

Publication Date: March 25, 2025

Reflection Date: March 30, 2025 - [Fourth Sunday of Lent](#)

---

## Taste and see the goodness of the Lord

The scripture [readings for the Fourth Sunday of Lent](#) present us with a parable we all know very well, but what may be not so familiar is the reason why Jesus tells the parable of the Prodigal Son. I was struck by the introduction.

From the Gospel of Luke: “The Pharisees and the scribes began to complain, saying, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’ So, to them Jesus addressed this parable....” Jesus knows that the Pharisees and the scribes consider themselves the

just ones, on the side of the law, while Jesus, by welcoming the “sinners” and eating with them, is the one who does not follow the law and in their minds needs to be considered also a sinner, an outsider. With this parable Jesus tries to give them a chance to have a change of heart, inviting them to look at the other with new eyes, eyes of mercy and understanding, abandoning a judgmental position.

With the parable, Jesus wants to make clear that any one of us at times could be like the young son, behaving as if all is owed to him, or like an adolescent who wants it all not tomorrow but today, and without having worked for or deserved it. We can be lost in the way we look at life, expecting to have everything at once without considering consequences to oneself or others.

At times we also behave like the older son, building anger inside as we compare ourselves with others, focusing on what is not given to us, making everything an absolute: “...you *never* gave me a young goat to feast on with my friends.” The anger and insecurities of the older son have made him a stranger in his own home. We too, if we are not careful and reflect on our behavior, could run the risk of blaming others for what is instead a perception we have of ourselves.

With this well-known parable, Jesus wants to point out to the Pharisees and scribes, and to us, that all people make bad choices guided by a wrong understanding of what is valuable in life. Blessed are we if we have next to us someone like the Father, a merciful father, friend, companion, willing to reconcile, to forget the past and continue the journey together.

It is not easy at times to give to the other as well as ourselves a second chance, to have the honesty to look into our hearts, our relationship with God, and ourselves. Yet, is this not the outcome we seek from the Lenten journey? Is this not the path of reconciliation, or to say it with a more Franciscan heart, a path of continuous conversion for which we deeply search? “Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold new things have come,” as the letter to the Corinthians reminds us.



As we approach the end of Lent, let us take stock of where the Lenten journey has taken us. Who do we want to become? Like one of the sons or like the father? Our world today needs more “fathers” ready to reconcile, forgive and rejoice “because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.” Then, at Easter we too can join the psalmist and sing, “Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.”

## ***Sr. Maria Orlandini, OSF***

*Director of Advocacy*

**Suggested Action:** If possible, this week make a donation to Catholic Relief Services or another direct service organization. The closing of USAID has badly hurt all the humanitarian programs CRS was involved in and hundreds of workers were let go. To learn more and donate the website is <https://crs.org>

### **Suggested Petitions:**

For all those who find it difficult to trust in God’s mercy, may the love of God reach their heart.

For all those who lost their job recently, may they find other meaningful employment quickly.

### **Prayer**

**O God, who through your word  
reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way,  
grant, we pray,  
that with prompt devotion and eager faith  
the Christian people may hasten  
toward the solemn celebrations to come.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

## **Urgent: Use our Franciscan Voice on Appropriations**



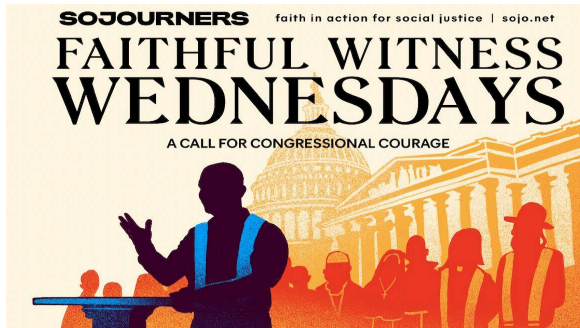
In view of the fast-moving U.S. government budget and appropriations processes, FAN has written a letter to Senators expressing **Franciscan priorities for federal funding** to care for our vulnerable neighbors and Earth through **critical programs including SNAP, Medicare, Social Security, and more**. We are asking FAN’s institutional member communities as well as individuals to sign. Please help us raise our collective Franciscan voice!

