

Go by another way

The secular world was finished with Christmas on December 26: untrimmed trees on curbs for mulch; carols silenced; gifts put away or returned. Back to business as usual. Not so in the liturgical world. Before we return to Ordinary Time, a great celebration of Mystery, Magi from a distant country guided by a star, gifts given and received, a dream warning and return journey home “by another way.”

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Whether the wondrous gospel story of [the Epiphany of the Lord](#) by Matthew is historically true or not, this Epiphany/Manifestation has significant theological and spiritual life lessons for us. That Jesus Christ became human for ALL humanity—east and west, north and south—is one such lesson. Revelation of Divinity in human flesh is a lesson. Another, I suggest, is that when we return to “ordinary time,” we must travel “by another way.” The violent way of war, regional conflicts, and gun killings is not the way of the Prince of Peace. Deep political divisions fed by lies and racial hatred are not the way of Wonder-Counselor. Closing our borders to asylum seekers is not the way of the Sun of Justice. Splits within the Church are not the way of Jesus the Christ.

Francis of Assisi discovered this truth in his militarized society which ignored suffering of poor and vulnerable people, and a Church with corrupted clergy, so he set out by a different way embracing poverty, humility, compassion, nonviolence, and love of all Creation centered in Jesus Christ. In 2023, we are called by Jesus, Francis, and Pope Francis to seek another way through the turbulence of our time and invite others to join us, guided by the lodestar of justice/peace-nonviolence/care for Mother Earth and vulnerable sisters and brothers.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OFS
FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action:

Reflect on Howard Thurman's prayer-poem below. Name how you will begin the work of Christmas 2022.

Suggested Petitions:

With deep gratitude for Emmanuel, God-With-Us, let us pray.
That we may acknowledge with gratitude the small epiphanies in our lives, let us pray.

Prayer/Poem: *The Work of Christmas* by Howard Thurman 1900-1981

**When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,**

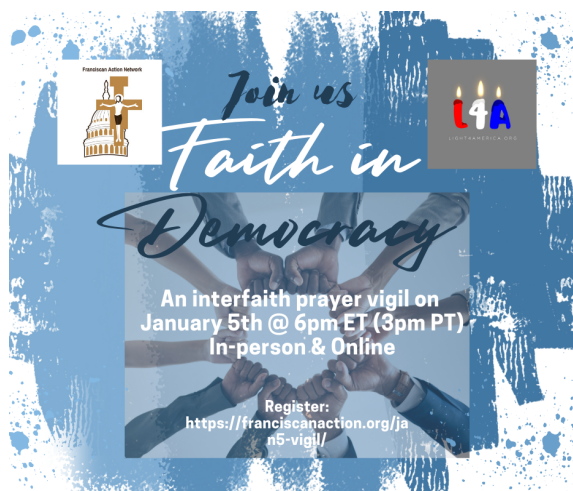
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers (and sisters)
To make music in the heart.

Amen

Join us January 5th to Pray for Peaceful Democracy

As Franciscans, we are called to act as peacemakers and bridge-builders. The events of January 6, 2021 continue to divide Americans and create concern about the health of our democracy as well as our ability to resolve political differences without violence.

On **January 5, 2023 at 6pm Eastern (3pm Pacific)**, Franciscan Action Network and our friends at [Light4America](#) will host an [interfaith prayer vigil](#) to commemorate the anniversary by reflecting together and praying for peace. The **event will be hybrid**, held in person on the Capitol grounds in Washington, D.C., and online for those across the country.



We are honored that two senior Catholic faith leaders—**Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.**, and **Sr. Carol Zinn, SSJ**, Executive Director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious—have agreed to lead our prayer vigil. They will be joined by **Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis** of the Poor People's Campaign, as well as other Jewish, Muslim and Christian faith leaders, with inspirational music provided by [Wordsmith](#).

Click here to [register to join us online or in-person](#).

Join us for a Film Screening of "The Letter"

As Franciscans, we are called to care for all of God's wondrous creation. Our Holy Father Pope Francis invites all people of good will to hear the cry of earth and the cry of the poor.

On **January 18, 2023 from 7p-9p Eastern Time / 4pm-6pm Pacific Time**, join us virtually to watch [The Letter](#), a new documentary about how spiritual values unite us in the face of the planetary emergency. After we watch the film, we'll discuss what we can do to join the movement of people who are building a better



future.

The Letter tells the story of a journey to Rome of frontline leaders to discuss the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* with Pope Francis. [Watch the trailer on YouTube here](#). The exclusive dialogue with the Pope, included in the film, offers a revealing insight into the personal history of Pope Francis and stories never seen since he became the Bishop of Rome. **Join us for the virtual screening and discussion by [registering on our website](#)**. It'll be a great way to see if you might like to organize your own local in-person screenings.

Solidarity Travel to Mexico and Guatemala

The [Quixote Center](#) and the [Franciscan Network on Migration](#) are planning a solidarity trip for February 27th-March 3rd 2023.

The trip offers an opportunity to visit migrant shelters in Tenosique, Mexico and El Ceibo, Guatemala to examine first-hand the impact of U.S. policy on Mexico's immigration enforcement on its southern border. [Find more details on this flier](#).

To apply for the trip, [click HERE](#). If you have any questions, please email alexandra@quixote.org



Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

The **Virtual Justice Circle** began as a way to involve those who have limited mobility to stay engaged in social justice issues and advocacy while building community and creating new relationships. Because we meet virtually, it is important for us to bond and strengthen our connections. Our Circle members are from across the United States and may never gather together in person, but we do gather virtually twice a month to learn, discuss, share, laugh, cry and build community in Franciscan joy.



The Virtual Circle has studied and shared on the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* and is currently studying the JustFaith program, *Just Engagement*, where we are learning and discussing faith-rooted organizing and advocacy.

Though few of us can get out to organize or advocate for a cause, we are still able to make phone calls, send letters and emails that can make a difference in our communities. We can also come together to fervently pray for the endeavors of the other [Franciscan Justice Circles](#) around the country. If you would like to connect with any of the geographic or virtual Circles, please [contact us](#).