

Publication Date: September 9, 2025

Reflection Date: September 14, 2025 - [Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross](#)

Transformed by the Cross

The Bible constantly surprises me, just as real life does. Today I was surprised by the strong link made in the readings for the [Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross](#) connecting Moses to Jesus via the story of the serpent biting the Israelites in the desert connected to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In the Gospel of John we read: *And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.*



Here's what gets me about God's perspective, as portrayed in this passage. God put together in one neat package seemingly contradictory images and story lines:

- The serpent is the symbol of the devil because the serpent offered Eve the fruit of the tree of knowledge in the garden of Eden and thus bring them death.
- The serpent is killing the Israelites in the desert – so once again a symbol of death.
- Moses is commanded by God to put a symbol of the serpent on a pole made of wood [eg. A tree] and use it to heal people who have been bitten by a serpent and thus bring life.
- Jesus is put on the cross, also referred to as a tree to die to bring life, and life eternal.

In other words, life and death are two threads which weave together to create our lives; life cannot exist without death. Now this death can be physical, but I think during our brief lives we also die in many other ways: emotionally, intellectually, relationally, etc. However, with faith that death can be transformed to bring life.

So how can we use this teaching in our daily lives? We can, when we suffer, pray with God and then work with others to transform that suffering into a new way of being, to be reborn in some way. I see this as a life long process, not a single event. Our life is filled with little deaths and then rebirths. When we do that we make resurrection a reality in our lives and when we make that visible to others our faith will shine and that is often the best way to share the Good News. Just as Franciscan Action Network seeks to embody resurrection by turning pain into hope for our communities, we too can let our little deaths be reborn into new ways of living. I leave you with this little prayer to help get you through this day:

I am filled with despair. Yet again life has knocked me down and I don't know if I have the strength to get back up. Please give me your strength to keep going. I know that with You by my side, I can face anything. Amen.

Gordon Kubanek

Third Order Franciscan and Writer

Suggested Action: It is easier to keep going when we have community. Please consider joining FAN for a [virtual Transitus](#) on Thursday, October 2 at 7PM. It will be a great opportunity to connect with other Franciscan-hearted people working for rebirth in our world.

Suggested Petitions:

For all who feel worn down by hardship, that they may discover strength and renewal in God's presence, we pray.

For communities of faith, that we may witness to hope by accompanying one another through trials into new beginnings, we pray.

Prayer

Loving God, when we face loss or struggle, help us trust that you are already at work bringing new life. Give us courage to rise again and to walk with others in hope. Amen.

Amen.



Transitus Service - Thursday, October 2 at 7PM

You are warmly invited to a **Virtual Transitus Service** hosted by Franciscan Justice Circles across the U.S. on **Thursday, October 2 at 7 PM ET on Zoom**. This will be a Transitus like no other, when we not only remember the precious passing of our spiritual father, St. Francis of Assisi, but we also connect his experience to our own. Don't miss this unique opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the life and passing of St. Francis as well as to connect with one another in our shared work for peace and justice. [Click here to register.](#)

Welcome, Robert!

FAN staff is excited to welcome Robert Christian as our Communications Director! Robert is a former educator, activist, columnist, and social media manager, as well as the founding editor of *Millennial*, an online publication by millennial Catholics on religion, politics, and culture. Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, he studied at the University of the Pacific before earning graduate degrees at the University of Leicester and the Catholic University of



America. Robert now lives in Derwood, MD, with his wife and three children.

Please join us in giving Robert a warm welcome!

[Click here](#) to send Robert a welcome message.

Endangerment Finding: 3500 signatures & counting!



Please add your signature to the online petition to urge EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin to do what is right: do not repeal the Endangerment Finding and deny the health impacts of climate pollution. The Endangerment Finding provides the legal basis for the U.S. government to regulate greenhouse gases. The proposed repeal would allow pollution from vehicles, power plants, and other sources go unchecked, erode life-saving public health protections, and set the stage for irreversible harm to God's creation.

Join thousands of people of faith who have already signed by submitting a comment, now extended to **September 15**, during this Season of Creation.

[Sign the Petition](#)

Join a Pilgrimage of Hope for Creation

As we celebrate the anniversaries of the Canticum of the Creatures, Laudato Si', and the Jubilee Year, Catholic communities across the United States are uniting through **Pilgrimages of Hope for Creation** during the Season of Creation (September 1 – October 4, 2025).



Together we will pray for the grace to encounter Christ in the natural world and restore our relationships with God, Creation, and one another.

[Click here to join a pilgrimage](#)

Suicide Prevention Day

Tomorrow, September 10, is World Suicide Prevention Day. All of us at FAN hold in our hearts all who are struggling and those who have lost someone to suicide. Faith calls us not only to compassion but also to action. One concrete way to protect vulnerable lives is by supporting policies like [Extreme Risk Protection Orders](#) (ERPOs), which help prevent suicide by temporarily removing access to firearms from those at imminent risk. Let us be people of presence and advocacy, working to save lives and bring healing to our communities.



Franciscan Justice Circles

Members of the **NYC-Area FJC**, **Mid-Hudson Valley FJC** and a group from Franciscan university, **Siena**, participated in stops along the route of a statewide caravan in solidarity with immigrants. The [caravan](#) fostered an appreciation for immigrants by holding up their humanity and emphasizing their essential contributions to New York's rural economy and agriculture. Br. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM shared [this video](#) of the caravan's stop at Siena.

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

DE Valley FJC (PA, DE, NJ): Tues. Sept. 9 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Monthly national FJCs call: Wed. Sept. 10 at 4:00 pm ET via Zoom

Rochester, NY FJC: Thur. Sept. 11 at 3:30 pm ET via Zoom

SoCal FJC: Thur. Sept. 11 at 6:00 pm PT via Zoom

Central Indiana FJC: Fri. Sept. 12 at 1:00 pm ET via Zoom

DC-area FJC: Sat. Sept. 13 at 10:00 am ET In Person

Driftless Region FJC: Mon. Sept. 15 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

St. Bonaventure U. FJC: Wed. Sept. 17 at 12:30 pm ET In Person

Boston FJC: Wed. Sept. 17 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Virtual FJC (ltd. mobility): Thur. Sept. 18 at 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET via Zoom

Pacific Northwest FJC: Thur. Sept. 18 at 1:00 pm PT via Zoom

Phoenix-area FJC: Thur. Sept. 18 at 5:00 pm MST 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](#).