

Publication Date: December 12, 2022

Reflection Date: December 18, 2022 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

“Do not be afraid!”

[“Anxiety of Joseph” courtesy of Brooklyn Museum](#)

The [Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Advent](#) centers on Joseph and his encounter with an angel, which changed his life and the decision to quietly divorce Mary. Joseph must have been in great stress over how something natural could be entwined with the Work of God.



A few years ago the Brooklyn Museum had a wonderful exhibit of the life of Christ. The pieces were beautiful and very moving, but none more than a work that has direct bearing on this Gospel story. It was entitled “The Anxiety of Joseph.” We may not think that of St. Joseph, but it does speak to us about how he is more like us than we realize. He is without a doubt a man of our age of anxiety.

Many of us in these past few years have had to face a confusing world with uncertainty, doubt, and anxiety and fear. But in the middle of anxiety comes a certainty when we take time to listen to God and let the Holy Spirit work in our lives.

The Angel said to Joseph and says to us, “Do not be afraid. God is with us!”

Do not be afraid of anything because God is in control and has a plan!

We at FAN live and work with those words as our cornerstone to continue to share the good news, speak truth to power and advocate for those who are afraid to speak or fear being discovered and having their lives changed.

Please pray that more will join us in this work by taking action and bringing the heart of St. Francis and St. Clare to Washington and local political bodies.

Br. Paul Crawford, OFM Cap.
FAN Board President

Suggested Action:

Remember that St. Joseph faced worries about the security of his young family and had to migrate with them to avoid violence. Take a look at the many actions related to migrants below in this newsletter and support at least one of them.

Suggested Petitions:

For God’s help so that our actions may be motivated by faith and love, not fear, we pray...

For migrants and all who are forced to make dramatic life changes due to insecurity, hunger, or natural disasters, we pray...

Prayer

Lord, you care for and love each and every human being on the planet—past, present, and future.

It seems as if I can hardly spare a few moments of attention to look up from whatever pressing matter is on my screen so that I might see what's really happening around me.

Guide me to the places where the pain is, where I can be a part of healing those hurts.

Or, at the very least, being compassionately present with those who are suffering alone.

Amen.

FAN Joins Haitian Groups in Celebrating the Extension and Redesignation of TPS for Haiti

On December 5, the U.S. administration extended Temporary Protected Status, or TPS, for Haitian nationals currently in the United States. Following the lead of Black immigrant advocates, Franciscan Action Network was among more than 420 organizations that signed a [letter](#) to the administration last month calling for this step.

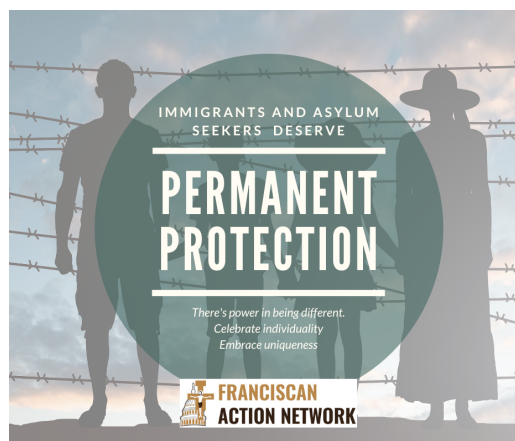


Updates on Immigration, Protecting Dreamers and Asylum Seekers

As we prepare for a new Congress in early January, several efforts are underway to protect our immigrant sisters and brothers as well as those seeking asylum. Please take action where you can.

Demand a pathway to citizenship: Contact your members of Congress via [telephone](#) or [email](#) and ask them to return to the negotiating table and pass legislation to provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants this year.

Reject efforts to extend Title 42: [Contact your members of Congress](#) and urge them to reject any congressional efforts to extend or codify Title 42 or



otherwise dismantle our asylum system.

Along the Asylum Journey: On Wednesday, December 14 at 8pm ET / 5pm PT join the Interfaith Immigration Coalition for a [teach-in webinar](#) about the harm caused by Title 42 and the lack of real solutions. (Offered in English with Spanish interpretation.) [Register here](#).

The Migration Outlook for the Next Congress: On Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 2pm ET / 11am PT, Justice for Immigrants will host this webinar to learn more about the makeup of the next Congress and what we might expect for the migrant and refugee communities we support. [Register 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.

What is COP15 and Why is it Important?

Image by [Penelope](#) from [Pixabay](#)

This month, from December 5-18, a United Nations Biodiversity Summit, known as COP 15, is being held in Montreal, Canada. The term biodiversity refers to plants, animals, fungi and other microorganisms that we do not usually see with our naked eye. It is the variety of life on Earth, from the tiniest bacteria to the largest mammals and it is what provides our food, water and air. *Biodiversity loss ranks as one of the biggest threats facing humanity.* At COP 15, government leaders and climate justice groups will consider a once-in-a-decade agreement that establishes goals for how the countries of the world should protect biodiversity and ecosystems (related to but separate from climate change, which was addressed last month in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt).



Pope Francis highlights biodiversity in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. "Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity" (LS 33).

To understand the importance of COP 15 and see a short video, *No More Biodiversity Collapse*, visit the [Laudato Si' Movement](#).

Save the Date: 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.

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

The Mid-Hudson FJC members have been active this fall in promoting an awareness of Care for Creation through a contemplative labyrinth walk at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie. Several petitions have been circulated and signed on topics ranging from the war in Ukraine and nuclear disarmament, workplace protections for pregnant workers, abolition of the death penalty, protections for immigrants, etc. Services which focused on Christian unity and interfaith collaboration were held in Woodstock (Nov. 17) and Poughkeepsie (Dec. 1).

Hudson Valley Pax Christi and the Secular Franciscans of New Paltz are planning a local in-person screening/discussion of the film "The Letter" early in 2023 and are looking for multi-generational participation. Following up on food baskets distributed at Thanksgiving, donations of food and household items/clothing will be distributed to needy families at Christmastime in various communities in the Mid-Hudson Valley. Peace and joy to all!

For information about a Circle meeting near you or about starting an FJC, [contact us](#).

