

Doing the Will of God

Image by [Gerd Altmann](#) from [Pixabay](#)

I am sitting here for 5 hours at Newark airport between flights, so I am very happy to use this time in prayer, reading and writing to you dear friends; thanks for helping me pass the time! For me this is just another example of how God works in mysterious ways; this “wasted” time at the airport is allowing me to read God’s word and write to His glory. God surprises me and God certainly surprised Abraham in the first reading for the Episcopal church’s [5th Sunday after Pentecost](#). Before we get to that, let’s see if we can discover the thread that connects all of the readings. You probably guessed it from my reflection title: “Doing the will of God.”



Let’s start with a [Lectio Divina](#) I did for two days while at the [Franciscan Renewal Center](#) in Phoenix at a [Franciscan Third Order](#) Convocation. That reading was from Luke 18:27, “What is impossible for human beings is possible with God.” I see the link between that idea and these Bible readings as this: alone we can do things, but in all probability it will be the wrong thing, done without the power to be effective. The only way we can do the right thing, with enough power to succeed, is to have God with us and living through us. This allows what seemed impossible to become possible.

That was certainly the experience of Abraham when God asked him to sacrifice his only son and at the very last minute replaced him with a ram that he found stuck in the bushes. We too may be asked to make a sacrifice that seems totally unreasonable, but if God asks it, who are we to refuse? That’s the bad news. The good news is this: if it truly comes from God some totally unexpected and surprising change will happen to change the unreasonable, though possible, sacrifice to a more reasonable, but impossible, sacrifice – one that we would never have imagined without God leading us down the path first. This means we must step out in faith not really knowing completely where we are going or how things will work out but trusting that because we are obedient to the will of God that will be revealed to us – but I repeat, only AFTER we step out to do something which seems totally unreasonable.

So, as you step into this new day and pray to know what it is God has in store for you, see if you can hear that little, quiet, shy voice within you from the Holy Spirit that gives you an idea that is totally silly—at least this is how it works with me. Perhaps that voice tells you to act in a way that is so silly or outrageous that you would normally put it aside. If that is the case, begin in faith to implement the idea. But here is the secret to success: as you are doing so, keep listening, like Abraham did, for God wants us to “fear” Him, with the fear meaning that we are in awe of Him and are willing to submit to His will. It is likely that the final outcome is not what you started with. Ideas and actions evolve and change and transform AS we do them. This is in keeping with a living and dynamic God who is unfolding the Universe. Keep listening, especially when you are

certain of what “the right thing to do” is, for it may be that God is still talking to you and needs to change your path just a bit so that you can do His will to accomplish what seemed impossible.

Gordon Kubanek, TSSF
FAN Supporter

Suggested Action:

Consider what in your life you feel is impossible. While addressing the systemic problems of society may seem impossible, in our Franciscan network we believe all things are possible with God, especially when we come together in God’s will. Say a prayer to God for trust and take a step into the unknown. Consider taking an action listed below, in faith, even if the cause at first seems impossible.

Suggested Petitions:

For all those struggling with “impossible” tasks, may they find strength and comfort in trusting God, we pray...

For all dealing with the fear of not knowing, may they find the courage needed to continue in God, we pray...

Prayer:

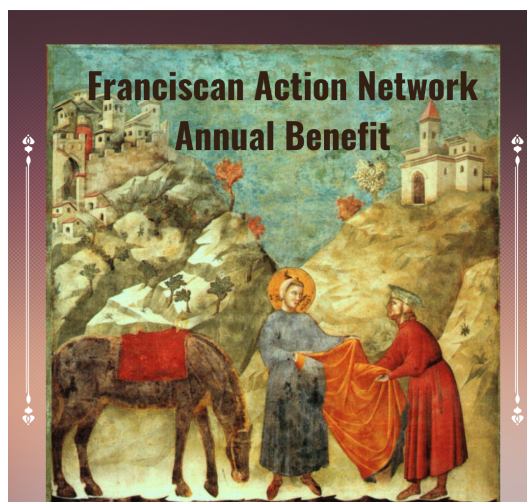
**Dear God,
please give me strength when I am weak,
love when I feel forsaken,
courage when I am afraid,
wisdom when I feel foolish,
comfort when I am alone,
hope when I feel rejected,
and peace when I am in turmoil.**

Amen

Last Chance to Support FAN’s Benefit

This week, Franciscan Action Network will hold our **annual benefit** according to a whole new concept: hosting a dinner for those who need it at the Franciscan Center in Baltimore and 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. There is still time to [get your tickets](#).

