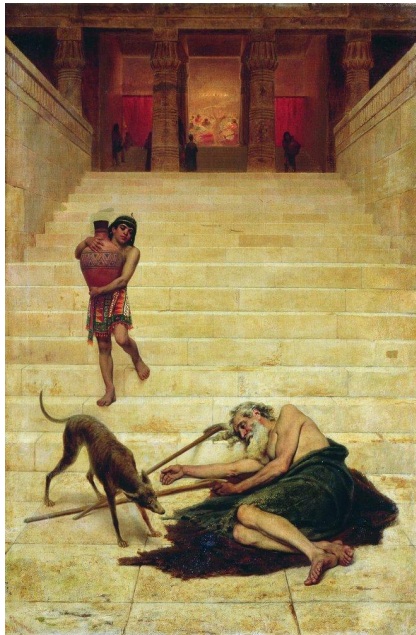


Publication Date: September 23, 2025

Reflection Date: September 28, 2025 - [Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

## Who are the Lazaruses in our lives?

In the Gospel of Luke (16:19-31), we hear the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. I first heard the parable when I played the role of the rich man in a children's liturgy skit. I remember the feeling of disappointment because the other child, who played Lazarus, entered Heaven, and I did not. But the experience taught me a much broader lesson: the importance of how we treat one another. The Gospel poses us a question: Who are the Lazaruses in our lives? It's the outcasts, the sick and suffering, and all those whose voice is not heard.



For three years, I have resided at the Saint Francis Inn in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. For over half a century, the Inn has served hot meals and provided fellowship to the poor and marginalized. Over the past three years, this experience has opened my eyes and heart to both my ministry and the words of Jesus Christ.

In Kensington, I have witnessed several individuals with sores on their bodies, especially those who are suffering from the constant cycle of addiction. I often find this experience frustrating, and I'm prone to acting like the rich man. However, I am constantly reminded that, like Lazarus, these sisters and brothers are often treated as though they are unwanted by our society. Therefore, God calls us to do more, to live counterculturally.

For over a year, I have served as an advocacy associate with the Franciscan Action Network, particularly in the areas of homelessness and housing. This experience has challenged me to reflect on my current ministry. It also challenges me to do more to make a difference. This gospel passage challenges us to stand up for those on the margins, who are viewed as a Lazarus in today's world. As my experience in Philly and with FAN has taught me, direct service

and advocacy are interconnected. Therefore, we must advocate with and in favor of those whose voices often go unheard, so that they might not live on “scraps from the table,” but rather, live fully dignified lives. In a world full of extreme division and polarization, God calls us to treat one another with compassion and generosity. Lazarus remains one of my favorite figures in the gospels because his story reminds me how to treat each person I encounter with human dignity.

## **Br. James LaGrutta, OFM**

*FAN Advocacy Associate*

**Suggested Action:** Following the Department of Agriculture’s [cancellation](#) of an annual report on hunger in the United States, look into sources of information about hunger in your state or your community. How will you find out which of your neighbors need your care?

### **Suggested Petitions:**

*For all those who are ignored, marginalized, and discarded, may their voices be heard and their dignity affirmed, we pray to the Lord*

*For those of us who judge too quickly and too harshly, may we remember the goodness of each person no matter their struggles and affirm that goodness in how we see and treat them, we pray to the Lord*

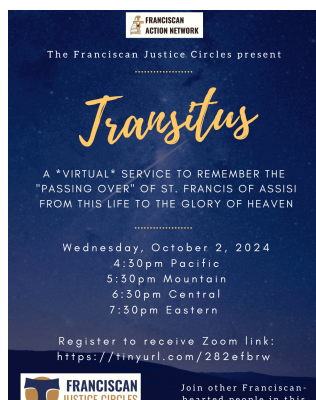
### **Prayer**

**Creator God,**

**Lazarus suffered in this life and endured many hardships. Today, several of our sisters and brothers continue to face hardships and several forms of injustice. Help us to become more aware and attentive to those in need, and to advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves. Help us to hold our elected leaders accountable, so that we might work together to promote legislation that breaks down the barriers of injustice**

**Amen.**

## **Transitus Service - Thursday, October 2 at 7PM ET**



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 / 6 pm CT / 5 pm MT / 4 pm PT 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.](https://tinyurl.com/282efbrw)

## The Golden Jubilee of Sister Maria Orlandini, OSF



Earlier this month, there was a celebration for the Golden Jubilee of Sister Maria Orlandini, OSF, FAN's Director of Advocacy, and her many contributions to the Church and the world as a vowed religious for the past 50 years. Those in attendance celebrated her years of service, while joining together in song and prayer to praise and thank God for who she is and all she has done in those remarkable 50 years. They also joined together in praying John O'Donohue's 'A Blessing of Solitude':