Please sign onto the letter at the link below by end of day Friday 3/28 to add your voice. Please share it with friends who would like to sign. We will keep you posted on the process and what we hear from Senators.

Button: [Sign on Here](#) by Fri. 3/28

## Wednesday Witness Vigils Mar 26 & Apr 2

FAN is cosponsoring a weekly prayer vigil by faith leaders outside the U.S. Capitol during Lent to pray for and communicate our concerns to members of the U.S. Congress. Read/listen to an NPR report on the vigils [here](#). This week, **Wed. Mar 26 at 12 noon eastern**, Executive Director Michele Dunne, OFS will offer a prayer. Register to attend or watch the livestream [here](#).



Next week, **Wed. Apr 2 at 11 am eastern**, Repairers of the Breach will host a Moral Witness prayer vigil outside the U.S. Supreme Court featuring Rev. William Barber and other faith leaders. Register to attend online or in person [here](#).

## Join us for Guided Meditation: April 8 at 7PM ET

Join FAN Staff and community members for a Lenten guided meditation and discussion, "Conversion of the Heart: Seeing Anew with Franciscan Eyes" on **Tuesday April 8 at 7pm ET/6pm CT/5pm MT/4pm PT**. Like our previous events, the first half will be a guided meditation and the second will have a small group discussion followed by a full group one. The meditation portion will be recorded for later viewing.

Button: [Register Here](#)

An event flyer for "Conversion of the Heart: Seeing Anew with Franciscan Eyes" featuring a QR code and registration information. The flyer has a dark background with white and orange text and a QR code on the right side.

Conversion of the Heart:  
Seeing Anew with  
Franciscan Eyes

April 8, 2025  
7pm ET/6pm CT/5pm MT/4pm PT

Join FAN staff and community members for an evening of reflection and discussion during the Lenten season.

Register using the QR code on the right, or at <https://bit.ly/FANLent>

## Recording of “Nonviolence & Noncooperation”

Thank you to everyone who attended the webinar *Using Our Power: Nonviolence & Noncooperation in History & Today* on March 19. We appreciate your participation in this important conversation. If you couldn't join us live, please watch the recording at your convenience by clicking the button below.

[\[Watch the Webinar\]](#)

## We're Hiring: Part-time Development Assistant

FAN is seeking a part-time Development Assistant (15 hours/week) to support fundraising efforts, including donation tracking, donor acknowledgments, and digital and direct mail campaigns. Experience with development, Salesforce, and Google Suite is preferred.

This remote or hybrid contract position is open immediately for at least three months, with the possibility of extension. [Click here for more information.](#)

## Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

**Registration for Love in Action: FJLC 2025 is now open! Join us in Washington, D.C. from October 18-20, 2025—[click here to sign up.](#)**

The **Rochester, NY FJC** continues to explore ways they can actively support immigrant families who are experiencing vulnerability due to the rhetoric and way policy decisions are being made and carried out. At their March meeting, they invited a local priest who ministers within the immigrant community to share his stories which were very difficult to hear. All were encouraged to be welcoming to others no matter what the color of their skin or their nationality.

Nonviolent living and how that applies to our actions in response to what goes on in our communities remains the focus of the **Virtual FJC**. Using the book *Franciscan Nonviolence* for formation and reflection, the FJC meets every first and third Thursday of the month.

Upcoming [Franciscan Justice Circle](#) (FJC) gatherings:

**CT-RI FJC:** Tues. March 25 at 7:00 pm ET over Zoom

**Twin Cities Region FJC (MN):** Tues. March 25 at 7:00 pm CT over Zoom

**Texas FJC:** Tues. March 25 at 7:15 pm CT over Zoom

**SE Wisconsin FJC:** Thurs. March 27 at 4:00 pm CT over Zoom

**Kansas FJC:** Tues. April 1 at 7:00 pm CT over Zoom

**Ohio FJC:** Wed. April 2 at 7:00 pm ET over Zoom

**Virtual FJC (limited mobility):** Thurs. April 3 at 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET over Zoom

**Chicagoland FJC:** Sat. April 5 at 10:00 am CT over Zoom

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