierce social justice advocates who sometimes find themselves at odds with the institutional Church.



Franciscan Action Network: Vote Franciscan Values

Care for Creation

Care for Creation:

- Funded by USCAN grant: Partnered with Creation Justice Ministries, YECA, and IPL on [Faithful Climate Action Fellowship](#) to recruit young religious leaders across the country to spur their faith groups to enter the conversation and push for bold action.
- Participated in the [Polar Bear Plunge](#) (pictured)
- Held successful [Virtual Gathering of Franciscans to celebrate EAD](#).
- [Laudato Si Week Webinar](#).
- [Action Alert to Bureau of Land Management](#): Sent 779 messages opposing sale and lease of lands in Alaska National Wildlife Refuge for drilling.
- [Laudato Si Revolution webinar: Franciscan Call to Action Rebuilding the Temple of God's Creation](#).



Franciscan Solidarity Tables

- Created content for two FST pages on website:
Overview and Resources
- Developed Resources: **"What is Advocacy"** and **"Advocacy Planning Cycle"** for Phase III of FST
- Finalized FST **Facilitator's Guide** and **FST Member's Handbook**
- Created **promotional materials**: flyer, brochure, bulletin announcement,
- Coordinated and planned **Virtual Franciscan EAD Gathering** with Sr. Joan Brown
- Coordinated **Laudato Si' Week** webinar



"My participation in the SoCal table has enhanced my formation and has made me a better Franciscan."

~Br. Christopher, Yorba Linda, CA

Faithful Democracy

- In January, #FaithfulDemocracy marked 10 years of **#CitizensUnited** with Sen. Ed Markey: [Photos on Facebook](#). (Pictured)
- Co-hosted a [webinar](#) calling for protection of our **democracy** in the context of COVID-19.
- **New Faithful Democracy logo and [website](#)**
- Coordinated a **postcard campaign** to potential voters in GA and a virtual **screening of "[Suppressed the Fight to Vote](#)"** with partners in state.

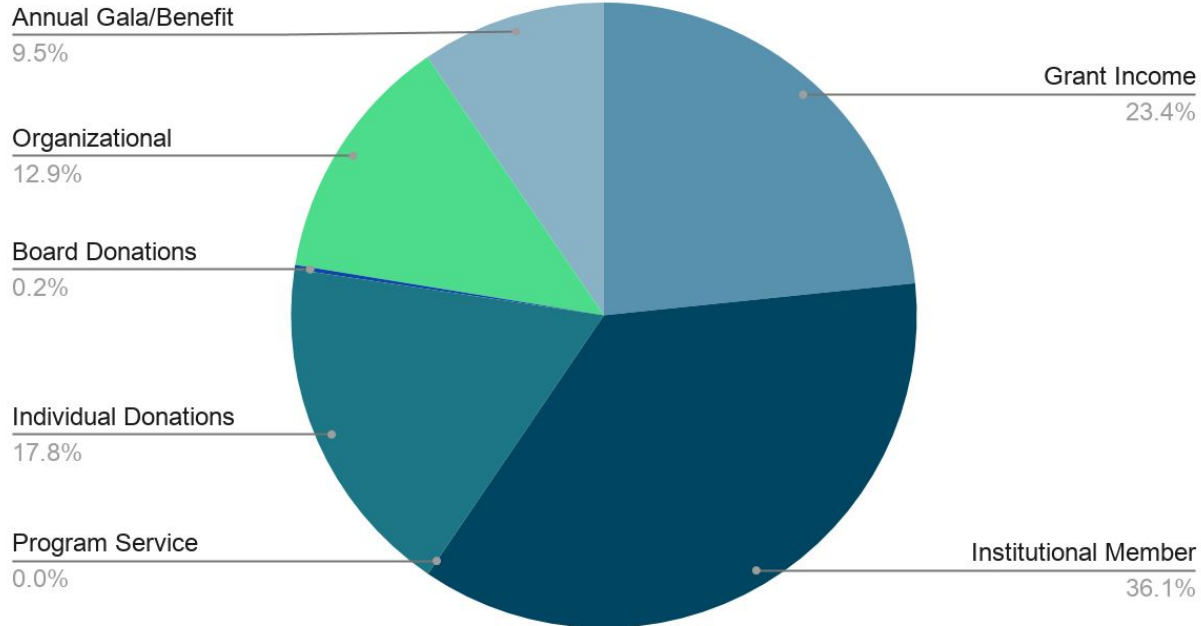


FAN Financials

FAN's primary source of ongoing funding is from our institutional members. Their financial support is essential as together we engage the issues so important to Franciscans and all people of faith.

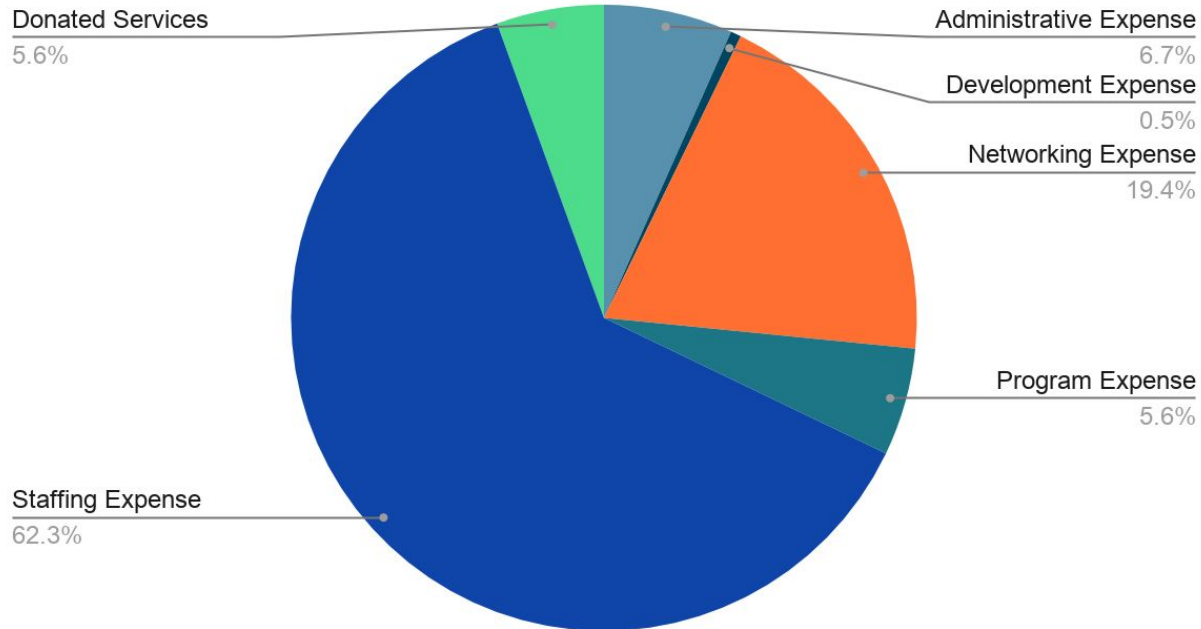
2020 Income

2020 Income



2020 Expenses

2020 Expenses



FAN Staff and Interns from the Franciscan Interprovincial Postulancy