When you purchase a ticket, your donation will



subsidize a dinner for our sisters and brothers who truly need it, while also supporting FAN's work this year. **Your support is critical to our work!** Please [join us](#) for this special opportunity.

FAN Welcomes Gabriela Martinez

Franciscan Action Network is pleased to announce the addition of Gabriela Martinez to our staff as our new Associate for Campaigns. Her work will focus on advocacy related to economic and racial justice, as well as supporting Franciscan Justice Circles.

A graduate of Xavier University with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and a minor in Peace and Justice studies, Gabriela just finished half a year with AmeriCorps where she served challenged youth by offering personalized and small-group learning sessions to increase their potential.

We are blessed to have her on our team! Send [Gabby a welcome](#) message.



Ukraine Webinars and Call to Action

FAN Just Peace Fellow Eli S. McCarthy, Ph.D. recently hosted two webinars on the war in Ukraine. At the first, held May 25, 2023, we heard a discussion of various peacebuilding, nonviolent resistance, and unarmed civilian protection happening in the war-torn country. Watch the [recording on our YouTube](#) channel. Additionally, we offer this [resource](#) written by Eli on more examples of nonviolent actions.

The second webinar, held last week, included a panel considering the common narratives influencing the war and the propaganda being used to distort the truth. Discussion of what message might facilitate an end to the war led into opportunities for diplomatic negotiations. Watch the [recording of the second webinar here](#).

As this catastrophic war in Ukraine continues to escalate, we need your help to advocate for diplomatic negotiations and other peacebuilding practices to end the war and build a just peace. **Contact your Senators and Representatives** and urge them to promote diplomatic negotiations and other proven peacebuilding practices. [Take action here](#).



Take Action: Call for Vote on Assault Weapons Ban

Recently, FAN staff visited gun violence survivor Sam Schwartz during his sit-in at the U.S. Capitol. After his cousin Alex Schachter was killed in the Parkland shooting, Sam is now dedicated to making sure no other family has to go through what they did. He is joining the call to demand a vote to [#BanAssaultWeapons](#).

We urge you to take action and call Senator Durbin, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee (202.224.2152), and Senate Majority Leader Schumer (202.224.6542), urging them to schedule votes on [S.25, the Assault Weapons Ban](#). Here is a sample script:

As a person of faith affiliated with the Franciscan Action Network, I urge you to schedule both committee and floor votes on S.25, the Assault Weapons Ban, to take action and show survivors of horrific gun violence your commitment to removing these weapons from the streets. Over 70% of Americans support this legislation and we are seeing action in the House to force Speaker McCarthy to hold a vote. We want to see the same action in the Senate and a commitment to make our communities safer, especially for those communities often marginalized by hate. We recently marked seven and eight year anniversaries respectively for the Pulse nightclub massacre and the Mother Emanuel Church shooting in Charleston, both events involving a gunman perpetuating a hate crime. Franciscans prioritize nonviolence and an end to systemic racism, both of which demand movement toward banning assault weapons and addressing gun violence. I am tired of waiting for common-sense gun legislation to address the cycle of mass shootings in this country.

Thank you for taking action. [Let us know how your calls went](#).



Panel Discussion on Meaning of Independence Day in Context of Migration

The Holy Days and Holidays committee of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition will join the American Friends Service Committee to host a [panel conversation](#) on the meaning of Independence Day in today's global migration context. FAN's immigration advocacy associate Merwyn De Mello will be a presenter.

Join the webinar on **Thursday, June 29 at 7pm ET (4pm PT)**. [Register by clicking here](#).



Franciscan Justice Circles Updates

Last week, FAN Director of Franciscan Justice Circles Nora Pfeiffer made a presentation at the [Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities \(AFCU\) Symposium](#) about our



Franciscan Justice Circles. Nora was joined by Communications Coordinator Janine Walsh. See them pictured with keynote speaker, Br. Michael Perry, OFM, who will also speak at our [Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference](#) on October 14. You won't want to miss it!

If you would like to learn more about the Franciscan Justice Circles, [please contact us](#).