

This gospel reading for the [Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) tells the intertwined stories of the synagogue official Jairus's plea for his sick daughter and the healing of a woman suffering from a hemorrhage. Both of these stories speak to profound acts of faith from a place of desperation: Jairus who pleads for his dying daughter and the woman who, due to her affliction, has been ostracized and isolated from the community for the past twelve years. When we look at these stories from a human rights perspective, both emphasize compassion, the life and dignity of the human person, and the intrinsic value and worth of the individual.

From a Franciscan perspective, human dignity is vital. Saint Francis of Assisi, who revered the dignity of all creation, would see the woman suffering from hemorrhages as embodying the marginalized and excluded. In her society, her condition rendered her ritually unclean, ostracizing her from religious and social life. Her isolation reflects how societies often devalue those who do not conform to health, economic, or social norms. Jesus' response to her is radical compassion. He not only heals her but does so publicly, affirming her worth in the eyes of the community. His words, *"Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction,"* restore her dignity and reintegrate her into the community. It was her faith that led her to risk being stoned to death by enveloping herself in a crowd of people while considered unclean. This act stresses Jesus' commitment to uphold the dignity of all individuals, particularly those marginalized by societal structures. It highlights key aspects of human rights: the right to inclusion and the recognition of inherent dignity.

Our Franciscan spirituality is deeply rooted in compassion for all and the call to care for the weak and vulnerable. This call is demonstrated in Jesus' interaction with Jairus and his daughter. Jairus, a synagogue official, represents a powerful societal figure, yet he humbles himself before Jesus out of love for his daughter. Jesus' willingness to respond to Jairus, even while being interrupted by the hemorrhaging woman, illustrates a model of compassionate response to human suffering that transcends social status. Both of these extraordinary healings illustrate a profound faith that intersects with radical compassion. Faith, in this context, becomes a driving force for social action, advocating for the rights and dignity of every person, particularly those who are most vulnerable. These acts affirm the right to life and the importance of nurturing and protecting it.

How does this challenge us to uphold the right to health and well-being, ensuring that no one is left to suffer without aid or to endure isolation from family and community? This gospel passage not only provides a model for personal transformation but also calls us to create a more compassionate and inclusive society that honors the dignity and rights of all individuals, no

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matter the circumstance. Jesus calls us to love one another, not isolate and exclude us from society. He calls for a compassionate response to suffering, affirming the worth of every person. Saint Francis' life and teachings inspire us to uphold the worth and value of every human person, advocating for justice and compassion in our world today.

Carolyn D. Townes, OFS
Member of Virtual Justice Circle
Former Board Member

Suggested Action:

As followers of Christ, let us commit to advocating for compassionate healthcare for all, particularly the marginalized and underserved.

Suggested Petitions:

For the marginalized and excluded, may they find healing, acceptance, and dignity through compassionate communities that reflect your love and mercy, we pray...

For leaders and caregivers, may they follow the example of Christ, who responds to every cry for help with love and action, we pray...

For the promotion of human dignity, may we, through our actions and words, reflect the radical compassion of Jesus, who sees and honors the intrinsic worth of every person, we pray...

Prayer:

Loving and merciful God, we thank you for the powerful examples of faith and compassion in the stories of the gospel. Help us to embody this same faith and compassion in our lives, advocating for the dignity and rights of every person. May your love inspire us to create a more inclusive and caring world, where no one is left to suffer alone. Guide us to be instruments of your peace, always seeking to uplift and support those in need.

Amen.

Final Episode of Acting Franciscan Season One

The final episode of FAN's new podcast, "Acting Franciscan," created by OFM Postulant Jimmy Beh, is available now on [Spotify](#), [PodBean](#) and our [website](#).

The fourth and final episode of this limited series welcomes **Sr. Andrea Koverman, SC**, who helps illuminate the creative and generative tension between direct service and advocacy, especially in terms of poverty and racism in the educational space. If direct service is where we get our fire and our knowledge of an issue, advocacy is how we show up to create lasting change around its root causes.

Listen now and please [share the podcast](#) with your friends and colleagues.



Join us for a Nuclear Weapons Webinar

On **July 17 at 4pm ET / 1pm PT**, Franciscan Action Network will host a special informational webinar: "[Nuclear Weapons: What you don't know can hurt you.](#)"

As Franciscans, we seek ways to be peacemakers in a troubled world. In this one-hour webinar, we will discuss: Which are the countries and conflicts that present the greatest danger for nuclear warfare? What would be the global effects of any use of nuclear weapons? What can I do to show my concern? **Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF**, Justice and Peace Coordinator for the Felician Sisters of North America, will moderate the discussion.

