

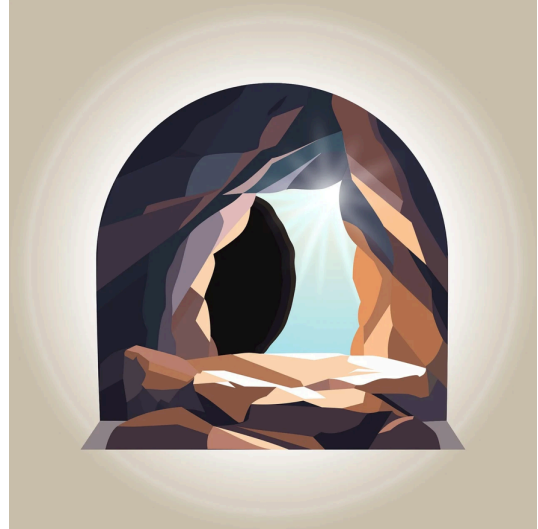
Publication Date: April 15, 2025

Reflection Date: April 20, 2025 - [The Resurrection of the Lord, the Mass of Easter Day](#)

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## Hope in the Darkest Places

The [gospel reading for the Easter Mass](#) (Jn 20:1-9) tells of the actions of Mary Magdalene, John, and Peter that first Easter morning. We have all experienced something like the despair Mary, John, and Peter must have felt as they went to the tomb that morning. All three are probably at the lowest point in their lives. We have all had moments when we feel that life as we know it has ended, when we lose a parent, child, or loved one, lose the means to support ourselves and our family, or are hurt by another.



Mary, Peter, and John each take action that Easter morning despite thinking that their world as they knew it has crumbled. Each goes to the grave, and with that, they are each transformed by and amazed at the power of God. Each of them experience the empty tomb differently, in the way that Jesus knows it is best for them to believe and hope again.

Our first reading (Acts 10:34a, 37-43) speaks of Peter's witness to the hope of the Resurrection. Peter is now quite different from the Peter who denied Jesus on Good Friday because of fear. He has all but forgotten the guilt he must have felt in denying Jesus as he proclaims for all to hear, "We are witnesses of all that he did" (Acts 10: 39). This transformation that occurs in Peter as well as Mary Magdalene and John is available to each of us, to be the witness and person God created us to be.

Our world is crying out for our Christian witness of all that Jesus did. "He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God" (Acts 10: 42). We witness to our belief in the Resurrection whenever we allow the hope of Christ to penetrate our despair and the death-dealing structures of our world.

Jesus' Resurrection is a powerful reminder that the ruling political and religious elites do not, and will not, have the final say. Instead, Jesus Christ reigns triumphant, and he commissions us, his followers, to go to every corner of our nation and world, especially in the seemingly darkest places and times, to spread the gospel message. As we strive to live a life rooted in faith, charity, and justice, we actively build God's kingdom here on earth.

Our belief in the Resurrection impels us—amid the problems in our nation and world that may seem overwhelming at times, our destruction of God's creation, the dehumanizing and violent rhetoric that can easily lead to war, "othering" or demonizing any person or group who is different from us, extreme economic inequalities, oppression of the poor and vulnerable—to

believe something more is possible. Peter reminds us in Acts that Jesus "went about doing good and healing all those oppressed." Because of Jesus, we embrace hope and believe that no injustice is too large to overcome.

**Sr. Maryann Mueller, OSF**  
*Felician Sisters of North America*  
*CT-RI Franciscan Justice Circle*

**Suggested Action:** Consider calling your legislators about issues that matter, a powerful way to influence them. [Please click here](#) to find your federal, state and local elected officials.

**Suggested Petitions:** Creator God, give us the words and courage to witness to the hope of your Resurrection to those who need it this week.

### Prayer

**Risen Christ, in our sorrow and despair, you call us to hope. Transform our hearts with the power of your Resurrection. Help us witness your love and peace in a broken world. Because you live, we dare to hope and build your kingdom.**

**Amen.**

## Welcome Nora Collins, Director of Campaigns



FAN is pleased to welcome Nora Collins as our new Director of Campaigns and Creation Care. She will lead FAN's advocacy on environmental issues and also assist in building our Franciscan Justice Circles. Nora brings over 25 years of experience working at the intersection of faith, justice, and advocacy, including roles with Catholic Relief Services, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps, and the Archdiocese of Washington. She lives in Baltimore with her family and is a founding volunteer with the South Baltimore Retreat Center.

