

Publication Date: January 14, 2025

Reflection Date: January 19, 2025 - [Second Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Everyone serves good wine first

“Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now.”

The gospel reading (John 2:1-11) for the [Second Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) tells the familiar story of the wedding feast at Cana. Unlike many other gospel stories focused on serious healings or exorcisms, this one begins with a social problem: the wine has run out. At Mary’s urging, Jesus performs a miracle, ensuring that the celebration continues. John tells us that this act “revealed his glory” and made his disciples believe in him.

Mary plays a key role in this story. She notices a problem—seemingly trivial—and insists on action. Even as Jesus protests, “Woman, how does your concern affect me?” he trusts her judgment and acts. What follows is an extravagant gift of grace that transforms the celebration and brings joy to the community.

As members of the Franciscan Action Network, we can benefit from reflecting on the light mood of this gospel. We are surrounded by immense challenges: human suffering, environmental destruction, and deep divisions. Our work often feels heavy and focuses on urgent matters. But this lighthearted gospel also reminds us that faith calls us to celebrate life, human relationships, and communal joy.

Our Franciscan tradition teaches that prayer should inspire action. Like Mary, we are called to notice when the “wine runs out” in our communities and advocate for action. Whether through organizing, speaking out, or simply building connections, we can make a difference. As Isaiah reminds us, “For Zion’s sake I will not be silent” (Is. 62:1-5), and Paul teaches that all gifts, no matter how small, work together toward God’s love (1 Cor. 12:4-11).

In a time when our world feels divided and fractured, the question remains: where has the wine run out in your community? How can you help restore joy and connection? It might be as simple as sharing a coffee or a beer with someone you’ve grown distant from, or reaching out to a neighbor or friend despite political or ideological differences.

The invitation in this story is clear. Like Jesus at Cana, we are called to respond with generosity and act in ways that magnify God’s love. By doing so, we can help bridge the divides in our world and bring grace and unity to a hurting and divided community.

Tobias Harkleroad, OFS

Regional Councilor, Secular Franciscan Order

Suggested Action: Reach out to someone with whom you’ve lost touch or with whom you have differing views. Whether through a phone call, a shared meal, or a simple note, take a step



toward rebuilding connection and understanding. In doing so, help restore joy and bridge divides, fostering peace in your community.

Suggested Petitions:

God, help us to notice where joy is lacking in our communities and give us the courage to restore it through simple acts of kindness and compassion.

God, empower us to recognize the divisions around us and lead us in the work of reconciliation, uniting us through your love and mercy.

Prayer:

God of unity, we ask for your guidance as we seek to bring peace and healing to our divided world. Fill our hearts with compassion and wisdom, and empower us to work together toward a future of understanding and love.

Amen

Tomorrow: Urban Heat Island Disparities Webinar



[Register here](#) for our next environmental justice webinar **tomorrow, January 15, 2025 at 7 pm ET/4pm PT**. Our event will feature advocates from local organizations, Southside ReLeaf and Virginia Interfaith Power & Light, speaking on the heat island effects on communities of color and/or low wealth in the Richmond, VA area, what they are doing to mitigate this heating, and how you can help.

Feb. 4 Immigration Webinar


Join FAN staff and friends on **Tuesday, February 4, at 7 pm ET** for an evening of learning and discussion about immigration, including current developments, what is likely to happen next, and how all can support immigrants/refugees going forward. There will be a brief presentation, followed by a panel discussion with leaders in immigration advocacy and plenty of time for questions.

Immigration Update

What's Going On, and How Can I Help?

Moderators	Panelists
 Sr. Marie Lucey FAN Associate Director	 Eileen DeGuire FAN Legislative Director
 Rev. Julio Hernandez Congregation Action Network	 Giovana Oaxaca Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
 David Spicer USCCA	 Michelle Sardone Catholic Legal Immigration Network

February 4, 2025
7pm ET/6pm CT/5pm MT/4pm PT



Register Here!

[Register here](#)

Advocacy Works: Petrochemical Plant Cancelled



Mitsubishi Chemical Group has officially [announced the cancellation](#) of its proposed petrochemical plant in the river parishes (Ascension, St. James, and St. John the Baptist) of Louisiana. The plant would have emitted tons of harmful pollution and greenhouse gas. A coalition of climate justice activists organized the public to send comments to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ),

raised awareness about the plant's potential environmental and public health hazards, and hosted panel discussions on stopping the expansion of one more petrochemical plant in the Mississippi River corridor between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. This outcome highlights the power of activism and community organizing in promoting environmental justice.

Learn About Inequalities Affecting Farm Workers



Join *Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ)* on **Tuesday, January 14 at 8pm ET** for a session with Julie Taylor, Executive Director of the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) about the challenges faced by those who labor in agricultural fields—individuals who play a critical role in putting food on our tables yet often remain unseen and unheard.

Explore the inequalities impacting farm workers, including barriers to fair wages, worker rights, and immigration status, as well as the intersectional issues tied to racial and economic justice. [Click here to learn more and register.](#)

Jan. 26 Webinar on Nuclear Weapons and AI

On **Sunday, January 26, at 9AM ET / 2:00 PM GMT**, join leading experts for a webinar,



“Autonomous Armageddon: Nuclear Weapons and AI,” exploring the threat posed by integrating artificial intelligence in nuclear weapons.

Hosted by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, and Pugwash Conferences on Sciences and World Affairs, the event will feature Sir Geoffrey Hinton, Melissa Parke, Dr. Ruth Mitchell, and other global leaders in disarmament and AI safety. The discussion will address the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war and efforts to mitigate these threats. [Register here](#).

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

Members of the Cincinnati Area Franciscan Justice Circle (FJC) are involved in various efforts including solidarity with immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, environmental work, as well as ceasefire advocacy. They seek to connect with young people in their community to mutually support and empower the younger generation around the issues on their hearts. There are many [Franciscan Justice Circle](#) gatherings scheduled this month:

CT-RI FJC: Tues. Jan. 14 at 7:00 pm EST over zoom

Texas FJC Interest: Tues. Jan. 14 at 7:00 pm CST / 6:00 pm MST over zoom

Richmond, VA Area FJC: Wed. Jan. 15 at 8:00 am EST in person at state capitol

Boston FJC: Wed. Jan. 15 at 7:00 pm EST over zoom

Virtual FJC (limited mobility): Thurs. Jan. 16 at 2:00 pm EST over zoom

Phoenix Area FJC: Thurs. Jan. 16 at 6:00 pm MST over zoom

SoCal FJC: Thurs. Jan. 16 at 6:00 pm PST over zoom

Central Indiana FJC: Fri. Jan. 17 at 1:00 pm EST over zoom

Driftless Region FJC: Mon. Jan. 20 at 7:00 pm CST over zoom

Mid-Hudson Valley FJC: Tues. Jan. 21 at 12:00 pm EST over zoom

Cleveland Area FJC: Tues. Jan. 21 at 7:15 pm EST over zoom

SE Wisconsin FJC: Thurs. Jan. 23 at 4:00 pm CST over zoom

Reading, PA FJC: Sun. Jan. 26 at 3:00 pm EST in person

Denver Area FJC: Mon. Jan. 27 at 7:00 pm MST over zoom

For information about joining or forming a Franciscan Justice Circle, please contact Nora Pfeiffer at FJCinfo@franciscanaction.org.