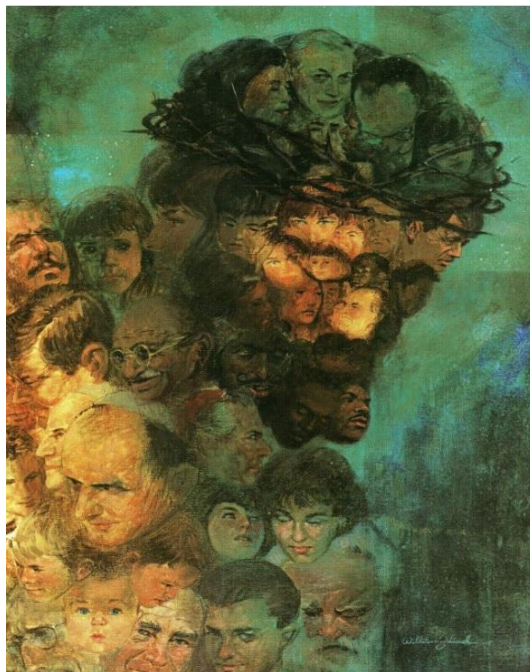


Accepting God's Gracious Invitation of Salvation

"In His Image" by William Zdinak (1925-1993)

In the readings for the [28th Sunday in Ordinary Time](#), God offers a gracious invitation of salvation through Jesus the Messiah. In the first reading, it is proclaimed, "the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples." In the second reading, Paul tells the Philippians, "God will fully supply whatever [we] need." These declarations reveal to us that all will be provided for. The gates of the kingdom are open to anyone and everyone.

In the gospel parable, the wedding feast represents God's salvation and offers two lessons. Bear in mind that God has always given, and continues to give, humans the freedom of choice. In the story, the invitation from the king goes out and we hear of those who refuse or ignore the invitation. After two more invitations are met with indifference and violence, the king tells his servants "invite to the feast whomever you find." Here we receive the first lesson of the story - salvation is not based on ethnicity, education, income bracket, popularity, ministry position, personality type, cultural savvy, or attractiveness. For this reason, we should be very careful *not* to assume that the people most fit for the kingdom are those who look most like us.



The second lesson in the parable is presented to us through the unsuitably dressed man. He represents those who were not prepared for complete commitment to Jesus and his teachings. Though the gates of God's kingdom are open wide, God imposes conditions on us. Namely, we must bear its fruits. Everyone is welcome at the table, but the table transforms us. Or, to keep with the imagery of the parable, it changes our clothes. If it doesn't, then we aren't truly guests. This transformation must be taken seriously and acted upon in our society today. It is not enough to cry out about climate change, we must also put those words into action in our own lives and in our communities and country. It is not enough to tout our personal morality, we must ensure that those morals and values are the basis for everything we do, from our daily interactions with others to how we vote. If we don't commit to living as Jesus taught, we too will be bound and cast into the darkness.

The image I use to remind myself of my commitment to live as Jesus taught is "In His Image" by William Zdinak (1925-1993). In contemplating this beautiful piece of artwork, I hear God's gracious invitation and gentle reminder to use my life to add my face to the mosaic of salvation.

Janine Walsh
Communications Coordinator

Suggested Action:

Take a moment today to pray for all those attending our [Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference](#) Oct. 13-16, that they accept God's invitation and commit to live as Jesus taught.

Suggested Petitions:

For all those whose material needs are not met, may they find sustenance through the generosity of others, we pray...

For the courage to act on our faith in all our interactions, we pray...

Prayer:

Gracious God, give me a heart like Jesus.

Help me to be patient and loving towards others.

Help me to show gratitude for the grace and mercy given to me.

Help me to seek your will above all else, and to put others before myself, as Jesus did.

Bless me with the strength and courage to follow in his footsteps, to imitate his example in my own daily life, and to bring his teachings into my corner of the world.

Amen

Webinar: Working for Environmental Justice in Louisiana

Please join us on **Tuesday, October 24 at 4pm ET (1pm PT)** to learn how environmental activists in Louisiana are challenging the petrochemical industries in the area named "Cancer Alley," an 85-mile stretch of land along the Mississippi River that has more than 150 petrochemical plants and refineries in areas where the majority of residents are both Black and lower income. The rate of cancer and respiratory illness is far higher in "Cancer Alley" than the national average.

