

## Easter People Sing Alleluia in Darkness

Scripture [readings for Easter](#) overflow with exuberant praise, joy, and hope. We celebrate not only Christ's Resurrection but our own. Because he has rolled back the stone and broken the bonds of death, so will we if we believe in the promise, if we live as Easter people. "We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!" is a heart-felt cry attributed to St. Augustine.



Our faith compels us to sing "Alleluia" even in dark times—personal, communal, or global. Twenty years ago, my younger sister died of lung cancer a few days before Easter. On the saddest day of my life, Alleluia stuck in my throat, but not quite in my heart. "He is risen!" offered assurance that my sister's life was not ended, but transformed. She was free from suffering, singing her Alleluia in her God's loving embrace.

Through the centuries, Christians in war ravaged countries, Christians oppressed by a dictator or in refugee camps or in prisons have sung their Easter Alleluia even in pain and through tears, confirming their belief in light beyond darkness, in life after death. The glorious "Exultet," sung during the Easter Vigil is sung in darkness, except for the light of the Easter candle, symbol of Christ. Each stanza recounting the delivery of the Jewish people from slavery, up to Christ rising from the dead, begins "This is the night."

The gospel narrative of Mary of Magdala arriving at the tomb notes that it was "early in the morning, while it was still dark." Then everything changes. Here is the great Christian paradox, that life emerges from death, darkness gives way to light, hope prevails over despair. Easter people don't settle for "happiness" as defined by the world, but seek the deep joy that is found by following Jesus up to Jerusalem, to be betrayed, denied, forced to carry a cross, executed and buried—and to rise from the dead as he had promised. Easter people sing Alleluia even when the song sticks in our throats.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF  
Associate Director

### Suggested Action:

Sit in darkness, holding in your hands your troubles and fears, and wait for dawn to fill the sky, or light a candle, and hear the Risen Christ say "Do not be afraid." Sing Alleluia!

### Suggested Petitions:

That we may have the faith and courage to be Easter people, singing Alleluia, let us pray. . .  
That love will compel us to live a life of service, as Pope Francis encourages us, let us pray. . .

**Prayer:** [Pope Francis](#)

**“Sing to the Lord a new song” (Ps. 95:1)**

**What is this new song?**

**It does not consist of words, it is not a melody, it is the song of your life,  
it is allowing our life to be identified with that of Jesus.**

**It is sharing his sentiments, his thoughts, his actions.**

**And the life of Jesus is a life for others.**

**It is a life of service.**

**Amen**

## Read Lenten Reflections from our Network

This Wednesday will be the final email of our Lenten series on [“Seeing Anew with the Eyes of the Heart.”](#) We hope that spending this time learning to see key issues including creation, gun violence, migration, poverty, racism, and war (this week) with converted hearts will help all of us act authentically from the heart. We have been thrilled by the profound, beautiful reflections that so many of you have submitted! [Please read them here.](#)



## Become a Sustainer of FAN

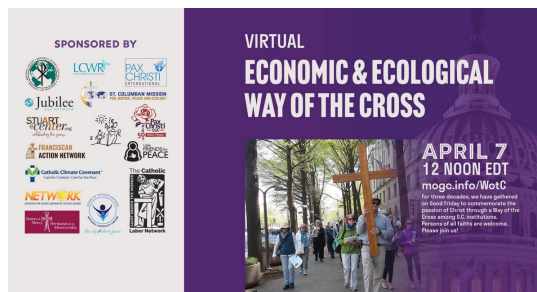
Last week, FAN began a campaign seeking partnership from you to support our work on an ongoing basis as sustaining donors. Please view this [message from Board Member Fr. Paul Lininger, OFM Conv](#) and consider joining our Community of Franciscan Hearts as part of your Lenten Almsgiving.



**Thank you so much for being a valued member of our network!**

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

FAN is cosponsoring the annual [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 reading one station.



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

## Repudiation of Doctrine of Discovery

*Image courtesy of John Locher/The Associated Press*

Following decades of demands from Indigenous people and advocates in religious communities, including many Franciscans, the Vatican last week [formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery](#).



The Doctrine of Discovery originated in 15th-century papal bulls and was used to legitimize the colonial-era seizure of Indigenous lands all over the world. The removal of tribes from their ancestral lands, as well as forced assimilation and abuse of Indigenous children at government sponsored [boarding schools](#) (some of them Catholic-run), are serious abuses that must be acknowledged for the profound harms they inflicted on Indigenous peoples.

FAN joins many others in expressing gratitude to Pope Francis for this important step in acknowledging harms from the past that continue to have consequences for current generations of Indigenous People.

## Help FAN Find an Associate for Campaigns

Franciscan Action Network is continuing to accept applications for 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!**



## Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

If you would like to connect with any of the upcoming Franciscan Justice Circle meetings this week, please [contact FAN staff](#).

**Mid-Hudson Valley FJC** - Tuesday, April 4 at 12:00 pm Eastern over zoom

**Central Indiana FJC** - Thursday, April 6 at 1:30 pm Eastern over zoom



