

The Cost of Discipleship...and the Return

[Francis renounces his father's wealth](#)

In the Gospel for the [23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time](#), Jesus addressed the crowd traveling with him and gave some very specific terms for following him. He says, "...anyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14:33). This demand may seem untenable in today's society and yet, we heard in the gospel a few weeks back another cost of discipleship when Jesus warned that his teachings would divide families.



In reading a [commentary](#) about this gospel passage by Jeannine K. Brown, I was struck by her insight that Jesus' command to "Follow me" is "both gift and demand." She explains the demands presented by Jesus and the high cost (her term) of discipleship, which is "not cheap, not easy, and not to be entered into without deep consideration of the consequences and costs."

Discipleship, we are told, must include giving up our self interest, competing loyalties, and worldly possessions. Perhaps it is Jesus' intention to turn away half-hearted followers in favor of those with the courage and fortitude to continue bringing His message to others even in the face of adversity. This message will not always be easy to follow or to translate into our twenty-first century context. It boils down to the need to prioritize our relationship with God above every other thing and person in our lives.

After reconciling with these costs, how do we move forward in our lives today? Once we have committed to discipleship, what next? In today's day and age, which is more focused on self-interests, one might ask, "what return will I get for this cost?"

During his lifetime, Francis of Assisi set out on a mission to restore Jesus Christ's own, original values to the church. Publicly renouncing his father's wealth, he willingly paid the cost of discipleship. For 800+ years, his example is one that still tugs at the hearts of people and inspires them to personal transformation and action.

While the cost of discipleship can be great, the return can be even greater. We can heed the example of St. Francis of Assisi and be transformed into the person God created us to be. We can overcome our prejudices, stigmas, and fear of others to become empathic and to act against injustices that diminish or fail to recognize the divine present in each member of creation. Our willingness to pay the cost of discipleship allows for the values of Jesus to live on in our world.

Janine Walsh
FAN Communications Coordinator

Suggested Action:

Dedicate some time this week to considering your willingness to pay the cost of discipleship.

Suggested Petitions:

For the fortitude to pay the cost of discipleship. We pray...

For all those struggling with the cost of discipleship. We pray...

Prayer:

**If we had a fraction of the faith in you that you have in us
then this world would be transformed, Lord.**

**If we showed a fraction of the love that you show to us
then this world would be transformed, Lord**

**If we possessed a fraction of the patience that you display with us
then this world would be transformed, Lord.**

**If we shared just a portion of the blessings that we have received from you
then this world would be transformed, Lord.**

**If we showed as much trust in others as you have shown in us
then this world would be transformed, Lord.**

**If we claimed just a fraction of the power you promised to your Church
then this world would be transformed, Lord.**

**Transform us first, Lord, that we might transform this world
through your love and your power.**

Amen

Join us for our Annual Gala on October 6

Please join the Franciscan Action Network for our annual gala on the evening of Thursday, October 6. Our theme will be "[Peacebuilding in the Spirit of Sts. Francis and Clare](#)," and our speakers and honorees will include **Margaret Carney**, **OSF** (Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities), **Gloria Purvis** (America Media), **Marie Dennis** (Pax Christi), and **Greg Jackson** (Community Justice Action Fund). [Click here for more details and bios of our speakers.](#)



We are delighted to host our gala **in person for the first time since 2019** and we hope that as many of you as possible will join us for **dinner and our program at St. Francis Hall, Washington, D.C. at 6:00pm.**

For those out of the D.C. area, we will **livestream the program from 7:30-8:30 pm ET (4:30-5:30pm PT).**

We hope you can join us either in person or online. [Get your tickets here.](#)

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 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.](#)

SHEMÁ: BIODIVERSITY, FRANCISCANS, AND THE SEASON OF CREATION
FOR A PRESENT THAT HAS A FUTURE

Listen to the Voice of Creation
Season of Creation 2022

FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK

• 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:

Rosa María Ruiz, a prominent environmentalist, defender of Madidi National Park in Bolivia.

Br. Erlison Campos, O.F.M., a Franciscan friar of the Custody of Saint Benedict of the Amazon, Brazil.

Paula J. Ehrlich, President & CEO of E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation/Co-Founder of Half-Earth Project.

Prayer Service Celebrating the Season of Creation

On **August 31 at 2pm ET (11am PT)**, the Missionary Society of St. Columban invites you to [join them for a prayer service](#) to celebrate the beginning of the Season of Creation.



From September 1 to October 4 each year, the Christian community celebrates the Season of Creation by praying and acting together to protect our common home. This online service will gather us together in prayer to prepare us for this special time of year. This prayer service will be conducted bilingually in Spanish and English. [Click here to register.](#)

What Would You Do? Saint Bakhita Youth Video Contest

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking are sponsoring a [video contest for high school students across the U.S. to respond to "What would you do?"](#) These videos will result in raising awareness, educating and empowering students on how to identify and prevent human trafficking. The video can be created by a group, individual or class and must be under 3 minutes in length. **Cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.**



The deadline for video submission is November 30, 2022. [Get more information here.](#) For further information contact theresa@sistersagainsttrafficking.org.

Afghan Adjustment Act Virtual Advocacy Days: Sept

6-8th

We hope that you will join the Evacuate Our Allies Coalition for [virtual Congressional advocacy days](#) Tuesday, September 6th through Thursday, September 8th to urge Congress to pass the Afghan Adjustment Act (AAA). **To join us and participate, please RSVP here TODAY.** The goal is to urge legislators to cosponsor and pass the Afghan Adjustment Act.

Participants will receive: virtual training on legislative meetings, sample talking points and asks, an advocacy and social media toolkit. Each meeting will include an accompanier (experienced legislative advocate) to provide support.

Virtual legislative visits will be scheduled between 12pm ET - 5pm ET (9am PT - 2pm PT) on Tuesday, September 6th and 9am ET - 5pm ET (6am PT - 2pm PT) on Wednesday, September 7th and Thursday, September 8th. If you're unable to join virtual meetings anywhere in those time blocks, please ensure you note this in the [RSVP form](#).



Pace e Bene Offers Virtual Pilgrimage to Assisi

Our friends at Pace e Bene are offering a six-week online series, Assisi Pilgrimage Online: [A Virtual Journey of Peace and Nonviolence In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare](#).

Join theologian and veteran activist Ken Butigan in an online pilgrimage of peace to Assisi, which begins on the Feast Day of St. Francis, October 4. Together we will virtually visit and reflect on the powerful sites where the lives of St Francis and St Clare were transformed—and where the nonviolent revolution they sparked began. [Click here to get more details and to register](#).



Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

“Would you rather have a friend who is always right, or who is in right relationship with you?” asks [Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM](#). God didn’t create us to always be correct, rather God simply desires that we remain *connected* - connected to the vine and to each other, the branches.

[Franciscan Justice Circles](#) provide a space where we are encouraged to connect with our sisters and brothers with such sincerity that we can’t help but walk with each other in actions that promote the well-being of all, especially “the least ones” – and challenge the structures that do not. Contributing to build the Beloved Community in our midst is going to take all of us. If you would like to join other local Franciscan hearts in taking actions grounded in our



connectedness, especially with those on the margin in some way, please [contact us](#) to see about joining a Franciscan Justice Circle!