

Publication Date: March 4, 2025

Reflection Date: March 9, 2025 - [The First Sunday of Lent](#)

The Same Lord of All

The [readings for March 9, the first Sunday of Lent](#), remind us of God's providential call to remember and act. Our first reading from the book of Deuteronomy urges us to recall our shared history and to respond generously. The letter to the Romans reminds us that God's grace is for everyone, not just those who are deemed worthy. The text tells us that "*there is no distinction between Jew or Greek, the same Lord is Lord of all.*" This is a clear message of inclusivity and oneness. The Gospel of Luke highlights the importance of resisting the temptations of power and privilege, calling us to live with integrity and purpose.



These passages speak directly to many of the challenges we face today. In a world marked by inequality, division, and systemic injustice, God's call to justice is more relevant than ever. Movements for racial equity, economic justice, and environmental stewardship can draw inspiration from these passages, which emphasize the dignity and worth of every person.

They also remind us of our shared humanity, challenging us to build inclusive communities and inspire us to resist the forces of oppression and corruption. As we reflect on the readings for this first Sunday of Lent, we are called to act with courage and compassion, trusting that our efforts, however small, contribute to the building up of God's kingdom on earth.

We are invited to reflect on our individual and collective roles in promoting justice. How can we, like the Israelites, offer our "first fruits" to support those in need? How can we embody the radical inclusivity the Apostle Paul describes in his letter to the Romans? How can we, like Jesus, resist the temptations of power and privilege in our daily lives?

Practical steps might include volunteering with organizations that serve marginalized communities, advocating for policies that promote equity, and engaging in practices of prayer and reflection to sustain our commitment to justice. By grounding our actions in the Word of God, we can draw strength and guidance for the difficult work ahead. For this Lenten journey, consider joining a [Franciscan Justice Circle](#), if there is one in your immediate area. If there is no Justice Circle, think about starting one with help from FAN.

In a world crying out for justice, our readings for this first Sunday of Lent serve as a beacon of hope and a call to action. May we, like the Israelites, remember our story. May we, like Paul, proclaim the inclusivity of God's love. And may we, like Jesus, stand firm in the face of temptation, working tirelessly for a world that reflects the justice and mercy of our Creator God. And when the way seems dark and uncertain, you can cry out like the Psalmist, "*Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble,*" and surely God will hear.

Carolyn Townes OFS

Former FAN Board Member
Convener of Virtual Franciscan Justice Circle

Suggested Action:

This Lent, answer God's call to justice by supporting those in need, resisting injustice, and building inclusive communities. Consider joining or starting a [Franciscan Justice Circle](#) through FAN to take action in faith.

Suggested Petitions:

For those who suffer under systems of oppression, discrimination, and injustice—may they find strength, courage, and allies in the struggle for their dignity and rights. *We pray to the Lord...*

For communities affected by violence, war, and displacement—may they experience healing, restoration, and the hope of a just and lasting peace. *We pray to the Lord...*

For all who work tirelessly for justice, equity, and peace—may they be strengthened in their mission, knowing their labor is not in vain. *We pray to the Lord...*

Prayer

God of mercy and righteousness, you call us to be bearers of light in a world too often shadowed by injustice and despair. Strengthen our resolve to stand with the oppressed, to speak truth in love, and to act with bold compassion. May our hearts be restless until justice flows like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amen.

Nonviolence & Noncooperation Webinar March 19

Wednesday | March 19, 2025

Using Our Power:

Nonviolence & Noncooperation In History & Today

1-hour webinar with
Maria Stephan and Rivera Sun.



PACE E BENE
NONVIOLENCE SERVICE

FRANCISCAN
ACTION NETWORK

Join Franciscan Action Network and Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service for a one-hour webinar on **Wednesday, March 19, at 4 PM ET**. *Using Our Power – Nonviolence & Noncooperation In History & Today* will feature **Maria Stephan**, coauthor of *Why Civil Resistance Works*, and **Rivera Sun** of Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service, with reflections from **Ken Butigan** on nonviolence in the lives of St. Francis and St. Clare and **Michele Dunne** moderating the conversation.

Learn about nonviolent strategies that have driven change throughout history and how they are used today. Register now to reserve your spot!

