

Publication Date: September 30, 2025

Reflection Date: October 5, 2025 - [Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

## Finding faith through discouragement

How many of us hear the words of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4) in the readings for the [Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) and feel kinship with him?

“How long, O LORD? I cry for help but you do not listen! Why do you let me see ruin; why must I look at misery? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and clamorous discord.”

It is hard to move on from the prophet and join the psalmist: “Let us sing joyfully to the LORD.” (Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9)



Vincent van Gogh - The Mulberry Tree (1889) via Wikimedia Commons

The passage from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 17:5-10) opens with the apostles saying to Jesus: “Increase our faith.” It’s hard to know what tone they used. I am inclined to envision them as needing encouragement.

Paul should be discouraged like the apostles in the gospel, but the epistle from prison encourages us to reject cowardice.

As people who have enough faith to both praise God and to question God, Jesus gives us an answer that requires meditation: “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.”

We might not want to hear it as we feel overwhelmed, but we can’t simply beg God for salvation, we must “acclaim the Rock of our salvation” by allowing the Holy Spirit to stir up the flame of faith in our hearts. We must desire the strength to bear hardships and unashamedly give testimony to the love of God through our actions and words.

This is why we fraternally band together as Franciscan Action Network, seeking to bring life to the gospel by living joyfully and pursuing justice in a world that can be so disappointing. Together we can find courage and overcome any discouragement along the way.

## ***Toby Harkleroad, OFS***

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**Suggested Action:** Take a few moments to read Cardinal McElroy's homily (view [here](#)) on the Good Samaritan from the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, and consider attending CLINIC's Immigration Law and Policy Conference online or in-person. The deadline to register (click [here](#)) is today!

### **Suggested Petitions:**

*For those who have faced major disappointments, that they may find faith, courage, and joy, we pray to the Lord.*

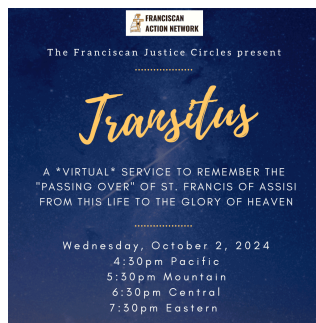
*For all who work together to advance justice in the face of great opposition, that solidarity will help them to persevere and keep fighting for those in need, we pray to the Lord.*

### **Prayer**

**Hear me, O LORD! Increase my faith that I might have the strength to acclaim you the Rock of my salvation. Pour out the fiery love of the Holy Spirit that my faith, even the size of a mustard seed, might allow me the boldness to say to the problems of this world, "Be uprooted" and our collective concern and acts of care might help to bring justice and Your peace where I now see strife and violence. Give me a vision of mercy, unity, creativity, and joy before me that I might have the hope to follow Christ's Gospel and the integrity to be your servant like our beloved brother Francis had the faith and foolishness to do. Amen.**

**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.](#)

## Thank You for Generating Thousands of Comments to Protect Creation



FAN staff along with staffers from other faith-based organizations delivered **nearly 10,000 comments** to the Environmental Protection Agency, opposing the repeal of the 2009 endangerment finding, a key foundation for regulating emissions and reducing climate change. Brian Roewe of *National Catholic Reporter* has an excellent [story](#) on these efforts. **Thank you to the thousands of FAN constituents who took the time to submit these comments and stand up for creation!**

While this advocacy effort was a powerful display of the Catholic and faith-based commitment to safeguarding God's creation, the work will continue as the Franciscan Action Network, partner organizations, and people of good will continue to resist efforts to undermine environmental justice.

## National Migration Week Concludes with Prayerful Pilgrimage and Moving Homily

Members of the Franciscan Action Network participated in the Archdiocese of Washington's *Reflection Procession & Mass to Commemorate the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees* on September 28. FAN's Associate Director, Sister Marie Lucey, OSF, delivered one of the readings on the prayerful pilgrimage before mass. Cardinal Robert McElroy delivered a stirring homily at mass, calling for the Church to "embrace in a sustained, unwavering, prophetic and compassionate way the immigrants who are suffering so deeply because of the oppression they are facing."



During National Migration Week (September 22–28), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops launched the *Cabrini Pledge*, as "both a reminder of our immigrant heritage

and a call to deeper engagement with our faith in response to current events.” You can take the pledge [here](#).

## Welcome to Franciscan Month!



Members of the Franciscan family are working together to make every October Franciscan Month--a special time to spread the news about the spirituality and way of life taught to us by St. Francis of Assisi. You can be part of this by checking out the many resources available on [franciscanmonth.org](http://franciscanmonth.org) and spreading the word in your parish or other community. Help us to spread the word this October and join the team to get involved in the campaign for next October! Contact Br. Greg Cellini, TOR, at [franciscanmonth@gmail.com](mailto:franciscanmonth@gmail.com) for more information.

## National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools

Today, September 30, is the National Day of Remembrance for Indian Boarding Schools. People across the United States and Canada are wearing orange to commemorate the day, while reflecting upon the harm inflicted upon native children and culture. The day serves as an opportunity for healing, reflection, and education for members of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Commemorations acknowledge the tragic history of the schools and their lasting intergenerational trauma. All are encouraged to join in and express their solidarity by wearing orange.



## Franciscan Justice Circles

The **New Mexico FJC** conducted a Pilgrimage of Hope and Kinship with Creation Sept. 19-21. They visited multiple sites in order to learn about historic and current social and environmental justice issues involving local Pueblo and Navajo communities. The pilgrimage included moments of prayer, attending mass, sharing meals and also learning from indigenous wisdom about how to live in harmony with creation, treating the Earth and all beings including water and soil with love and respect. The FJC is also exploring collaboration



with NM Interfaith Power & Light on actions there in the state of New Mexico.



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

**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

**National monthly FJC call:** Wed. Oct. 8 at 1:00 pm PT / 4:00 pm ET via Zoom

**NYC-Area FJC:** Thur. Oct. 9 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

**Central Indiana FJC:** Fri. Oct. 10 at 1:00 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](#).