

Publication Date: August 19, 2025

Reflection Date: August 24, 2025 - [Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Seeking God in a Troubled World

The gospel passage for the [Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) presents us with a question posed to Jesus: “Lord, will only a few people be saved?” There is no reason to believe that the person asking this question is anything but authentic, not trying to set Jesus up for a test. I imagine a sincere seeker, not unlike myself, honestly wondering about God’s mercy and what we are being called to be part of by following the way of Jesus. The stains of sin that can be seen across human history and even across our news feeds can easily lead us to wonder if there are many of us who can be saved.

Before considering how Jesus answered, it is helpful to consider the words of the Prophet Isaiah: “I know their works and their thoughts, and I come to gather nations of every language.” The Letter to the Hebrews recalls the lessons of the Jewish faith that Jesus was raised in by admonishing its readers: “God treats you as sons.” We sing with the Psalmist: “For steadfast is God’s kindness toward us, and the fidelity of the LORD endures forever.” Alleluia!

The answer that Luke’s Gospel provides us to someone’s question is probably not exactly what the person was looking for. We desire assurances, we’d love to be told with certainty that hell is empty. But, Jesus turns his answer back on us: “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough.”

These readings all ask us to consider the God whom St. Francis called “good, all-good, supreme good.” In knowing that the God of Israel already knows us, already considers us as sons and daughters, and is already coming to gather us all, we should lean into faith in God’s love for us. Rather than worrying about who will be saved and trying to do a cost-benefit analysis on whether or not to try for the narrow gate, we should trust in the Lord’s kindness and fidelity and trust that in following the Way, our loving God will heal us, feed us, and strengthen us. God desires for each of us to be among the people who come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, to recline at table in the kingdom of God. At Franciscan Action Network, we strive to show all people this acceptance and love of Christ. Thank you for being a part of our Network!

Toby Harkleroad, OFS

Doctoral Candidate at Virginia Theological Seminary

Suggested Action: Consider [signing the EPA petition](#) to protect our health and climate.

The EPA is considering repealing the Endangerment Finding, which would remove its ability to regulate climate pollution. Urge the agency to do what’s right by **September 1, 2025**.

Suggested Petitions:

For the Church, that we may trust in God’s mercy and strive to follow Jesus. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who doubt they are worthy of God’s love, that they may know they are called and beloved. Let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer

Good and loving God,
You know our hearts and our hopes.
Help us to trust in your mercy,
walk the narrow way of love,
and rejoice in the promise of your kingdom.

Amen.

Urgent! Only 14 more days to act. Sign EPA petition.



Please use the public comment period to urge the EPA to do what is right: do not repeal the Endangerment Finding and deny the health impacts of climate pollution. Please take action by September 1, 2025!

[Sign EPA Petition](#)

What's happening?

EPA Administrator Lee Zelden proposes repealing the Endangerment Finding, which would dismantle the legal basis and duty for the government to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles and power plants. This repeal threatens the EPA's legal authority to limit climate pollution. Climate change is real and urgent, as Pope Francis called it "one of humanity's principal challenges." The U.S. has both moral and legal obligations to reduce emissions and protect vulnerable communities. Without the Endangerment Finding, the EPA forfeits its legal authority to limit climate pollution.

Learn more!



As an ecologist, as well as a Franciscan, I urge you to support the current guidelines and regulations. Stop this obvious denial of climate change based on years of sound science. These regulations are needed to protect all of us and the future.

Dr. Ann Mayo, OSF
St. Theresa Parish
Farmville VA



I strongly encourage you to reconsider - I want a cleaner, safer world and I am sure you do also. So please, do what you know is best.

Sr. Ruthie Westmoreland OSF
Clinton Franciscan
Clinton Iowa



I sincerely hope you will show reverence for the earth which provides and sustains life for all human and other creatures. I believe you have a moral obligation to do so.

Sr. Nancy Shively, OSC
Franciscan Monastery
of St. Clare

Do you need an image for Sr. Joan to click on? I took a screenshot.

“The climate crisis is a spiritual crisis... We need rules to address pollution... Join me to tell the EPA yes to life.”

- Sr Joan Brown



World Day of Migrants and Refugees Procession

The Archdiocese of Washington and Jesuit Refugee Service will host a Procession in Solidarity and Prayer with Migrants and Refugees on **Sunday, September 28**, from **2:30 - 6:30 PM ET** in Washington DC. This event marks the World Day of Migrants and Refugees and the Jubilee of Migrants, concluding with Mass celebrated by Cardinal McElroy. [Click here](#) to learn more.

For those outside of DC, please keep migrants and refugees in your prayers. As Pope Leo XIV [writes](#), “In a world darkened by war and injustice, even when all seems lost, migrants and refugees stand as messengers of hope.”



Christians for Ceasefire and Just Peace

In-District Actions at Congressional Offices/Townhalls: August

Most congressional reps are at home during much of August. Take this opportunity to meet with representatives or visit their offices, town halls, or other suitable events to ask them to support a ceasefire in Gaza, urgent humanitarian assistance to avert starvation, and a cutoff of offensive weapons.

Complicit Companies Campaign - Expose and Divest: A large coalition of Christian organizations is launching an economic resistance campaign focused on tech company [Palantir](#) and [Chevron](#). One Palantir co-founder is a Christian, and both co-founders have publicly supported the Israeli government through AI and surveillance contracts with the Israeli military, while also enabling ICE mass deportations. The campaign aims to create economic and political pressure to reduce corporate support for Israel and help shift U.S. policy to end ethnic cleansing in Gaza and the West Bank. A [national day of action](#) at Palantir offices, organized by Our Revolution, is set for Aug. 23. Learn more through the links above and join an Aug. 23 action if you can. More details soon.

Did you know? Only 32% in U.S. Back Israel's Military Action in Gaza, a New Low

Americans' approval of Israel's military action in Gaza has fallen 10 percentage points since the prior measurement in September 2024, and it is now at 32%, the lowest reading since Gallup first asked the question in [November 2023](#). **Disapproval of the military action has now reached 60%.**

Thank you, Rebecca!

The Franciscan Action Network staff extends our heartfelt thanks to Rebecca Park, our summer intern. She brought an exceptional attention to detail and a kind, justice-oriented spirit to all her work. We are grateful for her and wish her the very best in her next chapter.



Interested in interning with FAN, or know someone who might be? Applications for fall interns are now open! [Click here to learn more](#) and [apply here](#).

Franciscan Justice Circles

The **Texas FJC** members support and invite each other to action such as writing letters to the editor, to members of Congress, praying together with others on a larger scale (such as Day of Peace), meeting with members of Congress and participating in peaceful public witness events.



Judy Traeger, New Mexico FJC member, celebrates [Campaign Nonviolence Action Days](#)

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

Pacific Northwest FJC: Thur. Aug. 21 at 1:00 pm PT via Zoom

Boston-area FJC: Thur. Aug. 21 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Phoenix-area FJC: Thur. Aug. 21 at 5:00 pm MST via Zoom

SoCal FJC: Thur. Aug. 21 at 6:00 pm PT via Zoom

SE Wisconsin FJC: Mon. Aug. 25 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

Twin Cities FJC: Mon. Aug. 25 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

Colorado FJC: Mon. Aug. 25 at 7:00 pm MT via Zoom

CT - RI FJC: Tues. Aug. 26 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Texas FJC: Tues. Aug. 26 at 7:15 pm CT via Zoom

W. PA FJC: Thur. Aug. 28 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

To find out more about any of the [FJC](#) gatherings coming up or for information about joining or forming a Circle, please sign up [HERE](#).