

Discipleship Demands

Image by [Constance Kowalik](#) from [Pixabay](#)

What is a just society and how are we called to bring it about? Jesus challenges us as he calls the disciples to bring healing and liberation to those in need. The readings for the [11th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) are clear: we too are disciples on the journey, and like the twelve, we are called to go to those who are lost and bring the good news to them. Jesus sent the disciples to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, instructing them to make the proclamation: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.”



Discipleship involves mission. Matthew uses two images to indicate that discipleship implies mission: people are like sheep without a shepherd and like a harvest that needs laborers to get the work done. There is much work to be done but very few who are willing to do the work. When we answer the call to become a follower of the Lord, this call involves being and doing. It does not mean we are to just sit back and do nothing. It does not mean we are to allow others to do the work while we watch and pray. Missionary discipleship, as Pope Francis calls us to, is being in service to the people of God. Pope Francis notes that “every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus...” If we have encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus, then we are to extend that same love to one another, especially in service to those most in need.

Discipleship demands our full attention and intention to be at the service to the people of God. Pope Francis considers this calling to be the key characteristic of the life of the Church in the world and of the lives of all those in the Church. He presents a new understanding of who we are and what we do as the people of God. Doing the works of mercy in your community – feeding, sheltering, and visiting those in need – can more than fulfill your duty to discipleship. Begin with prayer and discernment, asking God what is yours to do. Then listen for the response. See what opens up to you; see what opportunities present themselves in your immediate environment. And then set about the business of going forth in action. As the saying goes, “pray then move your feet!”

In a world plagued by addiction, poverty, war and violence, Jesus still sees us as lost sheep in need of a shepherd. Discipleship demands us to tend to the harvest. And what is the harvest? The sick, the dead, the lepers and those possessed by the demons of the world. Just as Jesus’ heart was moved with pity for the people who were troubled and abandoned, we too must be moved with pity and compassion for those who go without each and every day. And just as Jesus called the twelve by name, so too he calls us by name to go out and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Do you believe this? Then, proclaim it boldly!

Member of Virtual Franciscan Justice Circle
Former FAN Board Member

Suggested Action:

Discern and pray about the needs in your community and take a small step to missionary discipleship by feeding, sheltering, providing water and clothing to those in need and visiting those who are ill or infirmed. Also consider taking action for policies and practices that promote the values of peace, creation and human dignity, such as those in this newsletter.

Suggested Petitions:

For the courage and the strength to walk as missionary disciples, we pray...

For the perseverance and grace to tend to the lost sheep, we pray...

For hearts that are moved with compassion toward those who are troubled and abandoned, we pray...

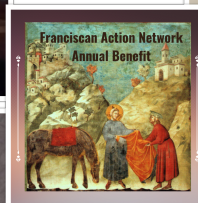
Prayer:

Loving Spirit of God, make visible to our eyes what is invisible: the needs of all those who go without. Give us the grace to live as missionary disciples in your Church and in your world. May our hearts be moved with compassion towards all who suffer or are abandoned. Help us to engage in love-inspired action that transforms us all.

Amen.

Come Hear our Panel at FAN Annual Benefit

Franciscan Action Network is pleased to host our annual fundraising event a little differently this year. In two weeks, instead of holding a dinner for our donors, we will sponsor and serve dinner to our impoverished neighbors at the Franciscan Center in Baltimore on Tuesday, June 27. We invite you to attend an **online program on Wednesday, June 28 at 7pm Eastern (4pm Pacific)** that will focus on Franciscan care for and solidarity with the poor. After an interview with our keynote speaker, Fr. David Couturier, OFM Cap., the program will feature a **panel discussion including those providing direct service to and advocacy for the impoverished and unhoused.**



Ms. Sabrinia Gay is the Community Navigator at the Franciscan Center of Baltimore, overseeing the homeless tent encampments in Baltimore City, assisting clients navigating various federal and local applications, emergency assistance and more. **Br. Gary Wegner, OFM Cap.** has served at parishes in Chicago and rural Wisconsin and is currently the Executive Director of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit. **Nate French** is currently the Director of Community Impact for Community Solutions. Nate works directly with communities in Los Angeles to build and improve systems to end homelessness. FAN Board Member **Sr. Melinda Pellerin, SSJ** will moderate the panel. Sr. Melinda is a retired teacher, Pastoral Minister at Saint Mary's Parish in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, and a chaplain at the

Western Mass Regional Women's Jail. [Learn more and get your tickets here.](#)

Ukraine: Narrative/Propaganda and Opportunities for Diplomacy

FAN will host a [second webinar on Ukraine Thursday, June 15 at 1pm ET \(10am PT\)](#). FAN Just Peace Fellow Eli S. McCarthy, Ph.D. will moderate a panel about the role of narratives and diplomacy.

