

Publication Date: January 17, 2022

Reflection Date: January 23, 2022 - 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proclamations

As documents go, the telltale signs of an official proclamation are easy to spot. You will notice a “by virtue of the authority vested in me by...”, a “do hereby proclaim...” and maybe even a “...in witness whereof...” for good measure. UC Santa Barbara’s [The American Presidency Project](#) lists 8657 presidential proclamations. With that many, the range of topics is wide, from popular declarations to those less well known like Great Outdoors Month and National College Application Month.



To proclaim is to announce officially or publicly declare something one considers important with due emphasis. Besides the aforementioned boiler plate pieces of such a statement, what gives proclamations their heft comes by who it is that makes the declaration and by what authority, who it is addressed to, and how it is received. Making presidential proclamations is shared in the halls of Congress and even on post marks as I remember National Children’s Dental Health Month when I was a kid. Proclamations are not just the stuff of U.S. Presidents. Mayors and Governors do so likewise. There are usually numerous proclamations being made simultaneously.

The Gospel reading from Luke for the [3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) includes the account of Jesus reading from Isaiah and the two proclamations, “to proclaim liberty to captives...” and “...to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.” By what authority? “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...” To whom? Jesus addressed all those in the synagogue that day, to all of us who hear the Word of the Lord proclaimed during Mass. How is the proclamation received? After Jesus sat down, “...the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him,” and “all spoke highly of him.”

What of our own response? At Mass, following the proclamation of the Gospel, there is an acclamation, where we acclaim, praise enthusiastically and publicly, not to be merely stated but to be sung. We are called not merely to acknowledge holy proclamation but we are to do as the Psalm response for this week, to acknowledge, “your words, Lord, are spirit and life.”

Liberty to captives? A year acceptable to the Lord? These proclamations coming by way of the Spirit of the Lord are timeless, to be acknowledged as holy scripture in our prayers and worship, now and every time they are read, proclaimed.

There may be no more significant proclamation, declaration in the Church in our day than the establishment of the Assembly of Bishops in Synod in October, 2023, and the synodal process the global Church will undertake to prepare for the Assembly. Communion. Participation. Mission. FAN’s areas of interest and activity, so focused on peace and justice, so often in communion with the oppressed and marginalized, will most definitely overlap with the synodal process here in the United States. May we pray the prayer for the Synodal Journey now and through the 2023 Assembly.

Mr. Kent Ferris, OFS
Director of Social Action and Catholic Charities • Diocese of Davenport

Suggested Actions:

Gather some family or friends and together read the Gospel for this Sunday as if hearing it from Jesus' mouth.

Suggested Petitions:

May we have the courage to NOT be silent when presented with injustice. We pray...
May we lovingly work with our fellow brothers and sisters, acknowledging we are all important parts of the One Body of Christ. We pray...

Prayer for the Synodal Journey:

**We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
As we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful;
do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor let partiality influence our actions.**

**Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.**


**All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever.**

Amen.

Join FAN for the March for Life on Jan 21

FAN staff will participate in the 2022 March for Life in Washington, D.C. under a "[consistent ethic of life](#)" banner on Friday, Jan 21. This value is sacred to all Franciscans who are dedicated to a profound respect for human life and supporting the most vulnerable, including unborn children and women in crisis pregnancies.

We understand concerns about gathering in person amid the current surge in COVID infections. However, if you are planning on



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ACTION NETWORK**

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

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~~Death Penalty~~ ~~War~~
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Support a consistent ethic of LIFE

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participating in the March we would love for you to join us. Please [contact Jason Miller](#) to find out where we will be gathering.

For those who are not able to attend, please take a moment to [lift a prayer](#) on Friday, January 21 for all the March for Life attendees and for hearts to be open to caring for our fellow humans from conception, through all stages of life, to natural death.

Last Chance Today to Take Action: Urge your Senator to Protect our Sacred Right to Vote

All across the country, groups hosted vigils on Thursday, Jan. 6 to mark the one-year anniversary of the U.S. Capitol attack. Our executive director, Michele Dunne joined one such vigil in Washington, D.C. where attendees were urging the Senate to act on federal voting rights legislation. She is quoted in this [RNS article](#) saying, “As Franciscans, we believe in the equality of all people, and that means equal access to political power and political decision-making.”



