

Publication Date: January 13, 2026

Reflection Date: January 18, 2026 - [Second Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

“I Did Not Know Him”

In the gospel reading for the [Second Sunday in Ordinary Time](#), when John the Baptist turns the attention of the crowd toward Jesus, he says twice: “I did not know him.” Certainly, John knew his cousin as a relative. We were first introduced to John when he leaped in Elizabeth’s womb as Mary, pregnant with Jesus, greeted John’s mom. It is likely, though not told in Scripture, that Jesus and John knew each other as they grew and matured into manhood. But it is only when John saw the Spirit descend on his cousin that he fully realized who Jesus was: Son of God, Messiah.



Francis of Assisi, raised a Christian, knew *about* Jesus. He was familiar with his story, but he did not truly *know* Jesus until the Crucified One spoke to him and gave him a mission. From then on, Francis grew in his knowledge of Jesus Christ, and desired nothing more than to *identify* with the Christ he loved with all his mind, heart, and soul.

As a vowed Franciscan woman, I am grateful for our Third Order Regular charism of “continuous conversion.” Francis’ conversion took time. Every day I am invited to be converted, transformed into the person God wants me to be. John’s acknowledgement of not fully knowing Jesus challenges me to ask myself how well I know other people. How well do I know my friends, my family, my sisters in community, my co-workers? How well do I know people with

whom I disagree? Those whom I dislike? How well do I know myself? How well do I know the Jesus I follow, God Creator, God Holy Spirit?

I will never fully know God in this life. The more I think I know, the less I know God, Great Mystery. But the wonderful truth is, God knows me. God knows my puny attempts to know the Divine; knows my virtues and good intentions; knows my faults and my failures—and loves all of me, unconditionally. God knows you and loves you unconditionally.

In his First Letter, John the Evangelist writes: “Whoever says ‘I know him,’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar . . . whoever claims to abide in him ought to walk just as he walked.” This is the invitation of Jesus Christ to me, to you, to walk in his footprints. Sometimes his footprints are clear and strong, sometimes faint, sometimes bloody. But if we want to know him, we must walk in his footprints.

As part of the Franciscan Action Network, this is what we are called to do. Rather than simply proclaiming our faithfulness, we are called to demonstrate it by following Christ’s footsteps to the margins, where we can join together to protect the vulnerable, defend the earth, and engage in creative nonviolence.

Sr. Marie Lucey, OSF

FAN Associate Director

Suggested Action: Take time, in this New Year, to ask yourself how well you know people you love; how well you know people you find it hard to love; how well you know yourself. Pray Psalm 139 with gratitude that God knows you better than you know yourself—and loves you.

Suggested Petitions:

That we may grow daily in our knowledge of God’s presence in us and in our world, we pray.

That we may realize that people are more than I know them to be and withhold judgement, we pray.

Prayer

O my Beloved, You have searched me and known me!

**You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my inmost thoughts.**

**You find me on the journey and guide my steps; You know my strengths
and my weaknesses.**

Even before words rise up in prayer, Lo, You have already heard my heart call.

**You encompass me with love where’er I go,
and your strength is my shield.**

**Such sensitivity is too wonderful for me; it is high;
boundless gratitude is my soul’s response.**

Amen.

(Psalm 139: 1-6; Nan C. Merrill, [Psalms for Praying](#))

Mourning and Action in Wake of ICE Shooting

As Franciscans, we grieve the killing of Renee Nicole Good, a woman shot and killed by an ICE officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota last week. We pray for her family, friends, and the Minnesota community. We are called to stand with our immigrant brothers and sisters, as well as with U.S. citizens who advocate for their rights. We urge a full and transparent investigation and accountability for officers involved so tragedies like this are not repeated in the future.



Please consider taking action with FAN by calling on Congress to exercise discernment in voting for additional funding in the FY2026 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill. This bill would expand ICE's enforcement and removal operations, including more funding for officers who carry out interior raids, transportation and removal of people, and hiring additional enforcement personnel. The bill also increases funding for detention centers. [Click here](#) to take action.

