

Gospel Sacrifice

In the gospel reading for the [Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#), we hear some stern words from our Lord: *“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off.... If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off.... And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out.”* Obviously, this is metaphorical language, and yet the meaning is clear: nothing must stand in the way of holiness and our relationship with God. Jesus’ words this week speak to us about sacrifice. What are we willing to sacrifice to obtain the kingdom of God?



In times long past, sacrifice was the act of offering something to a deity in propitiation or appeasement or homage, especially the ritual slaughter of an animal or person. Thankfully, through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, we don’t need such rituals in our times. Yet, the concept of sacrifice today is still valid as it means the act of giving up something highly valued for the sake of something else considered to have a greater value. For example, social activism often involves tremendous sacrifice.

The word *sacrifice*, from the Latin *to make sacred*, is a concept few of us want to entertain because it means we have to give something up, and not just *any* something, but something very dear to us. One of the hardest things to give up is our privilege. When we think about the marginalized, the immigrant, the poor and outcast, they are not only the “least of these,” but they are our brothers and sisters. Yet, they remain the *least* because someone else is greater, and the one who is greater has the privilege they dare not part with.

The Letter of James is equally severe: *“You have lived on earth in luxury and pleasure; you have fattened your hearts for the day of slaughter. You have condemned; you have murdered the righteous one; he offers you no resistance.”* Are we willing to risk discomfort in order to stand for justice and truth? In the pursuit of social justice, individuals often face moments where they must choose between remaining comfortable and taking action against injustice. Jesus’ metaphor of cutting off a hand or plucking out an eye can be seen as a call to remove the temptation to remain passive or indifferent in the face of injustice. The passage challenges us to recognize that true discipleship and spiritual growth often require us to step out of our comfort zones and confront issues that might be difficult or uncomfortable, to give up our privileged positions.

Advocacy for social justice frequently involves confronting uncomfortable truths about oneself and society. This might include acknowledging personal biases, systemic inequalities, or the ways in which one’s own privilege contributes to the oppression of others. For example, a person might feel compelled to confront their own implicit biases about race or gender, recognizing that doing so is necessary to promote justice and equity. This kind of examination of self and society can be deeply uncomfortable, but it is essential for spiritual growth, the pursuit of justice, and a closer walk with the Lord. Just as Jesus urges the removal of anything that causes sin, we too are called to remove the blinders of comfort and complacency that prevent us from seeing and addressing injustice.

Carolyn D. Townes, OFS

Member of Virtual Franciscan Justice Circle
Former Board Member

Suggested Action:

In our pursuit of holiness, let us commit to sacrificing some of our comforts for the daily care of those in need. For example, consider donating clothing to a homeless shelter in your area or creating blessing bags (a bag filled with everyday toiletry items) to distribute to the unsheltered.

Suggested Petitions:

We lift up the marginalized, the excluded, migrants and refugees, the oppressed, and those who oppress them. We pray for those who have been cast aside by society, who live on the fringes and struggle to find acceptance and security. Comfort them in their pain, and grant them hope and resilience. May they find refuge in Your love and justice, and may their cries for dignity and fairness be heard. For all this, we pray...

Prayer:

Gracious God,

We ask for Your guidance as we seek to confront injustice in the world. Give us the wisdom to discern how we can best serve those in need, and the humility to listen to the cries of the poor and oppressed. Help us to be diligent in our pursuit of justice and fairness, and lead us in Your ways of righteousness. May we not grow weary in doing good, but remain steadfast in our commitment to Your will. Let our advocacy be grounded in Your love and truth.

Amen.

Welcome Rosie Davila

Please welcome our new Communications and Development Coordinator Rosie Davila! Rosie grew up on a flower farm in Kentucky, where her passion for peace and justice took root early. At age 11, she learned the story of her great-great-grandfather Alberto, who was killed for his nonviolent resistance to war and refusal to serve as a soldier. This story profoundly shaped her commitment to nonviolence. Rosie holds a double major in Anthropology and Psychology from the University of Kentucky. Since 2020, she has served as the Art and Media Coordinator for Pace e Bene Campaign Nonviolence, hosting "Peace Out with Rosie," a YouTube series where she shares reflections on nonviolence. Rosie joins FAN as a way to help build a more just and compassionate world for all.



[Send a welcome message to Rosie!](#)

Virtual Transitus Service Oct. 2

As the Feast of St. Francis approaches, the Franciscan Action Network invites you to a **virtual Transitus Service on Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 7:30pm ET / 4:30pm PT** to remember the passing of St. Francis from this life to the next. This uniquely Franciscan commemoration serves as a time of reflection, prayer, and deep gratitude for the life and teachings of Saint Francis.

In an effort to respect in-person Transitus services on Oct. 3 while offering an opportunity for us to come together across distances for this special occasion, the Franciscan Justice Circles will be offering this 30 min. virtual service the day before, on **Wednesday, Oct. 2 via Zoom**. Please [click here](#) to register.



