

Publication Date: February 18, 2025

Reflection Date: February 23, 2025 - [Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Loving our Enemies in Difficult Times

The readings from the [Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) present us with a challenge that can sometimes feel impossible: to love our enemies. From David sparing Saul's life to Jesus' radical call in the Gospel of Luke, we are reminded that mercy is at the heart of our faith. These passages can be difficult, especially when we face real injustice today.

David had every opportunity to take revenge, but he chose active nonviolence, trusting in God's justice over human retaliation. Jesus takes this further, calling us not just to resist striking back but to confront evil with love that disarms and transforms. This is not about submission but about a creative force that seeks justice without replicating the violence we oppose.

Theologian Walter Wink described nonviolence as "Jesus' third way"—a path beyond fight or flight, where we resist oppression without dehumanizing the oppressor. This third way calls us to act boldly, confronting injustice while upholding human dignity. Loving our enemies is not sentimental but a demanding way of life that requires faith and persistence.

At Franciscan Action Network, we live out gospel nonviolence through advocacy and action, always remembering that everyone is made in God's image. Whether defending immigrants, advocating for peace, or standing against oppression, we believe nonviolence is key to building the world God desires. [The Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference](#), taking place on October 18-20, 2025, offers a powerful opportunity to step into Washington, D.C., and speak truth to power with courageous action and compassion. I invite you to join us!

In today's polarized world, loving our enemies is countercultural. It is in this time that we are most called to reflect God's mercy. May we, like David, trust in God's justice. May we, like Christ, offer love beyond measure.

Rosie Davila

Communications and Development Coordinator, Franciscan Action Network
Artist, Pace e Bene Campaign Nonviolence

Suggested Action: Today, reach out with kindness to someone you may see as an enemy—whether through a kind word or an open conversation. Consider joining our Feb 19



reflection event, [Living in Hope and Kindness](#). We invite you to consider joining the [Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference](#) on October 18-20, 2025, to stand for justice in a spirit of nonviolence.

Suggested Petitions:

We pray for the courage to love our enemies, confronting injustice and trusting in God's justice. We pray for wisdom and strength to embody nonviolence in our daily lives, building a world of dignity for all.

Prayer

God, give us the courage to love beyond our fear, to stand firm in truth even when it costs us. Let us not be passive in the face of injustice, but active in the pursuit of peace. May our lives be a witness to Your love.

Amen.

Join Us Tomorrow for Reflection

Tomorrow, **February 19, at 7pm ET / 6pm CT / 5pm MT / 4pm PT**, join FAN staff for an hour focused on "Living in Hope and Loving Kindness." This event will help you cultivate hope and courage to act with loving kindness. Similar to our Advent reflection, we will have guided meditation and quiet reflection, followed by time for small group sharing.

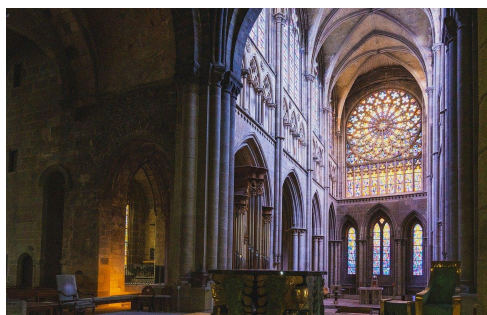
Register Here: <http://bit.ly/4aRQA2z>



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Stand with Houses of Worship

Faith communities have long provided refuge and support to those in need. A recent policy change by the Trump administration now makes it easier for ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to arrest people in houses of worship, hospitals, and schools—places that should remain safe for all.



A petition by *Sensitive Locations, Sacred Spaces* is urging the administration to restore these protections and for Congress to take action. [Click here to sign the petition.](#)

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](#)

Join the Lenten Fast to End Gun Violence

As Franciscans, we are called to nonviolence, yet gun violence continues to devastate communities across the U.S. FAN is a member of [Nuns Against Gun Violence](#) and we invite you to join the second annual Lenten Fast to End Gun Violence. This year's focus is on the intersection of gun violence and immigration.

The fast begins with an Ash Wednesday Prayer Service on **March 5 at 11am ET / 8am PT**. [Click here to register.](#) Participants are encouraged to connect with a local organization working to end gun violence and to use this fast as a public witness to the urgency of this crisis. Access the [commitment form](#) and other helpful tools in the [Lenten Fast Toolkit](#). For more information, contact **Sr. Maria Orlandini** at morlandini@franciscanaction.org.

Take Action: Protect Life-Saving Aid & Assistance

The Administration has halted nearly all foreign aid during its review of State Department and USAID programs, putting lives at risk. While as of right now, a judge has reversed that hold, it is temporary. At the same time, Congress is considering budgets that could slash Medicaid and SNAP, cutting health care and food assistance for millions. [Click here to contact your members of Congress to protect food assistance.](#)

As people of faith, we are called to stand with those in need. Urge Congress to protect essential programs that uphold human dignity and allow humanitarian aid to continue while under review. [Click here to contact your Senators and Representatives](#) with this action from Catholic Relief Services.

Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

The **Virtual FJC** is journeying together with the book [“Franciscan Nonviolence” from Pace e Bene](#), as formation and motivation for nonviolent action in many spheres. They meet the first and third Thursdays at 11 am Pacific / 2 pm Eastern and is open to people all over the country, especially those who have limited mobility.

Members of the **Mid-Hudson Valley FJC** have signed on to [Greenfaith's letter to Pres. Trump](#), encouraging decisions that support our common home and the well being of the human family. They have advocated with their legislators daily on various issues of concern such as support the NY for All Act and submitting letters to the editor regarding suicide and gun storage. Some members are volunteering to accompany sisters and brothers in migration at the southern border in February.

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

Cleveland-Area FJC: Tues. Feb. 18 at 7:15 pm EST over zoom

Twin Cities Minnesota FJC: Wed. Feb. 19 at 7:00 pm CST in person

Virtual FJC (limited mobility): Thurs. Feb. 20 at 2:00 pm EST / 11:00 am PST over zoom

Phoenix-Area FJC: Thurs. Feb. 20 at 6:00 pm MST over zoom

Denver-Area FJC: Mon. Feb. 24 at 7:00 pm MST over zoom

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