[Send Nora a welcome note](#)

## Upcoming FAN Events

**TONIGHT** - Join us for an **Advocacy Training Workshop at 7 pm ET** where we will go over how to call your representatives, write messages to them, how to schedule and have a meeting with their staff, and write a letter to the editor. [Click here to register](#). If you are unable to attend, don't worry! We will share a recording of the event.

**Wed. June 11, Online FAN Benefit** - You're invited to [FAN's 2025 Benefit, "I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me: A Century of Franciscan Solidarity with Migrants,"](#) on June 11 at 7 PM ET on Zoom. This year, FAN staff will sponsor and serve a meal at St. Francis of Assisi Church in NYC. Register to join us online for this special event or receive a recording. [Click here to register.](#)

**Sat-Mon October 18-20, FJLC** - Register now for the 2025 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference, taking place October 18-20 in Washington, DC. Join people of all ages from across the country for a weekend of community, action, and deepening the call to justice. Spots are going quickly! [Click here for more details.](#)

## Take Action for Earth Day 2025

This Earth Day (April 22), the Franciscan Action Network joins 32 faith-based organizations in urging Congress to oppose the repeal of **clean energy tax credits** in the upcoming budget reconciliation bill. These credits have created over 400,000 jobs and are essential to addressing the climate crisis. In Laudate Deum, or "praise God," Pope Francis calls for a hastened transition to renewable energy and the "abandonment of fossil fuels." FAN honors the Pope's appeal and **advocates with our members of Congress this Mother Earth Day!**

[Act Now! Urge Congress to Protect Clean Energy](#)

## Take Action for Immigration and Voting Rights

**Immigration:** Refugee Council USA has an action alert asking members of Congress to restore refugee resettlement. Sign on [here](#).

**Democracy/Voting Rights:** Last Thursday, the House of Representatives passed HR 22, the SAVE Act. This bill would make it a lot harder for many eligible citizens to vote because they lack the necessary paperwork to satisfy its extreme documentation requirements, and it would also upend mail and online voter registration systems ([click here for more information](#)). To protect voting rights, it is critical that the Senate vote against it. **Call your senator today asking them to oppose it!**





## Holy Week Events

**Witness Wednesday Prayer Vigil**, organized by Sojourners with FAN cosponsoring, will take place on the US Capitol grounds on Wed April 14 at 12 pm EDT. Fr. Sam Nasada, Provincial Councilor for the OFMs, will be speaking. Register [here](#) to attend in person or watch the [livestream](#).

Join Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns on Good Friday, April 18 at 12 pm eastern time for the **2025 Way of the Cross for Peace and Justice**. FAN is cosponsoring this event, and members of the FAN Staff will be participating and reading stations. [Register here to attend in person](#) in Washington DC or [click here to watch it on YouTube](#).

## Franciscan Justice Circle Updates

On April 2, the SE Wisconsin Franciscan Justice Circle gathered with St. Anthony High School students, Secular Franciscans, and Franciscan Sisters at Milwaukee's Habitat for Humanity. They explored housing racism in Milwaukee and discussed faith-based responses to injustice. Students led a lunch prayer, followed by conversations on Catholic Social Teaching and personal calls to action. In the afternoon, the group toured a materials warehouse and visited homes under construction in the Harambee neighborhood.

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

**Boston Area FJC:** Wed. April 16 at 7:00 pm ET over Zoom

**Driftless Region FJC** (WI, MN): Mon. April 21 at 6:00 pm CT over Zoom

**CT-RI FJC:** Tues. April 22 at 7:00 pm ET over Zoom

**Texas FJC:** Tues. April 22 at 7:15 pm CT over Zoom

**SE Wisconsin FJC:** Thurs. April 24 at 4:00 pm CT over Zoom

**Phoenix Area FJC:** Thurs. April 24 at 5:00 pm MST 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 [FJInfo@franciscanaction.org](mailto:FJInfo@franciscanaction.org).