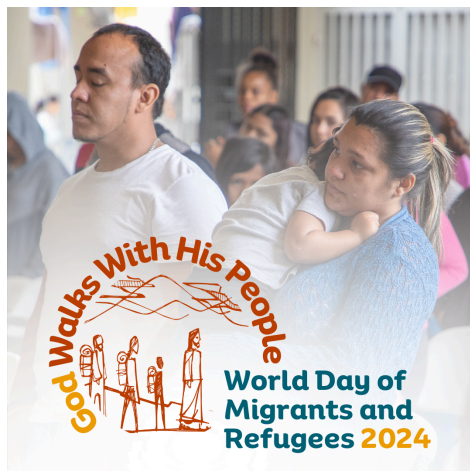
Middle East Peace Activities

As conflict in the Middle East escalates, FAN is partnering with other groups to commemorate St. Francis' feast day with a **prayer vigil for peace in Washington DC on Fri. Oct 4 at 12 noon** near the White House. You may sign up [here](#). Please join us if you are able, and invite anyone else who might be interested! We will have a livestream available for those who are not able to attend live, and we will send out the link before the event.

Just Peace Fellow Eli McCarthy and other members of [Christians for Ceasefire](#) are working with Palestinian Christian partners on actions to address the mass atrocities in Gaza and the West Bank. Upcoming opportunities include:

1. Nonviolent Resistance Witness: Wed. Sept. 25, 10-11:30am near the U.S. Capitol. Please save the date to join us for a creative procession and witness action at a strategic location near the U.S. Capitol. We are supporting participants and allies from the Stones Cry Out delegation who are returning to DC for 2 days of congressional visits, education events, and nonviolent witnesses. Please [REGISTER HERE](#).
2. Back to School week of Action: Sept. 22-29. Partnering with our friends in the Christians for a Free Palestine coalition, join us for this week-long program weaving together theological learning, organizing and direct action skills, leadership development, community connection, and spiritual nourishment. [REGISTER HERE](#)
3. Al-Makhrouf Solidarity Actions: Sun. Sept. 29. During past delegations, we [met Alice and her Palestinian-Christian family](#) near Bethlehem as they continue to resist the taking of their land, house, and restaurant. Alice's family has creatively organized a global network in nearly 30 countries to offer coordinated, strategic, prayerful solidarity actions. To connect with the US organizing group via WhatsApp, [contact Eli McCarthy](#).
4. Accompaniment delegations to Palestine: Oct. 13-23 or Dec. 8-18. We are going to keep up the wave of accompaniment delegations going to Palestine, especially with the recent activity in the West Bank. Please consider joining or [sharing this invite](#) with trusted people. [Register interest here](#)

Immigration Updates/Actions



From **September 23-29**, the Catholic Church celebrates **National Migration Week**, culminating in the [World Day of Migrants and Refugees](#) on **September 29** with an opportunity to engage in prayer, reflection, and action on behalf of our migrant siblings across the globe.

Ignatian Solidarity Network and their collaborators in the Jesuit Migration Network of the U.S. and Canada will release a **daily short audio reflection from September 23-28** to walk with God's people as we listen to stories of resilience and hope from migrants and those who accompany them.

BUTTON LINK to reflections: [Register for a daily reflection email from September 23-28.](#)

BUTTON LINK to broader website: [View the God Walks With His People Website and Reflection Guide](#)

Action Opportunity: Urge U.S. to Stop Illegal Arms to Haiti

Weapons being illegally shipped from the U.S. into Haiti account for 70% of the arms being used by gangs in the country to make daily life, education, and work life-threatening or impossible for the Haitian people. The US government can do more to stop this illegal flow of arms.



A coalition of more than 40 faith-based organizations including FAN is coordinating an [advocacy action campaign](#) with in-person and virtual advocacy visits in Washington, DC to take place on **September 25 and 26**. Sign up to participate in the [lobby days \(in person or virtually\) by clicking here](#). **WRITE to your senators, representative and the president** with [this template letter](#).

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Have you heard about FAN's initiative connecting Franciscan-hearted individuals through prayer, action, and advocacy in cities across the country? To find out more information about the [Franciscan Justice Circles](#) or any upcoming meetings, please contact FJC director [Nora Pfeiffer](#):

CT-RI FJC: Tues. Sept. 24 at 7:00pm EDT via zoom

Nashville-Area FJC Find Out More: Tues. Sept. 24 at 7:00pm CDT via zoom

SE Wisconsin FJC: Thurs. Sept. 26 at 4:00pm CDT via zoom

Central VA FJC: Mon. Sept. 30 at 7:00pm EDT via zoom

Mid-Hudson Valley FJC: Tues. Oct. 1 at 12:00pm EDT via zoom

Kansas FJC: Tues. Oct. 1 at 7:00pm CDT via zoom

Virtual FJC (limited mobility): Tues. Oct. 3 at 11:00am PDT / 2:00pm EDT via zoom

Boston FJC: Sat. Oct. 5 at 7:00pm EDT via zoom