Registration for this event is free. If you are able, we ask that you please consider donating \$10, \$25, \$50 or any amount to help support FAN's continued peace building. Thank you for your generosity! [Click here to register.](#)



Advocacy Works: New Executive Action Affirms Mixed-Status Families

On Tuesday, June 18, 2024, President Biden announced [bold new steps](#) to enable undocumented immigrants married to U.S. citizens to work lawfully and overcome obstacles to living to their fullest potential. This process will keep families together and bring broader economic and social benefits to the nation.

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition, of which FAN is an active member, released [this statement](#) with this quote from FAN's Associate Director Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF: "Franciscans welcome the Executive Order which allows thousands of families to live together without fear of separation and to work lawfully. Immigrant communities and advocates have urged the Administration to take this action, so we thank and commend President Biden for listening and responding. Following in the compassionate footprints of Jesus Christ and St. Francis of Assisi, we Franciscans continue to urge the Administration and Congress to build on this process which benefits not only mixed-status families but our whole society."



Line 5 Oil Pipeline Concerns

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is considering permits that would allow Canadian oil giant Enbridge to build a new 41-mile segment of its Line 5 oil pipeline around and upstream of the Bad River Reservation in northern Wisconsin. The



construction project would cross nearly 200 waterbodies and more than 100 acres of wetlands, putting some of Wisconsin's most precious natural areas at risk.

[FSPA Sisters and Associates](#) as well as members of the **Driftless Region FJC** and the **E. Wisconsin FJC** traveled to Ashland, WI on June 4 to participate in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' public hearing regarding a forthcoming environmental assessment of Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline expansion. Sr. Georgia Christensen, FSPA, gave an oral statement ([at 18:00 mark here](#)) at the hearing.

On a national level, public comments are now being accepted by email or physical mail through **August 4**. Following the FJC and FSPA examples of solidarity, please [submit a comment](#), aligning it with our [Franciscan values](#). Sierra Club offers [this toolkit](#) with guidance on how to submit a comment.

Break the link between human trafficking and forced migration

This month people of faith are making concerted efforts to address the link between human trafficking and forced migration by encouraging the passing of three critical pieces of bipartisan legislation:

- **Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2023** (H.R. 5856). This bill overwhelmingly passed the House (414-11) on Feb. 13, 2024 with its provisions to address the root causes of forced migration. It still needs to pass the Senate. The bill includes U.S. aid for sustainable development and humanitarian assistance in local communities that would enable migrants to avoid undertaking the treacherous journey to the United States.
- **Immigration Court Efficiency & Children's Court Act** (H.R. 6145 / S. 3178), to assist unaccompanied migrant children, including those in need of trafficking protection, as they navigate our complex court system, reducing the chance of their exploitation.
- **Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act** (H.R. 1325), directs Homeland Security to provide employment authorization for most asylum applicants 30 days after filing. An improved process for applicants seeking to legally work in the U.S. greatly diminishes their vulnerability to traffickers.



FAN's Director of Advocacy, Sr. Maria Orlandini, joined an advocacy day in DC on June 6 during which participants advocated for attainable bi-partisan solutions to reduce human trafficking by addressing root causes. **Take action** and [ask your members of Congress to support these three bills](#).

Franciscan Justice Circles Updates

The NYC-Area Franciscan Justice Circle hosted a [webinar](#), **A Franciscan Perspective on Food and Justice**, on June 19. The speakers explored how our Franciscan values - elevating human thriving and the integrity of creation - can inform and energize our policy responses to problems around harmful additives in our food and beverages. Specifically, the speakers talked about two bills in the New York State legislature, a ban of harmful chemical additives ([S6055B / A6424A](#)) and a bill that would bring more transparency to chemicals allowed in food in New York State ([S8615 / A09295](#)). Watch the recording to learn more [HERE](#).



Upcoming Franciscan Justice Circle meetings:

CT - RI FJC: Tues. June 25 at 7:00pm EDT via zoom

Mid-Hudson Valley FJC: Tues. July 2 at 12:00pm EDT via zoom

Kansas FJC: Tues. July 2 at 7:00pm CDT via zoom

Cincinnati FJC: Wed. July 3 at 7:00pm EDT via zoom

Richmond, VA -Area FJC: Mon. July 8 at 7:00pm EDT via zoom

Please contact [FAN staff](#) to connect to one of our 20+ [Franciscan Justice Circles](#) or find out more about forming one near you.