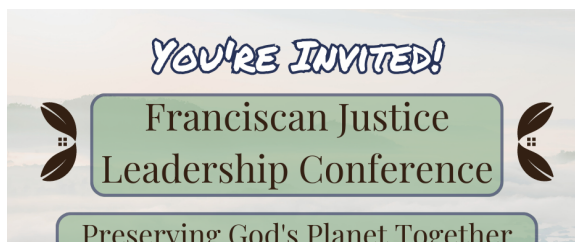
FAN Staff with Sharon Lavigne, 2022



Our speaker will be **Sharon Lavigne**, founder of RISE St. James, a faith-based, grassroots organization in Louisiana that works to defeat the proliferation of petrochemical industries in St. James Parish, Louisiana, where 32 petrochemical plants are currently located. [Register to attend here](#). This event will be recorded and all registrants will receive a link.

Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference Online Oct. 14

We are thrilled with the response we have to our first-ever [Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference](#): *Preserving God's Planet Together*, happening this weekend in Washington, DC. While we are now over capacity for in-person participation in the



conference, we invite you to **attend the online hybrid seminar Saturday Oct 14 from 1:30p-5:00p ET (10:30a-2:00p PT)**. Register for [online attendance](#) here. [Click here](#) to see our exciting lineup of speakers!

We are genuinely looking forward to coming together in person (and online) and building relationships to strengthen our collective Franciscan voice on creation care and climate justice. Please [contact us directly](#) if you have any issues or questions.

Urge Congress to Prioritize Welcoming Policies In Upcoming Funding Legislation

On September 30, Congress passed a stopgap measure to temporarily fund the government through November 17. While the move averted a government shutdown, it failed to include critical supplemental resources to expand our nation's capacity to welcome, and it also excluded a needed extension of eligibility for certain refugee resettlement services for Ukrainians arriving via humanitarian parole.

As Congress continues to negotiate funding for the coming fiscal year, take action by [urging Congress](#) to pass funding legislation that welcomes those fleeing violence and persecution and that rejects anti-immigrant restrictions.



Support DACA Recipients

Last year, the Fifth Circuit decided to partially halt DACA and returned the case to Judge Hanen of the U.S District Court of the Southern District of Texas for review of the new DACA rule proposed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). More recently, Judge Hanen ruled against DACA and called to terminate the program, again. Now, the future of DACA returns to the hands of the Fifth Circuit court. Millions of undocumented folks have already been left unprotected, but hundreds of thousands more are at risk if the Fifth

Circuit decides to end renewals. Biden and Congress' inaction has led to this moment – they must act NOW to deliver citizenship for all immigrant communities. Take action and [urge Congress to secure a pathway to citizenship for all](#).



Pray for Peace in the Middle East

Please join us in praying for peace following the stunning and heart-breaking escalation of conflict in Israel and Gaza. As the situation intensifies after a year of escalating violence in the area, Franciscan Action



Network is shaken with grief and stunned by the attacks. We watch and pray together with [Churches for Middle East Peace](#) that the violence and human suffering comes to an end rapidly and that the core issues between Hamas and Israel and Palestinians are addressed.

*God of Justice,
bless those who work for peace through justice.
Strengthen their resolve in the face of seemingly endless violence.
Guide the leaders of the people of the Middle East to know your will and to support a just peace for all of your children.*
[Read more.](#)

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Inspired by the charism of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi, [Franciscan Justice Circles](#) are forming nationwide with a desire to engage in advocacy around the areas of suffering and injustice in their communities. On October 1, 2023, the national network of FJCs and FAN hosted a [virtual transitus service](#), commemorating the passing of St. Francis from this life to eternal life.



Upcoming Franciscan Justice Circle meetings:

Delaware Valley FJC: Tuesday, Oct. 10 at 7pm Eastern over zoom

Monthly National FJC Call: Wednesday, Oct. 11 at 1pm Pacific / 4pm Eastern over zoom

Northern California FJC: Wednesday, Oct. 11 at 7pm Pacific over zoom

Rochester, NY FJC: Thursday, Oct. 12 at 3:30pm Eastern over zoom

Greater NYC area FJC: Thursday, Oct. 12 at 7:30pm Eastern over zoom

To find out more information or to join any of these meetings, please contact Director of Franciscan Justice Circles, [Nora Pfeiffer](#).