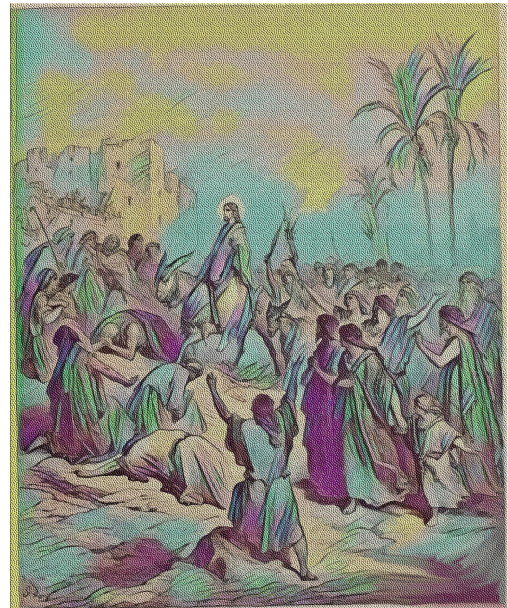


Two Very Different Processions

Image by [Jo Justino](#) from [Pixabay](#)

The [Gospel reading on Palm Sunday](#) is a familiar story. Jesus rides into occupied Jerusalem for Passover on a donkey, the animal we refer to as an ass. People cheer him and wave palm fronds and branches in his honor, shouting 'Hosanna to the son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.' In some ways Jesus is like a king entering the city, but this "king" identifies with those whose lives are suppressed by the Roman military and religious leaders.



Less well-known is the historical fact that a Roman imperial procession is also entering Jerusalem on Passover from the other side of the city. Each year, the Roman governor of Judea rode to Jerusalem in order to be present for Passover, the most politically volatile of the annual Jewish festivals. With the governor came soldiers and cavalry to quell any protests that might arise.

Thus, two very different processions enter Jerusalem simultaneously. They proclaim contrasting visions of how the world could be: a world of hierarchy, domination and exploitation or a world of justice, nonviolence and peace. The Roman procession is about the power of an empire; the purpose is to intimidate and keep under control. What is Jesus' procession about?

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is about sight to the blind, liberty to captives, good news for the poor. Jesus is clear: 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:40). What does that mean for us? We are called to advocate for the immigrants who seek asylum, the unhoused who long for permanent shelter, and our Sister, Mother Earth who cries out for justice.

The alternative reality that Jesus raises on Palm Sunday is as relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago. Like Jesus, we must bring about an inclusive community where we love our enemies as well as our friends, where we build peace rooted in justice. Palm Sunday raises the question: are we about power and conflict and maintaining privilege or are we about equality and respect and justice?

[Nigerian Bishop Emmanuel Badejo](#) speaks to this central question. He challenges us to "ride the colt of courage at all times, wearing the garment of truth and justice, and speaking the truth to all those who would suppress it."

Sr. Louise Lears, SC
Associate on Creation

Suggested Actions:

Reflect on the humble procession of Jesus into Jerusalem. In what ways are you called to imitate his action?

Suggested Petitions:

Lord, you set your face towards Jerusalem and walked alongside those who suffer.

May we too walk the way of the cross.

Lord, you entered Jerusalem with peace in your heart. May we too walk the way of the cross.

Prayer ([adapted](#))

**Give us the strength it takes
to listen rather than to judge,
to trust rather than to fear,
to try again and again
to make peace even when peace eludes us.
We ask, O God, for the grace
to be our best selves.
We ask for the vision
to be builders of the human community
rather than its destroyers.
We ask for the humility as a people
to understand the fears and hopes of other peoples.
We ask for the love it takes
to bequeath to the children of the world
more than the failures of our own making.**

Amen

Online Lenten retreat: “I was a stranger and you invited me”

On **Thursday, March 30, 2023 from 9am - 10:30am ET (6am - 7:30am PT)**, Franciscans International will host a virtual Lenten retreat titled “[I was a stranger and you invited me](#),” to reflect on the Franciscan mission of care for migrants and refugees. Sisters and Brothers working at the U.S./ Mexico border and representatives of the Franciscan family at the United Nations will guide the discussion. [Click here to register](#).