We will use Crowdcast for this webinar. To [register](#), click "Save my Spot," fill out the form with your email, name and create a password. (If you've previously created a password, you will be able to skip this step.) On the final screen click "Confirm & Join." Here are some [attendee resources](#) and [helpful tips on using Crowdcast](#). **A recording of the event will be made available to all who register.** [Click here to register on Crowdcast.](#)



As the war continues to escalate, U.S. Congressional voices continue to have an important impact on U.S. strategy and the war. We encourage you to **take action** and [urge your members of Congress to concentrate on peacebuilding in Ukraine](#).

June 17 Faith in Peace Concert

The [Concert for the Human Family \(CFHF\)](#) of the US Episcopal Church and [Light4America](#) are delighted to announce the second "[Faith In Peace Concert](#)" on **Saturday, June 17, 2023 at 8pm ET (5pm PT)** in the historic Sixth and I Synagogue in Washington, D.C. The concert will feature Kory + Keith Caudill, Wordsmith, Imani-Grace and a variety of other Pop/Rock, Hip-Hop, and instrumental artists from a broad array of faith traditions coming together to support the values of democracy, diversity, and decency.



If you live in the DC, Maryland, or Virginia area and would like to attend, [get your \\$20-\\$40 tickets for FREE](#) with the coupon code **FAN2023**

World Refugee Day Resource and Immigration Webinars

We have learned of several quality resources and webinars coming up which we pass along to those interested.

1. **June 20th is World Refugee Day:** Church World Service has put together this resource with the [Top Five Actions to Honor Refugees](#). The Interfaith Immigration



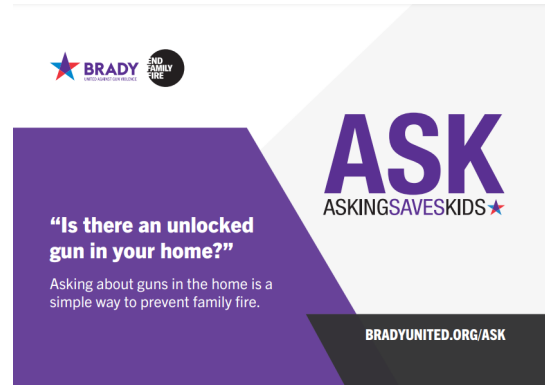
Coalition is planning a **virtual faith vigil for June 20** to share testimonies and reignite energy for refugee resettlement. **Watch this newsletter for details.**

2. The National Partnership for New Americans is hosting a webinar **Monday, June 26th at 2pm ET (11am PT)** on "Immigrant Communities on the Frontlines of Climate Disasters." [Click here to register.](#)
3. The American Friends Service Committee and the Interfaith Immigration Coalition will host a panel conversation on the **meaning of Independence Day** in today's global migration context, **Thursday, June 29 at 7pm ET (4pm PT)**. Learn [more and register by clicking here.](#)

ASK Day is June 21 - The First Day of Summer

ASK Day is an occasion to share the message of safe firearm storage and to remind parents to ask if there is an unlocked gun in the home where their child plays. It falls on the first day of summer, a time when kids typically spend more time at the homes of friends and other family members.

Brady United has compiled resources to help parents and friends of small children start a conversation about safe gun storage. [Click here for ASK Day Resources.](#)



Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Can you imagine the greater impact we could all have on promoting peace, kinship and care for our common home if we came together, not only at the national level, but at the local level as well?

[Franciscan Justice Circles](#) provide a space for this to happen. They are local grassroots affinity groups inspired by the Franciscan charism that unite to engage creation, peace and justice issues in their communities that are important to them through advocacy and action.



Upcoming FJC meetings this week:

St. Bonaventure U./Olean FJC: Tues. June 13 from 11:15-12:30pm in person

Delaware Valley FJC: Tues. June 13 at 7:00pm ET

Monthly National FJC call: Wed. June 14 at 4:00pm ET / 3:00pm CT / 1:00pm PT

Connecticut - Rhode Island FJC: Wed. June 14 at 7:00pm ET

For more information on joining one of these calls, [please contact us.](#)