

Love is as Love Does

In the reading from the Gospel according to John for the [sixth Sunday of Easter](#), Jesus tells us what loving him consists of, saying it two different ways in case we should be in doubt: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” and “whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me.” For me, this passage recalls the old aphorism, “love is as love does.”



So, if I want to “do” my love for Jesus, what are his commandments I need to keep? In the very same passage from John’s Gospel, Jesus’s command is delivered twice: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you,” and again, “This I command you: love one another.” The commandment is utterly simple, yet it takes a lifetime to comprehend and to live it out.

Luckily, I am not left alone, with my poor human brain trying to figure out how to love others as God does. After all, I am not God, and it is not possible for me to see others with God’s eyes. But Jesus tells us in the Gospel passage for May 14 that there is help on the way: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him. But you know him, because he remains with you, and will be in you.”

This suggests that there is some relationship between the truth that the Holy Spirit speaks within me and my ability to love others. Perhaps this truth, which Jesus promises will be “in” me, will keep me humble and nonjudgmental, able to see others and myself in right relationship and with divine compassion. Perhaps this truth will reassure me that this is not a love of a distant God or a Jesus who is far away—rather, as Jesus says, he is in me, and I am in him.

There is also a wonderful reminder in the second reading, from the first Letter of St. Peter, that love is not only as love does, but also as love speaks. St. Peter counsels us always to be ready to speak about our faith but to “do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear.” Speak my truth and my faith, yes, but not in a way that is self-righteous or excludes the possibility of other views.

So, let me ask myself plainly: Am I loving Jesus by loving others? Am I in sync with the Spirit of truth within? Am I saying what I know to be true and witnessing to my faith—in the most loving way possible? Am I doing what I know is the most loving thing even when it is inconvenient? Am I willing to sacrifice my personal inclinations and interests—for example, my desire to pay the lowest possible taxes despite the needs of the poor, my wish to see a foreign military aggressor not only defeated but humiliated, or my reluctance to learn the language or culture of new immigrants or refugees to the U.S.—to love others as God loves, not grudgingly but lavishly?

Only if the answer is yes—for which I will need the grace of God every moment of every day—can I begin to follow Jesus' commandments and therefore to love him.

I need companions on this challenging lifelong journey; how about you? Let's walk together and work together to speak our truth and to love others through our advocacy for justice, peace, creation, and the dignity of human life. Please join FAN for upcoming events on root causes of migration (May 17), efforts for peace in Ukraine (May 25), care for the impoverished and homeless (June 28) and much more, so that we can learn with and from each other about how to love Jesus by following his commandments.

Michele Dunne, OFS
Executive Director

Suggested actions:

Take the time to learn more about one issue for public policy advocacy—climate, poverty, racism, immigration, gun violence prevention—that might require you to sacrifice some of your resources, convenience, or privilege to show your care for others who are suffering.

Suggested petitions:

For a life of prayer that gives me time to hear the Spirit of truth speaking within, I pray...
For the ability to see where God needs me to love others today, I pray....
For the courage to make the sacrifices needed to love others truly, I pray...

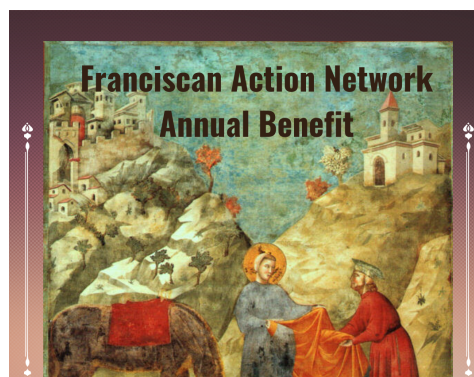
Prayer (Adapted from Mekdes Haddis, an African missionary living in the U.S.)

May God bless us with the courage to speak truth in love, to pray for the provoker of injustice, and to walk with wisdom and grace as we advocate for the oppressed.
May the word of God wash over our hearts and minds and guide our peace, and as we encounter the news and social media may our eyes remain fixed on Jesus.
May we be able to love, honor, and care for the fellow image bearers of Christ as we advocate for them.
May our hearts always be tender towards the sweet love of Jesus, and when we are weary may we return to our first love who is Christ for rest and restoration.

