

Publication Date: November 11, 2025

Reflection Date: [November 16, 2025 - Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Does Following Christ Evoke Hatred?

In the gospel reading for the [Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) (Luke 21:5-19), Jesus cautions his followers that “you will be hated by all because of my name,” while reassuring them that “not a hair on your head will be destroyed.”

For Christians in the early Church, facing brutal persecution, this passage surely resonated with their lived experience. They faced aggression, betrayal, violence, and death. Yet many believed that the full restoration promised by Christ, an eternal life of communion, was at hand.

This passage is just as pertinent to Christians facing persecution today, from North Korea to Nigeria.

But what about those of us living in countries where religious freedom is largely protected by law, where anti-Christian violence is rare? What about those of us living in countries where Christians have played a significant role in shaping the society?



Photo by Dan Edge on Unsplash

Christian Nationalists often view Christians as under siege, victims of a secular cultural war that is rooted in a hatred of Christians and their values. Reading this passage might affirm their belief

that their Christian faith inherently invites such hatred. It can become a badge of honor and motivate them to intensify that mutual hostility and seek victory in this culture war, assured of their own virtue.

Some on the other side of the culture war blame any enmity on Christians for attempting to impose their views on society (at least when such views conflict with their own ideology). Any hatred would therefore be the product of insufficient assimilation into the broader culture.

Yet the mandates that flow from the gospel are fundamentally radical—in every society. Authentic Christianity is inevitably countercultural in societies where few entirely escape the pull of consumerism, extreme individualism, and the countless other –isms of modern life that fuel a throwaway culture at odds with the Christian commitment to the option for the poor, human dignity, and the common good.

Christians are wise, then, to proceed with humility. Hatred toward Christians might just as easily be rooted in our failure to follow Christ and our hubris as our fidelity. Instead of reveling in hatred or abandoning our values, we are called to offer humble, joyful witness and build bridges that can foster communion and the common good.

This approach can still be isolating, which is why it is good to gather with others who share our commitments—for instance, by joining [Franciscan Justice circles](#). Our devotion to the poor and vulnerable will also likely foster some forms of hostility. Yet by faithfully accepting that such commitments may invite hatred, rather than spreading hatred or fleeing from it, we can each contribute to building a civilization of love and plant seeds for the Kingdom to come.

Robert Christian

Director of Communications, Franciscan Action Network

Suggested Action: Reflect upon your own engagement in civic affairs: am I motivated by a love that seeks justice? Have I responded to hostility by creating more aggression and enmity—or have I sought to find common ground, build bridges, and persuade others? Have I been brave in defending the marginalized when it is easy to look the other way? Christian witness is difficult—let us take some time for introspection to consider if we are truly living out our values and each being the person we wish to be.

Suggested Petitions:

For all Christians who are persecuted for their faith, may they feel the presence and reassurance of Christ in their darkest hours, we pray to the Lord.

For religious freedom for all people, so that all will be free to exercise this fundamental human right, we pray to the Lord.

For those whose work on behalf of the poor and marginalized generates hostility, may they remain steadfast and committed to building the Kingdom, we pray to the Lord.

Prayer

God,

Please help us to respond to hatred by remaining faithful, loving, and committed to fostering a culture that reflects the dignity of each person. Help us to reject triumphalism and quietism in favor of simple Christian witness and solidarity with the vulnerable and marginalized.

Amen.

Right to a Clean & Healthy Environment Series



FAN's 'A Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment' webinar, cosponsored by Franciscans International, took place on November 6. This was the first in a series of three webinars to educate and engage FAN's network in acting to codify this human right in U.S. state constitutions. Br. Jim Donegan OFM Cap and Marya Farah of Franciscans International were the first two presenters. You can view the recording [here](#).

Save the date: FAN's second webinar in this 3-part series, on **Tuesday Dec. 2, 2025** at 7pm ET (6pm CT / 5pm MT / 4pm PT), will highlight the advent and ongoing work of the **Green Amendments Movement in the U.S.** with Maya K. van Rossum. Registration link to follow.

Franciscan Sisters Return Land to Chippewa Tribe

National Catholic Reporter, in a new article on the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, an institutional member of FAN, [reports](#): "The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have sold their spirituality center to the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. This is the first Catholic institution to return land to a Tribal Nation in the name of reparations for colonialism and residential boarding schools, according to officials



involved in the sale....The sisters sold it to the tribe for the same price they paid for it in 1966—\$30,000, or just over 1% of its current value.”

November is Native American Heritage Month. One piece of legislation of interest at this time is the ***Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act of 2025*** (S.761, introduced in the Senate by Sen. Murkowski), which would establish a truth and healing commission on US Indian Boarding School policies to examine the impact of these policies. You are encouraged to call your Senators to express support for this legislation.

