

Tapping into the Joy of the Lord

Image by [Barbara Jackson](#) from [Pixabay](#)

The readings for the [3rd Sunday of Advent](#) always have one decidedly Franciscan virtue: JOY! Yes, happy Gaudete Sunday! As we light that lone pink candle, we recognize that the light is getting stronger and brighter. The Light of the World is preparing to enter into our reality, interrupting our mindless busyness. In those busy days, we tend to lose sight of the joy that is unfolding before us.



In these times of unrest and instability in our wounded world, joy is something that can elude us. We focus so much on what is going on around us that we miss what is happening inside of us. God came to be with us, among us, one of us. Francis of Assisi understood this all too well as he wanted to manifest the miracle as best as he could. So he created the first creche scene for all to experience that glorious event.

As people of faith, we are so blessed that we get to witness this miracle of an infant bursting into existence to save our suffering humanity, leading and guiding the way for all of us to be the hands and feet of the light and love of the One who came to save. That news alone should ignite great joy. Remember, joy is not the same as happiness. Happiness depends on what is happening and can shift and change from moment to moment. Joy, however, is that deep abiding presence of God's great love within. It does not shift or waver from moment to moment. It remains constant, if only we can recognize its presence.

Advent is the season of waiting and waiting patiently. The Letter from James admonishes us to be patient until the coming of the Lord. We must wait patiently without complaining or judging. This can be difficult when our waiting becomes impatient. Even John the Baptist doubted the Christ in his midst as he sent his disciples to ask some questions. Even John was impatient as his expectations about who the Messiah was did not match the deeds shown. Yes, the blind have their sight restored, the lame walk, and lepers are cleansed, but when will the Roman occupation be overturned? When will this oppression be lifted? God's people tend to forget how God saved their forefathers and foremothers before them from the harshness of oppression and slavery. Advent is the time to remember God's incredible power of love to serve and to save. When we can remember the true meaning of Advent, then we will also tap into the joy of the Lord as we await the coming of our King of Kings.

Carolyn Townes, OFS
FAN Supporter

Suggested Action:

Meditate in front of the creche this week. Ask the Baby Jesus to help you patiently wait and remind you of God's ever-present joy.

Suggested Petitions:

For all those who feel alone during the holiday season. We pray...

For all those who lack the joy which comes from God's consistent love. We pray...

Prayer:

Where there is sadness, let me bring joy!

Gracious God, as we await the coming of your Son, our Lord and Savior,

Help us to recognize the joy that is right before us in our everyday lives.

Grant us the grace to spread joy to all peoples, especially the hurting and forgotten.

Renew our spirits that joy will constantly bubble up in our hearts this season.

We ask this through Christ our Savior who is here now and here to come.

Amen.

Join our Final Webinar of the Series on Confronting Environmental Racism

This **Thursday, December 8 at 4pm ET / 12pm PT**, we will host the final webinar of our series on [Confronting Environmental Racism](#). We will welcome several experienced activists who will prepare us to take action with several advocacy options.

- **Rev. Lennox Yearwood** is a minister and community activist and serves as president of the Hip Hop Caucus, which developed the video series we have showcased with these webinars.
- **Sr. Nora Nash, OSF** is a Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia, served as her congregation's Director of Corporate Social Responsibility and worked with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility.
- **Clarence Edwards** is the Legislative Director for Sustainable Energy and the Environment for Friends Committee on National Legislation.

We hope you will join us for this important final gathering to learn ways to take action for environmental justice. [Click here to register](#) if you have not already done so.



The Franciscan Action Network, the Franciscan Federation & the Franciscan Friars (OFM) US-6 JPIC Working Group bring you:

Confronting Environmental Racism

It's time for us to stand with communities on the frontlines of environmental racism.

The centerpiece of our series is three short documentaries, "Big Oil's Last Lifeline," produced by Hip Hop Caucus. Each of four sessions will be one-hour beginning at 4 pm Eastern / 1 pm Pacific.

Learn more & register to attend at www.FranciscanAction.org

Action on Preventing Gun Violence

FAN staff and members will participate in the 10th Annual [National Vigil for All Victims of Gun Violence](#) on **Wednesday, December 7, 7-9 pm** in Washington, D.C. If you are in the area and would like to meet up, [please contact us](#). Check [here](#) for a vigil in your state.



PETITION

SENATORS:

PASS THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN NOW!

SIGNED:

We join a renewed call for an assault weapons ban and [urge our network nationwide to contact your Member of Congress](#) and demand action.

The emotional toll of mass shooting tragedies never seems to lead to action. The frustration over this sad fact is compounded when [data clearly shows](#) the effect the Assault Weapons Ban of 1994 (allowed to expire in September 2004) had on cities across America which saw dramatic drops in these weapons being seized at crime scenes:

Milwaukee, a 20% drop.
Miami, a 32% drop.
Anchorage, a 40% drop.
Boston, a 64% drop.

Find more data on assault weapons from [Everytown for Gun Safety](#).

Faithful Day of Action Vigil for Immigrant Protections

Control of the US House of Representatives will switch hands in January and that means Democrats will be rushing to pass priority legislation in the next month. Advocates want to make sure citizenship for DACA recipients, TPS holders and undocumented immigrants is at the top of their list.

FAN staff and members will join other people of faith at a [Faithful Day of Action Vigil](#) on **Tuesday, Dec. 6 from 3p-10p** to demand urgent action on permanent protections for immigrant communities, including DACA, TPS and those who are undocumented. Each group will take a 1-2 hour shift at the Capitol praying, singing, chanting and sharing stories from DACA and TPS recipients. [Sign up to join us here](#).



Support FAN with a Year-End Donation

As we begin the last month of 2022, we take a moment to look back with a grateful eye on what you, our network, has done over the past year. We are honored to continue bringing your Franciscan-hearted voice to policy advocacy, education, and organization of Franciscan Justice Circles.

We hope you consider FAN your humble servant, working to make explicit our shared Franciscan values in Washington D.C. and around the country. It takes a lot of resources and we urge you, if you haven't had the chance, to [make a year-end donation](#). It is through your generous support that we are able to grow and find new ways to connect our Franciscan charism to our country's policies. [Thank you for your generosity](#).



Please note: Franciscan Action Network's new mailing address is 1400 Quincy Street

NE, Washington, DC 20017.

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Have you been looking for a way to join with others in your local area who care about taking action related to promoting peace, justice and God's creation, especially with Franciscan values? FAN is supporting the formation of local affinity groups called Franciscan Justice Circles and we would love to connect you to a group in your area. Please watch our video [*Circles of Change: Franciscan Justice Circles*](#) to learn more!



Upcoming FJC meetings this week:

Mid-Hudson Valley Circle: Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 12pm Eastern (zoom)

Kansas Circle: Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 7pm Central (zoom)

St. Bonaventure University Circle: Wednesday, Dec. 7 at 12:30pm Eastern (In person)

Eastern Wisconsin Circle: Thursday, Dec. 8 at 5pm Central (zoom)

Washington DC Area: Saturday, Dec. 10 at 10am (In person)

Please [contact us](#) to get connected to these or any other Circles.