

Publication Date: February 25, 2025

Reflection Date: March 2, 2025 - [Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Living Louder: Lent's Call to Action

With the beginning of Lent on Wednesday, March 5, the readings for the [Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) provide a beautiful and ideal reflection to start this season when we take time to examine ourselves and contemplate what needs work and transformation to help enable us to “bear good fruit” (Lk 6:43-45). We all want to be the best person we can be before our God and to live to the true potential that God has given each of us. What is preventing this?



“How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye, when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye?’” (Lk 6:41). Our readings challenge us to question and acknowledge the beam in our eye that does not allow us to see neither the good nor the pain in another. What is preventing us from seeing the image and likeness of our God in those individuals and groups who are often denigrated publicly?

Lent also calls us to look at the world and our nation in such need of healing. How could I be contributing to violence in my home, country, or world? What keeps me from taking that extra step to protect God’s creation? What is God calling me to do in a manner only I can?

During a recent meeting addressing the polarity and divisiveness in our country, another Catholic sister suggested that these times call us to “love louder,” perhaps advice Jesus Christ would give us today. Love always leads to action for the good, to take a stand for whom and what we love and believe in. How are we called to “love louder” in our homes, our workplaces, and our democracy?

In his 2024 Christmas Eve homily, Pope Francis stressed, “Christian hope summons [us] not to tarry, to be kept back by our old habits, or to wallow in mediocrity or laziness. Hope calls us to be upset with things that are wrong and to find the courage to change them.” Trying to remember to “love louder” as we get out of bed in the morning could give us hope and the courage to act in support of the values we hold dear, and to speak against injustice.

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF

Justice and Peace Coordinator
Felician Sisters of North America

Suggested Action: Join Nuns Against Gun Violence in their Lenten Fast to end gun violence and to stand with all victims of this scourge in our country: those murdered, those forever injured, and those whose lives are forever changed due to the misuse of guns.

Suggested Petitions: Creator God, help me to be open to the transformation needed to “love louder” each day.

Creator God, guide us in healing what divides us, and help us take the steps necessary to bring peace and justice to our world

Prayer

**God of mercy,
Help us embrace this season of Lent with open hearts. Guide us in transformation, that we may reflect your love through our actions. Grant us the courage to heal what is broken and the wisdom to seek justice and peace.**

Amen.

Recording of “Living in Hope and Loving Kindness”

Thank you to everyone who participated in our February 19 reflection on “Living in Hope and Loving Kindness.” We are grateful for this community and the time we shared together in prayer and conversation. Your presence—whether in person or in spirit—helped make the evening meaningful.

If you were unable to join us live, or if you would like to revisit any part of the gathering, you can [access the slides](#) and watch the recording of the guided meditation below:

[Click here to watch the recording](#)

Ask Congress to Protect Safety Net Programs



Congress is working on a budget deal called a reconciliation package. The package will include tax policies and other economic policies that affect **everyone**. Deep cuts are being proposed to Medicaid and other important social safety net programs as Members of Congress debate how to pay for the package. These cuts will support funding to carry out mass deportations and provide tax incentives for the wealthiest Americans. We strongly encourage you to personalize a message to your Member of Congress, as personal stories make any advocacy, particularly in this area, more effective. Button:

[Click here to send a message.](#)

Additionally, FAN’s legislative director is in the process of scheduling meetings with legislators’ offices on this topic and others, and would appreciate having members from the representatives’ states/districts on those meetings. **If you are interested in participating in virtual or in-person meetings with your Member of Congress**, please reach out to Eileen

DeGuire. **If you have a story to share about how the funding is impacting you**, even if you are unavailable for a meeting, please contact us.

Button: [Contact Eileen](#)

Training for Allies of Immigrants

With the goal to protect and support our immigrant neighbors and communities, FAN's partners at Congregation Action Network are hosting a [Training for Allies of Immigrants](#) that will be hybrid (in Bethesda, MD and by Zoom) on **Sunday, March 9 from 3:00 - 5:00 pm EDT**. Please note March 9 is the day that Daylight Saving Time starts and clocks shift backward in states where daylight savings is observed. [Click here to register.](#)

The training will cover:

- Know Your Rights
- Family Preparedness
- Bystander & Rapid Response
- De-escalation
- Accompaniment
- Direct Service Supports
- Organizing together at the meeting

Just Peace in the Holy Land

[Contact Congress:](#) The catastrophic war in Gaza has been overwhelming and we need your help to advocate for ensuring a sustained ceasefire, an end to violence in the West Bank, a political process to ensure accountability, and an end to the occupation so a just peace can be realized. Please contact your Congressional reps to speak out and put constructive pressure on the President for these issues.

Support Unarmed Civilian Protection and Accompaniment in the West Bank/Gaza

There is an urgent request from Palestinian Christians and other partners for a significant increase in credible international presence, particularly from the U.S. Violence by the Israeli military and settlers has escalated in the West Bank, killing over 44 Palestinians in just the last month. If you have some experience being deployed in unarmed civilian protection units anywhere and you are interested in being deployed for this project, please [fill out this form](#). If you would like to financially support this project, please [donate here](#).

Save the Date! Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference 2025

Mark your calendars for **October 18-20, 2025**, because you won't want to miss the **2025 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference!**

This is the moment to gather with like-minded advocates in **Washington, D.C.** for justice, peace, and care for creation. Through inspiring speakers, hands-on workshops, and civic engagement on Capitol Hill, we'll explore how to live out our Franciscan values and lead the charge for a more just and peaceful world.



Stay tuned for more details, and get ready to join us for an event that will empower you and your community to make a lasting impact.

[Learn more here](#)

[Register your interest here](#)

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

The **St. Bonaventure U. Franciscan Justice Circle** uplifted two advocacy opportunities in February, one relating to expressing concern about their Congressperson's idea of opening up fracking in their area despite the current moratorium on fracking in NY state. Just 20 miles away in PA where they are engaged in fracking, people are experiencing issues with their drinking water, and Circle members are raising their concern. Additionally the Circle is supporting the implementation of sustainability goals on campus.

The **Denver-Area Franciscan Justice Circle** members have been active in various local initiatives of accompaniment and solidarity with their immigrant neighbors, including making Valentines for people held in the for-profit immigrant detention center, GEO to show that love knows no borders nor walls. A Lutheran Franciscan in the group went to the border to meet with other Lutherans involved in a project focused on accompaniment and solidarity with immigrants.

To find out more about any of the [Franciscan Justice Circle](#) (FJC) gatherings coming up or for information about joining or forming a Circle, please contact Nora Pfeiffer at FJCinfo@franciscanaction.org

CT-RI FJC: Tues. Feb. 25 at 7:00 pm EST over zoom

Texas FJC: Tues. Feb. 25 at 7:00 pm CST / 6:00 pm MST over zoom

SE Wisconsin FJC: Thurs. Feb. 27 at 4:00 pm CST over zoom

SoCal FJC: Thurs. Feb. 27 at 6:00 pm PST over zoom

Kansas FJC: Tues. March 4 at 7:00 pm CST over zoom

Virtual FJC (limited mobility): Thurs. March 6 at 2:00 pm EST / 11:00 am PST over zoom

DC-Area FJC: Sat. March 8 at 10:00 am EST In Person
St. Louis Area FJC: Sun. March 9 at 5:30 pm CT In Person
St. Bonaventure U. FJC: Mon. March 10 at 12:30pm ET In Person
Richmond, VA-Area FJC: Mon. March 10 at 7:00 pm ET over zoom