

Publication Date: March 13, 2023

Reflection Date: March 19, 2022 - The Fourth Sunday of Lent

Seeing into Hearts Creates New Vision

Image by [John Hain](#) from [Pixabay](#)

In the readings for this [Fourth Sunday of Lent](#) we are challenged to see as Jesus sees – into the heart – and we are challenged to live in the light.

In the first reading in which God passes over Saul and Jesse's seven sons and chooses David (Jesse's youngest son), God does so because God sees the potential within David's heart. In the second reading, Paul lets the people know that it is time to awake from the darkness and live in the light.



In the Gospel, Jesus reveals himself as the “light of the world” by healing the blind man. When questioned by the Pharisees, Jesus answered, *“Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him. We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”*

Jesus sees into the blind man's heart, knows his faith, and heals him despite the Pharisee's objection that this should not be done on the Sabbath. No matter how hard the Pharisees try they cannot discredit Jesus in the eyes and heart of the healed man. The young man replies to their questions that the man who healed him is Jesus and that “He is a prophet.”

The Pharisees cannot see the light, but the man healed can see the light. The man healed moves from physical to spiritual sight. His eyes were opened to the goodness of God when Jesus saw into his heart and chose to reveal himself as the “Son of Man.”

When Jesus looks into our hearts, does he see the light of love? Do we recognize Jesus when he is revealed to us during the day? I heard a speaker once say we have seven experiences of God a day, but we miss most of them. During this Lenten season, the Franciscan Action Network is working to help us open our hearts with their [Seeing Anew with Eyes of the Heart](#) email campaign. Engage with others through the reflections and share how your heart is being opened to God. Like the once-blind man in the gospel, may our eyes and hearts be open and receptive!

Sr. Marge Wissman, OSF
Franciscan Sisters of Oldenburg

Suggested Action:

Consider one of the stories presented so far in [Seeing Anew with Eyes of the Heart](#). Ask yourself how God is trying to open your heart this Lent?

Suggested Petitions:

For all of us who are blind to the plight of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. May our eyes be opened to their stories and needs. We pray...
May we trust in the Lord to open our hearts to see as God sees. We pray...

Prayer for a New Vision (Adapted)

Refresh my soul I pray, and give me a new vision, so that I may live my life in a manner that is worthy of You. Let me glimpse Your love and beauty, and help me to be willing to permit You to search deep into the inner recesses of my heart, so that I may be rid of anything and everything that could hinder the path along which You would have me go.

Give me a vision of the person You want me to be, and guide me along the way that You would have me to walk. Align my will to Your will so that the vision that is being nurtured deep in my heart, may reflect Your will and blossom into fruit of righteousness in my life.

Amen

Spots are still Available for our Assisi Pilgrimage

There are still several slots available for **FAN's first-ever Peace & Justice Pilgrimage to Assisi, Italy, in June 2024**, cosponsored by Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service. Led by Friar Michael Lasky, OFM Conv. and Dr. Ken Butigan, this one-week pilgrimage will be a unique opportunity to pray, study the lives of St. Francis and St. Clare, build community, and deepen our commitment to work for justice, peace, and Gospel nonviolence.



Details, tentative schedule, pricing, and application are on our [website](#). **Please apply soon if you are interested.**

Submit a Comment on the Asylum Ban

Please see resources below to become informed on the U.S. Administration's proposal to severely limit access to asylum at the southern border. FAN joins advocates nationwide in urging our network to [submit a public comment](#) on this proposed ban.

If you'd like to learn more, several informational webinars are coming up:

1. CLINIC is hosting a [free webinar](#) tomorrow, **March 14 at 2pm ET** which will explain how this proposed rule is essentially an asylum and entry ban with limited exceptions.



2. Church & Society of the United Methodist Church will host "[In Defense of Asylum](#)" on **March 20 at 3pm ET** with impacted asylum seekers from the border.

If you have not yet submitted a comment, [click here to access talking points and resources](#) from immigration experts to help in composing a unique comment. **Comments are due by March 27.**

Take Action Against Family Detention

The U.S. Administration is [reportedly](#) considering reinstating family detention as a strategy to deter migrants from seeking refuge. This practice has been proven inhumane, ineffective and trauma-inducing for young children. Migrants seeking refuge deserve protection and opportunities.

Take action today by [sending a message to the Biden Administration](#) opposing the implementation of family detention.



Catholic Climate Covenant's Earth Day Program

If you are looking for resources to help your parish or community commemorate Earth Day or the anniversary of Laudato Si', the Catholic Climate Covenant has just released their [2023 Earth Day Program](#).

The approximately one-hour interactive program (with prayers, readings, discussion questions, and practical activities) offers a respite from the busyness of life and inspires all to live a fuller life with less. Download the 2023 Earth Day Program by [filling out this form](#).



Franciscan Justice Circles Updates

Upcoming Circle meetings this week:

Richmond, VA-area FJC meets Mond. March 13 at 7pm Eastern over zoom

Saint Bonaventure-Olean, NY FJC meets Tues. March 14 at 11:15 am Eastern **in person**

DE-Valley FJC meets Tues. March 14 at 7pm Eastern over zoom

Virtual FJC meets Thur. March 16 at 2pm Eastern over zoom

Rochester, NY FJC meets Thur. March 16 at 3:30pm Eastern over zoom

E. Wisconsin FJC meets Thur. March 16 at 3:30pm Central over zoom

Driftless Region FJC (Wisconsin and Minnesota) will have a meeting next Monday, March 20th at 6:30 pm CST. They will be discussing the proposed Farm Bill which relates to environmental justice, and agricultural sustainability.

If you'd like to join any Circle meeting, please [contact FAN staff](#) to get connected.

Save the Date



Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference



Generations advocating together for creation and the excluded,
“for we know that things can change”
(Laudato Si’ par. 13)



IN PERSON: OCTOBER 13-16, 2023
WASHINGTON, DC

VIRTUAL OPTION: OCTOBER 14, 2023



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