

## Faith and Works

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

Our faith can and must inspire us to do works every bit as great as Jesus did. This week's readings for the [Fifth Sunday of Easter](#) are loaded with clear guidance on how we can live a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life. I will focus on John 14:9 where Jesus says:

*How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works.*



Clearly, it appears, at least here, that works and belief go hand in hand. No belief, no works. No works, no confirmation of belief. What does that mean for us in our everyday life? This is a confirmation of what we all know but constantly need a reminder of: we must pray AND work. John is clearly telling us that the works Christ did ARE his message. Yes, words help, but more powerful were, and are, his deeds. Is it possible that this famous quote attributed to St. Francis comes from this part of John?

"Preach the Gospel at all times; when necessary, use words."

Our belief is clear: to be a Christian is to walk in Christ's footsteps. Every saint, including the first to be martyred, St. Stephen had the courage to walk in Christ's footsteps towards the cross. That takes a faith that is courageous. It means that fear cannot control our lives. It means that conforming completely to our secular world and being seen as 'normal' is not our path. How do we walk that path of martyrdom? By allowing our belief in Christ to be so powerful that we do good works that demonstrate to any person the power of God. I leave you with the prayer listed below as you go into the world to build God's kingdom.

Gordon Kubanek, P.Eng.  
Third Order Franciscan & Writer

### **Suggested Action:**

Choose a simple action to take this week that supports your beliefs. For example, contact your member of Congress about creation care, gun safety, or immigration.

### **Suggested Petitions:**

For the courage to walk in Christ's footsteps, we pray...

For the strength to do the work which our faith demands, we pray...

Prayer from [Bishop Charles Lewis Slattery \(1867-1930\)](#)

Almighty God, we thank Thee for the job of this day.  
May we find gladness in all its toil and difficulty,  
its pleasure and success, and even in its failure and sorrow.  
We would look always away from ourselves,  
and behold the glory and the need of the world  
that we may have the will and the strength to bring  
the gift of gladness to others; that with them we stand to bear  
the burden and heat of the day and offer Thee the praise of work well done.

Amen.

## Film Screening: The Ants & The Grasshoppers

Please join FAN this Wednesday May 3, 4-6pm Eastern (1-3pm Pacific) for a screening of "[The Ants & The Grasshopper](#)," followed by a discussion of action we might take regarding the Farm Bill 2023. The film is a documentary ten years in the making that weaves together the urgent themes of climate change, gender and racial inequality, the gaps between the rich and the poor, and the ideas that farmers and others have generated in order to care for our Sister, Mother Earth.



Immediately following the film, we will host a discussion with **Madison Mayhew**, Congregational Organizer and Federal Policy Advocate at Interfaith Power and Light. Madison will discuss ways to respond to the documentary's message through advocacy around the Farm Bill.

**We are using a new technology for this webinar.** To [register](#) click on "Save my Spot," fill out the form with your email and name, create a password, and on the final screen click "Confirm & Join." You will be emailed a confirmation and a reminder 10 minutes before the event.

## Save the Date: Root Causes of Migration Webinar

FAN is pleased to join Franciscan Network for Migrants in presenting a webinar on [Root Causes of Migration](#) **Wednesday May 17 at 4pm ET (1pm PT)**. There will be simultaneous translation between English and Spanish.

Speakers will include an expert on the history of migration from a global perspective, an impacted person, and a Salvadoran friar providing support at the border.

[Register to attend by clicking here.](#)

ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATION	
<b>WEBINAR</b> <b>WED MAY 17, 2023</b> <b>@ 4PM ET (1PM PT)</b>	
LEARN ABOUT THE ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATION GLOBALLY AS WELL AS TO THE U.S. SOUTHERN BORDER. WE WILL HEAR FROM AN EXPERT, AN IMPACTED PERSON AND A FRANCISCAN PROVIDING SUPPORT.	
ENGLISH/SPANISH LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION WILL BE AVAILABLE	
RSVP: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/3NJ5WMZ6">HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/3NJ5WMZ6</a>	
	<a href="http://WWW.FRANCISCANACTION.ORG">WWW.FRANCISCANACTION.ORG</a>
	



## Fairness to Freedom Act Introduced

Sens. Gillibrand and Booker as well as Reps. Torres, Jayapal, and Meng recently introduced the [Fairness to Freedom Act](#), which would establish a right to federally-funded legal advice for immigrants facing removal who cannot afford counsel.

This bill is supported by 173 organizations and is part of the [Fairness to Freedom: Campaign for Universal Representation](#). The bill also establishes the Office of Immigration Representation to oversee a new national system of representation and work with existing state and locally funded removal defense programs.

Please reach out to your Congressional members and ask them to cosponsor the Fairness to Freedom Act using [this template email language](#).



## Efforts for Gun Safety Moving at State Levels

Last week saw some victories for gun safety at state levels.

- Washington passed a state-wide [ban of assault style weapons](#), which will prohibit the manufacture, importation, distribution and sale of the weapons.
- The Pennsylvania House Judiciary [passed a package of gun safety bills](#) that include reporting of theft or loss of firearms, keeping guns secure around children, regulating background checks, and repealing provisions relating to the sale or transfer of firearms, among other regulations.



This type of movement is only possible when enough people at the grassroots advocate for it. For example, Secular Franciscan George Foster from Huntington, Indiana let us know he recently wrote about regulating military-style assault weapons in a [Letter to the Editor](#) published in a local newspaper, the Herald-Press. During a visit with a congressional aide, he shared the letter in a dialogue exploring what sort of gun safety measures the legislator might support.

## FAN Attends Earth Day Rally in D.C.

On Saturday, April 22, FAN staff and members of the Washington, DC Area Franciscan Justice Circle joined [Earth Day DC](#) in a youth-led rally and march to the White House to demand that President Biden take bold action to follow through on his promises to end the era of fossil fuels.

Please check out the [FAN Shows Up](#) page to see all



the recent events in which we have participated.

## Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

On Earth Day, April 22, 2023, FAN organized an intergenerational group of 14 people for a Laudato Si' riverwalk at the Milwaukee River. A member of the Eastern Wisconsin Franciscan Justice Circle led the group on a walk with a particularly Franciscan perspective that highlighted sister water, brother earth and the unhoused individuals who lived along the riverbank in their beauty and in their struggle. The group included Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity from Manitowoc, a Capuchin friar and three St. Lawrence Seminary Juniors who had traveled from Mount Calvary, a senior from St. Anthony High School, several local Secular Franciscans, and a member of FAN staff.



From the river, the group moved indoors to a nearby church hall to continue in fraternal dialogue and reflection, sharing a meal and nurturing the new friendships made, helping to empower us in our actions that respond to the cries of our sister Mother Earth and the cries of those in poverty. It was a moving and enriching encounter, one that gave those present a closer glimpse into the deep harm caused to creation by human activity, the beauty in building authentic relationships with many different people in a community and the special role Franciscan hearts have to play in protecting our one common home and walking alongside those who are commonly excluded.