

Ready for Ordinary Time?

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The Christmas Season ends with its wondrous stories of the Birth of Jesus, angels, shepherds, stars, gift-bearing Magi, and foreshadowings of the Cross, lest we think we can remain at the manger. Stories of Jesus as a baby, a child in a refugee family, a 12 year old acting as teenagers do, giving parents anxiety. Before we settle back into Ordinary Time, the gospel of Luke fast forwards to Jesus, all grown up, the mature adult being [baptized by his cousin](#), John, his public ministry confirmed by hearing his heavenly Father call him “beloved Son” in whom God is “well pleased.” We are already aware that being God’s beloved is no picnic.



In the passage from Acts, we hear that God proclaimed peace without partiality through the beloved Son who “went about doing good.” What did doing good look like? Isaiah gave us a preview: “. . . he shall bring forth justice to the nations” (all of them). He was not just a personal savior, but was called “for the victory of justice”; that is, he would “open the eyes of the blind” (physical, mental, spiritual blindness); he would “bring out prisoners from the dungeon” (those imprisoned and enslaved by others and prisoners of their own fears or resistance to the Good News); and those “who live in darkness” (of ignorance, disease, poverty, hunger, oppression).

Jesus was initiated into his life’s mission of “doing good” by being baptized with water, he who would baptize “with the Holy Spirit and fire.” Probably most of us do not remember being baptized; we did not choose Baptism. Many, baptized as adults, did make this choice. Either way, Baptism initiated us into the Christian community and gave us the responsibility to go about doing good. We, too, are God’s beloved sons and daughters; we too are called to proclaim peace and to work for the victory of justice; we too must be motivated by love. And we, too, will suffer the consequences as Jesus did. If we take up the challenge of our Baptism in Ordinary Time, God will be —already is—“well pleased” with us.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

Recall the day of your Baptism, even if it is not in your memory. Who were your godparents? What promises were made for you? What does it mean now to be a member of the Christian community? Make a recommitment to act as God’s beloved.

Suggested Petitions:

With gratitude for the Sacrament of Baptism, let us pray. . .

For catechumens preparing for Baptism, let us pray. . .
That we may have the grace needed to go about doing good, let us pray. . .

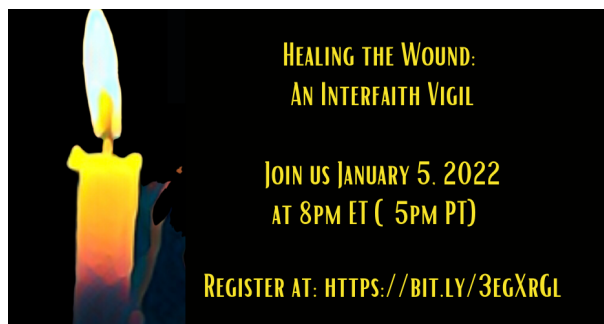
Prayer: Orthodox Liturgy of St. Basil

**O Lord, helper of the helpless, the hope of those who are past hope,
the savior of the tempest-tossed, the harbor of the voyagers, the physician of the sick.
You know each soul and our prayer, each home and its need.
Become to each one of us what we most dearly desire,
receiving us all into your kingdom, making us children of the light.
Pour on us your peace and love, O Lord our God.**

Amen.

Join us for Healing the Wound: An Interfaith Vigil

As we approach the anniversary of January 6, Franciscan Action Network invites you to join us for [Healing the Wound: An Interfaith Vigil](#). Two Secular Franciscans from our network in Iowa, Deacon Frank Agnoli and Kent Ferris, came up with the idea for this vigil and we are thrilled to help bring it to fruition through our Faithful Democracy coalition.



Who was responsible for creating the wound of January 6th and who is responsible for healing it? ALL OF US. On **January 5, 2022 at 8pm ET (5pm PT)**, we will gather as people of faith for an hour of prayer, reading of sacred scriptures, and individual reflection. Please join us. Participants will also be invited to join an optional day of fasting on January 6th.

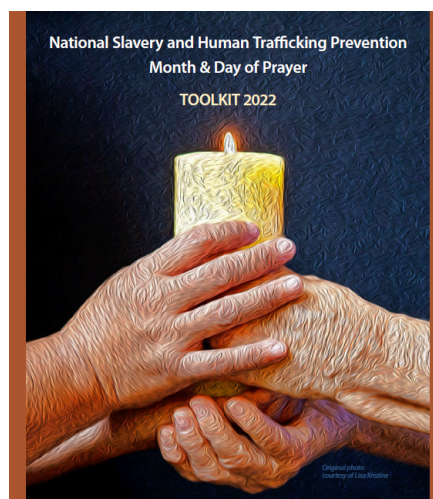
Register to attend by [clicking here](#). We will also be live-streaming the event to [FAN's Facebook page](#).

January is National Anti-Trafficking Awareness Month

January is National Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month and February 8th is the World Day of Prayer Against Human Trafficking.

The [U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#) (USCSAHT) provide us with a monthly newsletter to educate about the dangers and affects of human trafficking. To commemorate these two dates, the sisters have developed a [toolkit](#) full of information, action ideas, and prayer resources to support your ongoing anti-trafficking work in 2022.

The toolkit is [free to download by clicking HERE](#). We urge our members and friends to get your local church or



community involved.

Top 7 Immigration Explainers of 2021 from the American Immigration Council

Our partners at the [American Immigration Council](#) produce research that helps educate millions of Americans on why we need to build a fair, just, and welcoming immigration system. During 2021, we collaborated with them on the [Belonging Begins with Us](#) campaign to foster a more welcoming nation where everyone – regardless of background – feels they belong.



As the year comes to a close, the American Immigration Council offers their [7 most popular explainers](#) which we find very helpful in educating on the critical immigration issues today.

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

In the New Year are you looking for an opportunity that helps you to “walk the talk” of the Gospel message? Our [Franciscan Justice Circles](#) are local affinity groups throughout the country in which Franciscan-hearted people come together to deepen their spirituality and convert their values into action for justice, peace, integrity of creation, and human dignity.



There are many FJC Meetings scheduled this month at various locations. This week, the Mid-Hudson Valley NY and Southern California Circles have meetings on January 6th. Washington, DC FJC meeting is January 15th. Find the full list of upcoming FJC meetings on our [website](#).

For information about joining or forming a Franciscan Justice Circle, please contact Nora Pfeiffer at FJCinfo@franciscanaction.org.