Amen.

Save the Date: Possible Dinner for Impossible Ministry Online Program June 28

Ticket sales begin this week for [FAN's annual benefit](#). Instead of hosting a dinner for our supporters, FAN will sponsor and serve a dinner for roughly 150 impoverished or unhoused people at the Franciscan Center in Baltimore. We will also host an online program on June 28 to explore Franciscan care for and solidarity with the poor, featuring Fr. David Couturier, OFM Cap. as well as a panel of advocates for the poor moderated by FAN board member Sr. Melinda Pellerin, SJ. Please join us to support all of



FAN's work!

Find [more information and purchase your ticket here](#).

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](#).

Complementary to our webinar, Justice for Immigrants will be hosting a series on the root causes of migration organized by migration reason: climate, conflict and economics. [Find out more here](#).

ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATION	
WEBINAR WED MAY 17, 2023 @ 4PM ET (1PM PT)	
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: HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/3NJ5WMZ6	
 WWW.FRANCISCANACTION.ORG	
 	

Gun Violence Prevention Events in early June

National Gun Violence Awareness Day is June 2 and this year is followed by [Wear Orange](#) Weekend to honor those killed and wounded by gun violence. Every year, this inspiring moment helps renew our commitment to ending gun violence in America by taking action.



As communities across the country are grappling with gun violence, consider participating in Wear Orange Weekend and join the gun safety movement where people across the country come together to honor victims and survivors and work together for a future without gun violence.



Anti Human Trafficking Conference Sept. 28-30

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking will host a national conference in celebration of their 10th anniversary.

[Breaking Barriers to End Human Trafficking](#) provides the opportunity to reconnect with friends and colleagues, share ideas, exchange information, and learn more about efforts to end human trafficking.

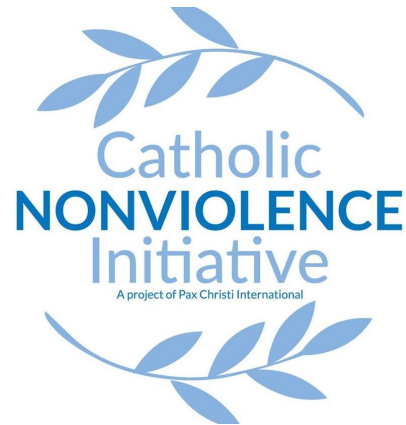
	U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking	
	National Conference	
9.28-30 Chicago, IL <i>Breaking Barriers to End Human Trafficking</i>		

The conference will be held September 28-30, 2023 in Chicago, IL and will feature Angela Reed, RSM and Christopher Thompson as keynote speakers. [Learn more and register here](#).

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative Lecture Series

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, in which FAN participates, is partnering with Casa Esther Catholic Worker to offer a [lecture series](#) for college students in October 2023 that will explore the interconnected relationship of violence and the environmental crisis.

Discussions are scheduled for Mondays starting October 2 and will continue through October 30, each beginning at 7:00 pm EST. [More information is here.](#)



Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Have you been wondering what being part of a [Franciscan Justice Circle](#) might be like?

This week FAN is hosting our monthly national zoom call for those involved in and considering being part of a Franciscan Justice Circle and you are welcome to join us. Additionally many Circles are meeting this week. If you would like to connect with any of them, please [contact us](#) to get the details!

Saint Bonaventure U./Olean FJC: Tues. May 9 at 11:15am in person at SBU

Delaware Valley FJC: Tues. May 9 at 7:00pm Eastern

Kansas FJC: Come & See meeting Tues. May 9 at 7:00pm Central

Monthly National FJC Call: Wed. May 10 at 4:00pm Eastern / 1:00pm Pacific

Northern California FJC: Wed. May 10 at 7:00pm Pacific

Virtual (nation-wide) FJC: Thurs. May 11 at 2:00pm Eastern / 11:00am Pacific

Rochester, NY FJC: Thurs. May 11 at 3:30pm Eastern

NYC-Area FJC: Thurs. May 11 at 7:30pm Eastern

Boston FJC: Fri. May 12 at 7:00pm Eastern

Washington DC FJC: Sat. May 13 at 10:00am Eastern in person