Environmental Justice Webinar Workshop and Action



Join FAN for a webinar workshop on Tuesday, **Jan. 27, 2026 at 7pm ET** (6pm CT / 5pm MT / 4pm PT) to learn more about joining the Green Amendments Movement to get the right to a clean and healthy environment put into your state constitution. Participants will be invited to join breakout rooms to learn more about opportunities to join the movement and make real change in their state. **You can register [here](#).**

The U.S. administration is accepting public comments for a new proposal to expand offshore drilling into the Atlantic, Pacific, Arctic, and Eastern Gulf of America. FAN is collecting **electronic signatures** on a joint comment ([here](#)), which will be added to the [Federal Register](#) for the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Together, let's urge the U.S.

administration to protect these waters. [CLICK HERE by January 20th](#) to learn more and add your electronic signature to the joint comment.

Faith in Democracy: Facing the Challenges of 2026

If you missed our event on January 6, please consider watching the recording. **Faith in Democracy: Facing the Challenges of 2026** explored the connection between faith and democracy, the challenges to US democracy at this moment in history, and ways people of faith and faith communities can work together to strengthen democracy moving forward. Speakers included Rabbi Sharon Brous, Chris Crawford, Gloria Purvis, Imam Talib Shareef, Bishop John Stowe, and Rev. Jim Wallis. **You can watch the full event [here](#).**



Thank you to Sr. Louise Lears

With deeply grateful hearts, FAN bids farewell to Sr. Louise Lears, SC, who led creation care work on our staff since 2021. Before coming to FAN, Louise ministered as a hospital chaplain, medical ethicist, adjunct faculty in several universities, and as a Congregational Leader with the Sisters of Charity. Experiences in Cuba, Guatemala, and El Salvador opened her eyes and her heart to the needs and hopes of people most often left out. Sr. Louise made a massive impact at FAN, profoundly shaping our environmental justice program, mentoring staff, and raising funds. Most of all, we will miss her warm heart, gentle ways, strong wisdom, and reliable humor. Peace and all good, dearest Sr. Louise. You have made a gift to the Franciscan family in the U.S. that will endure for generations.



Affirming Conscience Protections for Members of the U.S. Military

In a speech last Friday, January 9, Pope Leo XIV [said](#), “At this moment in history, freedom of conscience seems increasingly to be questioned by States, even those that claim to be based on democracy and human rights.” In the United States, on November 19, Senators Mark Kelly and Elissa Slotkin, and Representatives Jason Crow, Chris Deluzio, Maggie Goodlander, and Chrissy Houlahan released a video reminding members of the U.S. armed forces of their obligation to refuse illegal orders. The Trump Administration responded with verbal attacks and punitive actions. We invite you to consider [signing this petition](#) to support freedom of conscience for those serving in the US military and preservation of the rule of law.



Franciscan Justice Circles

The **Twin Cities FJC** gathered as a Circle for prayer, conversation, consolation and action updates this past weekend in light of the presence and actions of ICE in their community. Members have also been attending public prayer vigils promoting peace.

Members of the **Mid-Hudson Valley FJC** regularly contact their elected leaders around issues of concern such as local housing justice, humane immigration policies and implementation, and peace and nonviolence. Other actions include attending town hall meetings, submitting LTEs, direct service with those in need of food and shelter, and encouraging dialogue among political leaders to find solutions together.

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

Mid-Hudson Valley FJC: Tues. Jan. 13 at 12:00 pm ET via Zoom

CT-RI FJC: Tues. Jan. 13 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

DE Valley FJC: Tues. Jan. 13 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Monthly national FJCs call: Wed. Jan. 14 at 1 pm PT / 2 pm MT / 3 pm CT / 4 pm ET via Zoom

Virtual FJC (ltd. mobility): Thur. Jan. 15 at 11 am PT / 2 pm ET via Zoom

Pacific Northwest FJC: Thur. Jan. 15 at 1:00 pm PT via Zoom

Phoenix-area FJC: Thur. Jan. 15 at 5:00 pm MT via Zoom

NYC-area FJC: Thur. Jan. 15 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

Driftless Region FJC: Mon. Jan. 19 at 6:00 pm CT via Zoom

St. Bonaventure U. FJC: Wed. Jan. 21 at 12:30 pm ET In Person

Michigan FJC: Wed. Jan. 21 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

W. Pennsylvania FJC: Thur. Jan. 22 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](#).