Button: [Click here to register](#)

Registration is Open: 2025 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference: Love in Action

Registration is now open for the **2025 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference: Love in Action** from **October 18-20, 2025**, at the Yours Truly Hotel in Washington DC.

This inspiring event invites young and older adults to explore justice, peace, and care for creation together through thought-provoking speakers, communication and civic engagement training, and advocacy meetings on Capitol Hill. Together, we'll deepen our

Franciscan values and engage in meaningful action on the challenges our world faces today. We hope to see you here in Washington DC for this encouraging and empowering gathering.



[\[Register Now\]](#)

[\[Learn more here\]](#)

Ash Wednesday Events at U.S. Capitol

FAN will cosponsor or attend several events in Washington DC on Wednesday, March 5 to uplift the faith voice in favor of responsible governance and care for the poor and marginalized:



Witness Wednesday Prayer Vigil, organized by Sojourners with FAN cosponsoring, will take place on the US Capitol grounds on Wed March 5 at 12 noon eastern time. Register [here](#) to attend in person or watch the [livestream](#). Witness Wednesdays will continue weekly at least through the month of March.

Repairers of the Breach will hold a march to the Supreme Court on Wed March 5 at 11 am led by Rev. Bishop William Barber. Register to attend [here](#) or watch [livestream](#).

Pax Christi USA will hold a Catholic prayer service and distribution of ashes near the U.S. Capitol on Wed Mar 5 at 9 am. Register to attend in person [here](#).

Seek Alternatives to Immigration Detention Expansion

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture is raising concerns about plans to significantly expand the U.S. immigration detention system, including new large-scale facilities and the use of Guantánamo Bay. This expansion would require substantial federal funding, which would come at the cost of essential programs like Medicaid and SNAP.

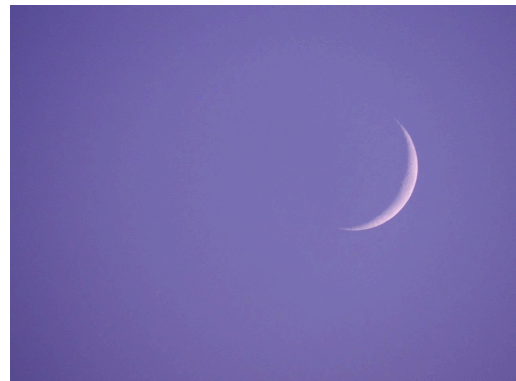
As Franciscans and people of faith, we are called to uphold human dignity and seek just, compassionate policies. We encourage you to consider [clicking here to contact your representatives](#) and ask them to oppose this expansion and support humane alternatives that respect the rights and dignity of migrants.

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 programs like SNAP, Medicare, Social Security, etc, are impacting you**, even if you are unavailable for a meeting, please contact us.

Button: [Contact Eileen](#)

Ramadan and Lent

Last week, Muslims around the world began observing Ramadan, and this week Christians will enter the holy season of Lent. In these times of division, both faith traditions call us to prayer, fasting, and generosity—drawing us closer to God and one another. May we keep each other in prayer and live out these shared values with compassion and love. Please see information about Muslim-Christian gatherings during Ramadan [here](#).



Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

The **CT-RI Franciscan Justice Circle** members have been making calls to their Congressional Representatives in support of the clean energy and climate programs under the Inflation Reduction Act that are facing threats of being repealed. They've also joined the CT Sierra Club's advocacy at the state level on supporting creation friendly policies like an Environmental Rights Amendment. One member submitted written testimony for consideration at the state legislature and others are interested in learning how to do so in the future. The FJC is considering organizing an [Offering of Letters](#) with Bread for the World.

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

Mid-Hudson Valley FJC: Tues. March 4 at 12:00 pm EST over zoom

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

Cincinnati & Cleveland FJCs: Wed. March 5 at 7:15 pm EST over zoom

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

Washington 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

CT-RI FJC: Tues. March 11 at 7:00 pm ET over zoom

DE Valley FJC: Tues. March 11 at 7:00 pm ET over zoom

New Mexico FJC: Tues. March 11 at 7:00 pm MT over zoom

National FJC Call: Wed. March 12 at 1:00 pm PT / 4:00 pm ET over zoom

Rochester, NY FJC: Thurs. March 13 at 3:30 pm ET over zoom

Central Indiana FJC: Fri. March 14 at 1:00 pm ET 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