

The Virtue of Humility

Image by [Jarmo Larsen](#) from [Pixabay](#)

I'm old enough to remember a world before selfies. I'm old enough to remember football players who would never dance in self-glorification after scoring a touchdown.

Yet, more and more our world inclines us to celebrate the self. We puff the ego. We live in an age in which all things are assumed to revolve about me, myself, and I. We live in an era of solipsism. We live in a time and place of vanity on stilts.

Hand in glove with our era's preening worship of our "me" is a swollen pridefulness in our "mine." The logo on our purse, the latest phone, the trendy cocktail, the names we can drop, and all the myriad possessions – don't we imagine that such things shout out to the world about the glory of "me"?



How quaint then must Sunday's readings for the [22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) seem to us, for they speak of what must be our age's most daunting virtue – humility. Yet, humility is utterly foundational for a genuinely Christian life. Much as pride is ultimately the root of all sin.

The First Reading from Sirach begins...

*My child, conduct your affairs with humility,
and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts.
Humble yourself the more, the greater you are,
and you will find favor with God.*

The Alleluia verse from Matthew 11 is among the most poignant in scripture: "Take my yoke upon you, says the Lord, and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart."

The Gospel from Luke 14 recounts the parable of the wedding feast wherein Christ gently chides the prideful Pharisees that "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled" while those who humble themselves "will be exalted." Christ continues in his counsel to the prideful saying when you hold a banquet, do not invite the famous and wealthy, "invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind."

It is, thus, no wonder that St. Augustine once observed that, for those who would truly follow in the ways of Christ, humility is the first thing, the second thing, and the third thing.

And, what is humility? It is a decentering of "me." It is a forgetting of self. Only in such forgetting of the self are we able to listen "with an attentive ear." Only in forgetting the self can we hear the

Word of God. Only in forgetting the self can we truly open space for welcoming “the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind” in whom we might discover the face of God.

Yet, in this age of the “me,” what hope can we have for forgetting the self? Let us pray for humility. Let us make conscious efforts to see God in creation and in the migrants at the southern U.S. Border. Let us seek to humble ourselves to create a more peaceful world.

Stephen Schneck, Ph.D.
FAN Supporter and former Executive Director

Suggested Action:

Take time this week to focus your thoughts on “the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind” in your life and community.

Suggested Petitions:

For a deeper understanding of humility, we pray...

For the courage and strength to persevere in bringing humility into our lives, we pray...

A Christian Prayer for the Virtue of Humility (Author Unknown)

**Lord Jesus, when you walked the earth,
Your humility obscured your Kingship.
Your meekness confused the arrogant,
Hindering them from grasping your purpose,
Your nobleness attending to the destitute.
Teach me to model after your eminence,
To subject my human nature to humility.
Grant me with a natural inclination
To never view myself greater than anyone.
Banish all lingering sparks of self-importance
That could elevate me greater than you.
Let my heart always imitate your humility.**

Amen

Webinar: Biodiversity, Franciscans, and the Season of Creation

Franciscan Action Network is co-sponsor of a webinar organized by the Order of Friars Minor [Franciscan JPIC Office in Rome](#) titled “[Shemá: Biodiversity, Franciscans, and the Season of Creation](#)” on **Saturday, September 3 at 9am ET / 8am CT / 6am PT.**

In the face of the global biodiversity crisis there is hope. Faith communities, scientists and environmental activists are increasingly working together to safeguard our common home. During



**SHEMÁ:
BIODIVERSITY,
FRANCISCANS,
AND THE SEASON
OF CREATION**

FOR A PRESENT
THAT HAS A FUTURE

• Hour:
Chicago: 8:00
New York: 9:00
Dublin: 14:00
South Africa: 15:00
Philippines: 21:00

**Date: Saturday,
September 3, 2022**

Register to participate in a zoom
presentation and conversation with:

Franciscan Action Network

Listen to the
Voice of Creation
Season of Creation 2022

Franciscan
ACTION NETWORK

the Season of Creation, join in a conversation of Franciscan-hearted people and learn what we can do to promote an ecological conversation of justice and healing within the Earth's community of life.

[Register to participate in this zoom presentation.](#)

Catholic Climate Covenant's Feast of St. Francis Program

Our friends at Catholic Climate Covenant have launched their program for the 2022 Feast of St. Francis, "[Eco-spirituality: Behold God in Everything](#)."

This year's program focuses on the call for "eco-spirituality," one of the goals of the Vatican's Laudato Si' Action Platform, and is designed to assist you and your community in engaging with and promoting ecological spirituality. The program contains prayers, readings, reflection/discussion questions, music, a contemplation exercise, a short video, and suggested activities.

To access the full program, [click here and fill-out the form](#). After you submit the form, you will receive an email with the links to the resources.



Take Action: Urge Congress to Pass the Bipartisan Afghan Adjustment Act

Days ahead of the one-year anniversary of the Afghanistan evacuation, a bipartisan group of legislators in both houses of Congress have introduced the [Afghan Adjustment Act](#) (AAA). This legislation would ensure that Afghans who were brought to safety in the United States can apply for lasting protection to stay long-term. FAN staff members Merwyn De Mello and Sr. Marie Lucey attended the press conference last week introducing the AAA. (Pictured)

Our friends at Church World Service have developed this [action alert](#) to urge members of Congress to swiftly pass this bipartisan and bi-cameral legislation.



Plan now to Participate in Vote Early Day

When Americans vote early, we ensure that last-minute problems, long lines at the polls, voter disinformation, and confusing election laws cannot stop us from casting our ballots. [Vote Early Day](#) on October 28 is a civic holiday started by nonprofits, media companies, technology platforms, election administrators, influencers, and businesses to give



voters the tools and knowledge they need to cast their ballot early in a fun and engaging way. This is a nonpartisan movement with bipartisan support and backing from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission as well as engagement from major nonprofits like the YMCA, the United Way, and the League of Women Voters. [Learn more and get involved here.](#)

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

[Franciscan Justice Circles](#) provide a space for people interested in joining others who also want to be involved in advocacy on issues related to the common good, creation and justice with a Franciscan lens. Usually the Circles are formed by people in a common geographic area, such as those pictured here in our Washington, DC Area Circle during an August meeting.

If you are interested in joining a Circle but due to life circumstances are unable to be physically out and about, we have a Circle for you! The **Virtual**

Franciscan Justice Circle is meeting this coming Thursday, Aug. 25 at 2pm ET / 1pm CT / 11am PT. Please [contact us](#) if you would like to attend the meeting.