Tomorrow the Senate is likely to act on legislation to protect our sacred right to vote. If you haven't already, we urge you to call your Senators and ask them to do all in their power to pass the newly titled, the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act. **Call 833-345-2551 and tell your Senators how critically important voting rights are to you and to our democracy.** After you have made your calls, [let us know how it went](#).

Today we celebrate American civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, who also spoke out for voting rights. This year, Dr. King's family encouraged advocates across the country to honor their father's legacy with action. The people have responded. **Events are happening today all across the country to demand passage of voting rights legislation and access to the ballot box.** [Click here to find an action near you.](#)

This **Thursday January 20th at 12:30pm ET (9:30am PT)**, join [Faithful Democracy](#) and [Faith in Public Life](#) as they gather people of faith across the country to unite virtually in prayer and hear updates on the state of the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act. [Get more info here.](#)

Human Trafficking Webinar and Stop Trafficking Newsletter

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking recently hosted a webinar on [Cyber Safety and Keeping our Kids Safe](#). The hour-long presentation by Russ Tuttle with the Stop Trafficking Project is well worth the time even if you do not have children. Russ discusses numerous platforms and the rise in exploitation of children's vulnerabilities online.



Additionally, the [January issue of the Stop Trafficking Newsletter](#) focuses on human trafficking that occurs within the family. You can access any past issues of the Stop Trafficking Newsletter on FAN's website, [HERE](#).

This [Morning Prayer Service](#) was developed for use on January 11th, Human Trafficking Awareness Day, which brings attention to a crime that leaves a lasting toll on human life, families, and communities around the world. You may wish to use it to pray privately or with your community.

A Franciscan Renaissance: Needed, Costly and Within Reach

The Franciscan Federation is hosting a [virtual dialogue](#) around Brian McLaren's presentation "A Franciscan Renaissance: needed, costly and within reach."



A Franciscan Renaissance: Needed, Costly and Within Reach

Presentation for the 56th Annual Franciscan Federation Conference (AFC) June 12, 2021, a virtual experience.

Dr. Brian McLaren

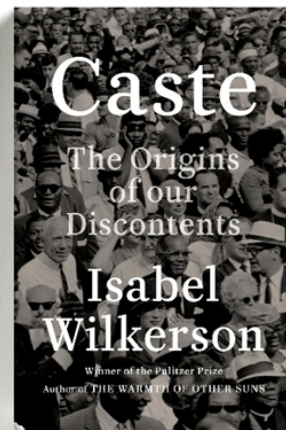
You are invited to join in to explore with other members of the Franciscan community the inspiration and invitation offered by Brian in his keynote address at the 2021 Franciscan Federation Conference.

There are two remaining sessions, both of which are the same in content. They are scheduled for **Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 4pm ET (1pm PT) or Sunday, March 6, 2022 at 6pm ET (3pm PT)**. [Click here to register](#).

Franciscan Federation Book Discussion Series

Caste—The Origins of Our Discontents is an eye-opening story of people and history, and a reexamination of what lies under the surface of ordinary lives and of American life today”.

Members of the [Franciscan Federation](#) will facilitate this unique opportunity for prayer, study, dialogue and discussion on racial injustice. Isabel Wilkerson's book provides a guide to race and racial brutality in the US, told through the allegory of caste, the latter viewed as the skeleton under the flesh of black-white relationships in the 400-year history of what became the US.



Several date options are being offered throughout February for this three-part book discussion series. For more information and to register please [click here](#).

Franciscan Justice Circles Updates



On the **second Wednesday of each month** we host members of [Franciscan Justice Circles](#) from all over the country for a monthly national FJC call. These calls allow members to hear about the work FAN is doing in DC and offer space for FAN staff to hear what the FJC members are doing in their local community.

At our monthly call last week, we heard from a member of the Southern California Franciscan Justice Circle, who worked as a pro bono immigration attorney with Catholic Charities accompanying our immigrant sisters and brothers. She shared with us some of her lived experiences and the opportunities for change and for advocacy in response to systemic injustices in the immigration legal system that her clients faced.

Sharing and discussion are always built into these meetings as we appreciate learning from each other's personal experiences in different parts of the country. We hope you are able to join us on the next call, **February 9th at 3pm ET (12pm PT)**. For information about joining our National FJC call, please contact Nora Pfeiffer at FJCinfo@franciscanaction.org.