St. Anthony Messenger Profiles FAN



Stephen Copeland's [feature story](#) discusses the work of FAN, quoting Executive Director Michele Dunne and Director of Franciscan Justice Circles Nora Pfeiffer. The article notes, "FAN has grown into a vibrant network of 50 Franciscan religious communities, 17,000 individual members, and 30 Justice Circles across 23 states, including three on college campuses." The article describes how FAN "seeks to help people participate in the democratic process, not upend it" and "seeks to transcend the left-right division that media and politicians exploit for financial gain and instead elevates the human person."

Franciscan Presence at the Border Mass in El Paso

Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso was joined by bishops, clergy, women and men religious, FAN Board member Paul Lininger, OFM-Conv, two Franciscan Mission Service (FMS) volunteers, volunteers from the Acompañantes Fronterizos de Esperanza, and the faithful for an annual Mass near the U.S.-Mexican border on November 1.



Bishop Seitz gave a powerful homily, saying, "We remember that borders that demarcate one country from another should never destroy the unity of our families, the unity of our faith, or the dynamism of our economy. No border can rob us of the brotherhood and sisterhood that we share."

Continue to Take Action

Immigration:

Please ask Congress to act with urgency, after returning from this prolonged shutdown, to advance the Renewing Immigration Provisions bills (S. 2468/ H.R. 4696) out of the Judiciary Committees in the House and Senate for a vote.

This bill would create a streamlined path to citizenship for DACA recipients, TPS holders, farmworkers, and undocumented essential workers by amending the Immigration and National Act (INA) which governs the “registry” process (a path to legal status for certain long-term residents). If passed, the bill would update the registry process, giving long-term residents who have lived in the U.S. for at least seven years an opportunity to apply for legal status.



You can act now: [here](#).

Israel/Palestine

Despite the recent ceasefire, Gaza is far from being on a path to a sustainable and just peace. Since taking office, the present Administration has continued the pattern of recent Administrations and approved a series of arms sales to Israel totaling over \$12.5 billion. Independent investigations have found that U.S. weapons have been used in unlawful attacks that killed dozens of Palestinian civilians, including children.

Please join FAN in urging the House of Representative to advance the Block the Bombs Act, H.R. 3565, introduced by Representative Delia Ramirez (IL-3), which would prohibit the President from selling, transferring, or exporting certain defense articles or services, including heavy bombs, to Israel except in specified circumstances.

You can act now: [here](#).

Care for Creation:

*After Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins cancelled the **Roadless Rule**—a 2001 regulation that protects 45 million acres of National Forest from road construction—members of the U.S. House and Senate have proposed legislation to reinstate the rule.*

Please consider asking your representatives in Congress to support these bills, which are essential to protect our National Forests and the precious and irreplaceable wildlife, water

sources, Native American sacred places, and recreational opportunities they contain. Allowing road construction is likely to lead to logging and mineral extraction.

You can act now: [here](#).

Franciscan Justice Circles

On October 29, 2025 members of the **New Mexico FJC** and NM Interfaith Power & Light spoke at a hearing in Santa Fe on Modernizing Oil and Gas Bonding and Cleanup Rules. They spoke to the spirit in St. Francis and a Native American code of ethics, noting nature as part of us, not something separate. Each in their own words recognized the need for economic development and prosperity in the state, but not at the expense of the health and safety of New Mexicans and the land, air and water they call home. As Kim Rogers said, "If corporations and entities are allowed to plunder the resources of New Mexico, they should do their due diligence in cleaning up after themselves."

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

Connecticut - Rhode Island FJC: Tue. Nov. 11 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

DE Valley FJC: Tue. Nov. 11 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

New Mexico FJC: Tue. Nov. 11 at 6:30 pm MT via Zoom

Monthly national FJCs call: Wed. Nov. 12 at 1:00 pm PT / 4:00 pm ET via Zoom

Rochester, NY-area FJC: Thur. Nov. 13 at 3:30 pm ET via Zoom

SoCal FJC: Thur. Nov. 13 at 6:00 pm PT via Zoom

Central Indiana FJC: Fri. Nov. 14 at 1:00 pm ET via Zoom

Driftless Region FJC (WI and MN): Mon. Nov. 17 at 6:00 pm CT via Zoom

St. Bonaventure U. FJC: Wed. Nov. 19 at 12:30 pm ET In Person

Michigan FJC Info. Session: Wed. Nov. 19 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Virtual FJC: Thu. Nov. 20 at 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET via Zoom

Pacific Northwest FJC: Thu. Nov. 20 at 1:00 pm PT via Zoom

Phoenix - area FJC: Thu. Nov. 20 at 5:00 pm MST via Zoom

Boston - area FJC: Thu. Nov. 20 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

W. Pennsylvania FJC: Thu. Nov. 20 at 7:30 pm PT 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](#).