*May you recognize in your life, the presence, power and light of your soul.*

*May you realize that you are never alone,  
That your soul in its brightness and belonging  
connects you intimately with the rhythm of the universe.*

*May you have respect for your own individuality and difference.*

*May you realize that the shape of your soul is unique,*

*that you have a special destiny here,*

*That behind the facade of your life*

*there is something beautiful, good, and eternal happening.*

*May you learn to see yourself with the same delight, pride,  
and expectation with which God sees you in every moment. Amen!*

## Secular Franciscan Order USA presents JPIC Award to Carolyn Townes, OFS



The Secular Franciscan Order USA presented its annual Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Award to Carolyn Townes, OFS, on September 10. The award is given to members who embody Franciscan values through their actions and initiatives. In her speech, Carolyn said, "Today more than ever we need circles—to mourn, to grieve, to share, to vent, to tell our stories of pain and hurt." She encouraged those listening to "check out the Franciscan Justice Circles at the Franciscan Action Network," noting, "I convene a Virtual Circle for folks with limited mobility. We learn and share about nonviolent living and action. Pope Leo said that nonviolence must distinguish our decisions, our relationships, and our actions." You can read the full speech [here](#). Congratulations, Carolyn, we're grateful to have you on the FAN team as a Franciscan Justice Circle Animator!

## Complicit Companies Campaign - Expose and Divest

*Complicit Corporations Campaign - Expose and Divest:* A coalition of more than 35 Christian organizations (including Franciscan Action Network, Friends of Sabeel North America, American Friends Service Committee, Christians for a Free Palestine, Mennonite Action, and Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace) has launched an economic resistance campaign focused on tech company [Palantir](#) and [Chevron](#). Palantir supports Israel's policies of ethnic cleansing and genocide through Artificial Intelligence and surveillance contracts with the Israeli military, as well as public statements of support; Palantir also assists ICE in mass deportations. Chevron exports Israel's natural gas, creating revenues for the state. The campaign aims to create economic and political pressure to reduce corporate support for the Israel government's policies and help shift U.S. policy to end the ethnic cleansing in Gaza and the West Bank. The campaign is seeking organizational, religious community, group, or institutional (national, regional, state, or local) [endorsements](#). See this [webpage](#) with more details. For individual and organization *action* commitments, fill out [this form](#).



**Oct. 2-4** (Gandhi's birthday Oct. 2 and St. Francis feast day Oct.4) **The campaign calls for public witnesses at Chevron stations and Palantir offices.** See [webpage](#) and [Chevron tool-kit here](#). Please share any actions planned with [emccarthy@franciscanaction.org](mailto:emccarthy@franciscanaction.org).

## Nuclear Abolition Day



September 26, 2025 is *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*. The United Nations will convene a high-level meeting of world leaders in order to discuss urgent and effective measures to move toward global nuclear disarmament. You can learn more about the day, along with steps to get involved on social media or as part of a joint appeal [here](#).



## Franciscan Justice Circles

With their focus on local affordable housing, the **St. Louis FJC** had a guest speaker join them to discuss affordable housing efforts and legislation in St. Louis, local collaboration and justice initiatives, and a new violence response program.

The **Ohio FJC** was represented at All Franciscan Day, a gathering of the Franciscan-hearted in Cincinnati last month, where they were able to connect with new people. An FJC member was a guest speaker on the Faith & Sustainability podcast from the Archdiocese of Atlanta to share about the topic: Untangling Plastics: The Missing Link in Mitigating Climate Change - [listen here](#).

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

**CT-RI FJC:** Tues. Sept. 23 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Texas FJC:** Tues. Sept. 23 at 7:15 pm CT / 6:15 pm MT via Zoom

**Boston FJC:** Thur. Sept. 25 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**W. Pennsylvania FJC:** Thur. Sept. 25 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

**Twin Cities FJC:** Mon. Sept. 29 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

**Bay Area CA FJC:** Mon. Sept. 29 at 7:00 pm PT via Zoom

**Ohio FJC:** Wed. Oct. 1 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Virtual FJC** (ltd. mobility): Thur. Oct. 2 at 2:00 pm via Zoom

**Richmond VA-area FJC:** Sat. Oct. 4 at 9:00 am ET In Person Pilgrimage

**Chicagoland FJC:** Sat. Oct. 4 at 10:00 am CT In Person Pilgrimage

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](#).