



Seeing Anew with the Eyes of the Heart (Intro email message)

Hi, this is Michele Dunne, executive director of Franciscan Action Network. As my colleagues and I pondered what special work we wanted to undertake for Lent this year, the word “heart” kept popping up.

We had a wonderful staff retreat in January with Pax Christi Teacher of Peace Marie Dennis, who urged us to turn our hearts towards nonviolence. We screened the film, “The Letter,” and were touched by Pope Francis saying at one point that he sometimes switches into Spanish because “my heart is in Spanish.”

We recalled how Pope Francis often speaks of the need to see “with the heart,” and how conversion of the heart and seeing things anew are also important themes in the writings of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.

Lent is a good time to remember that Franciscans are called to a whole life of daily conversion, so at FAN we decided to focus this Lenten Season on **conversion** of the heart, **seeing** anew with our converted hearts, and then **acting** from our hearts.

Each Wednesday during Lent you will receive an email like this one, but with a focus on one specific issue: **gun violence, poverty, migration, racism, climate, and war**—difficult issues on which I know my heart needs conversion and perhaps yours does too.

The email will provide texts from the Gospel, St Francis, or other sources about seeing with the heart, and will feature an inspirational story about someone acting from the heart on that issue.

There will also be reflection questions, prayers, and a chance to share your thoughts and your stories. And because we are Franciscan ACTION Network, we will give you ideas for taking action on that issue.

Let's take this Lenten journey together to **convert** our hearts towards God, **see** difficult issues anew with the eyes of the heart, and **act** from the heart.

I can't wait to hear how it goes for you and to share how it goes for me. May the Lord give you peace on this Ash Wednesday, throughout Lent, and always!