Help FAN Find an Associate for Campaigns

Franciscan Action Network is seeking an [Associate for Campaigns](#). This entry level, full-time staff position,

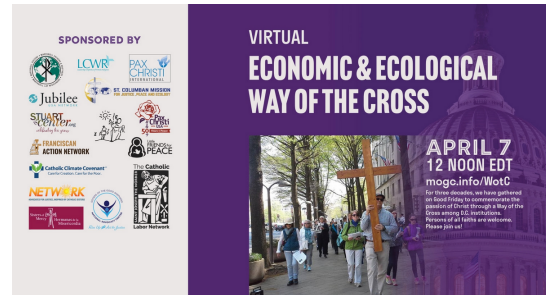


located in Washington DC, is open immediately. The right candidate will work with us to expand, support, and mobilize FAN's network of Franciscan-hearted advocates. The position offers an outstanding opportunity to learn about and be mentored in the field of faith-based advocacy.

Learn more about the position and how to apply by [clicking here](#). Please circulate to possible applicants!

Join us at Virtual Way of the Cross for Economic and Ecological Justice

FAN is cosponsoring the [Virtual Way of the Cross for Economic and Ecological Justice](#) on **Good Friday, April 7, at 12pm ET (9am PT)**. The Economic and Ecological Way of the Cross is a special observance of Christ's passion and an opportunity to reflect on the ways we have broken our covenant with God at the expense of other persons and creation. At each station, focus is directed to a different economic or ecological challenge or sign of hope for our times. FAN staff will be participating in person and reading one station.



[Click here to register via Zoom](#). The presentation will also be streamed live on [Maryknoll's YouTube page](#).

Clinton Franciscan Sisters Launch Podcast

The Franciscan Peace Center, a ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis Clinton, Iowa, recently launched [The "Center" Podcast](#). Hosted by Franciscan Peace Center's Director of Programming, Marsha Thrall, the conversations amplify the Sisters of St. Francis's mission of peacemaking and active nonviolence and the impact of these transformative practices in everyday life. This year's episodes will focus on the experiences of the Sisters that continue to lead them to a deeper commitment to active nonviolence as well as topics related to their corporate stands, including basic human rights and income inequality, care of creation, human trafficking, immigration reform, nuclear weapons, and the abolition of the death penalty. Find The "Center" Podcast on the [Clinton Sisters' website](#) or on major podcast platforms including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts.



Farmworker Awareness Week March 25-31

This week marks National Farmworker Awareness Week to honor the daily contributions that farmworkers and their families make to our food system. The Agriculture sector has long been excluded from legislation that protects workers. The hard work, low wages,



high rates of workplace injury and illness, and workplace conditions aggravated by global warming result in migrant families making up the bulk of the agriculture workforce.

The National Farm Worker Ministry will host a webinar on the [Introduction of Child Labor in Agriculture](#) on **Tuesday, March 28 at 2pm ET (11am PT)**. [Click here for more information and to register](#). The webinar will be offered in English and Spanish.

Stop Trafficking Newsletter

This month's *Stop Trafficking* Newsletter focuses on the nexus between homelessness and human trafficking. In a typical year 4.2 million young people experience homelessness in the United States. Housing instability makes individuals, families, and entire communities vulnerable to exploitation, including an increased risk of human trafficking.



[Please click here](#) to access the March newsletter and find past issues on [FAN's website](#).

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Inspired through prayer, reading and reflection together, the **Connecticut - Rhode Island FJC** will be deepening their focus on God's creation and the excluded by reading *Laudato Si'* together, beginning on Thursday, April 27 at 7pm. Some members are helping to organize screenings of [The Letter film](#) locally in Connecticut. We continue to challenge ourselves to respond with what is ours to do for the good of our common home and family of creation. If you'd like to join, please [contact FAN staff](#).

Upcoming [Franciscan Justice Circle](#) meetings this week:

Georgia FJC - Tuesday, March 28 at 2pm via zoom

Cleveland-area FJC - Tuesday, March 28 at 7pm via zoom

Virtual FJC (non-geographic) - Thursday, March 30 at 2pm Eastern / 11am Pacific via zoom

Washington DC-area FJC - Saturday, April 1 at 10 am in person

If you'd like to participate in any of these meetings or want to learn more, please [contact us](#)!

