

Publication Date: February 3, 2026

Reflection Date: February 8, 2026 - [Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Letting Light Shine in the Darkness

The mass readings for the [Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time](#) challenge our complacency and compel us to live our faith actively, engage with issues affecting the poor and vulnerable in society, bring God's goodness to our world, and respond as people of the gospel to what God puts before us each day. Each of us must allow these readings to discomfort us a bit, as we ponder the ways we might not be letting our faith guide us and the times we have failed to speak out, inspired by the gospel, on moral issues.



Photo by Rob Schulz on Unsplash

In the first reading, the Prophet Isaiah is clear: only “if you share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless... and satisfy the afflicted” (Is. 58:7), then “light shall rise for you in the darkness” (Is. 58:10), for those sharing, sheltering, providing, or speaking out for what is needed and also for our brothers and sisters in need.

The gospel challenges us to shed light on the injustices in our state and national policies that allow and actually cause the daily lives of our families and neighbors to be fraught with concerns about hunger, the need for healthcare, homelessness, fear of being disappeared, becoming the next victims of gun violence, human trafficking, or nuclear weapons. These are not simply political issues, but moral ones. We need to question a faith that has lost its taste (Matt 5:14) and ignores the suffering and needs that should concern us.

In a democracy where we are all responsible, how can we shine a light on the injustices in our nation's or state's policies? Support organizations such as the Franciscan Action Network that work collectively to bring our gospel values to national policies and legislation—and also allow individuals to use their voice to impact policies that align with our gospel values through action alerts and sign-on letters. These are opportunities to shout collectively, “Here we are to advocate for our gospel values.” Visit your legislators in your home state about policies in the news that harm our brothers and sisters, evoking Isaiah’s warning not to “turn your back on your own” (Is 58:8).

Faith in the gospel of Jesus *must* have consequences in our lives. The light of your faith must shine in our nation and world, which need to hear and experience the message of the gospel. This week, commit to taking one action that will allow your voice to be heard for peace or justice, knowing that to do otherwise would risk making yourself and your faith irrelevant.

Sr. Maryann Mueller, CSSF

Justice and Peace Coordinator, Felician Sisters of North America

Suggested Action: Go to the [issues section of the FAN website](#), find one issue that breaks your heart or pricks your conscience and commit to taking one action each week to change policies regarding that issue.

Suggested Petitions:

Creator of all, help us to use our voice to advocate peacefully and with love for the needs of the most vulnerable in our society.

Creator God, help us always to have a faith that has consequences in our lives and the lives of others.

Prayer

God, please help us to always be horrified by the injustices in our society, have the love and courage to see you in the poor and vulnerable, and to take action. We remember the words of Elie Wiesel: “The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.” Help us to avoid this indifference.

Amen.

Standing Up for Our Immigrant Brothers and Sisters



On Thursday, January 29, FAN staff joined people of faith from across the country in prayer at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington DC, then walked to the US Capitol to oppose any additional funding for DHS this year and for proper regulation, transparency, and accountability for ICE.

FAN executive director Michele Dunne, OFS is quoted in a new article from [America](#), 'A Catholic guide to resisting the ICE crackdown': "How do we know what is ours to do?" Ms.

Dunne asks. We learn that through prayer, which "shows us...which issues we are particularly called to be active on and how to do that in a loving, faith-filled, gospel-rooted way." "None of us can do everything," Ms. Dunne says, "and it's so easy to become overwhelmed and then just withdraw and do nothing." Each of us through prayer can see where God is calling us "to be peace builders, to be loving our neighbors, to be living the gospel."

Toby Harkleroad, OFS, a former FAN staff member who shared his experiences in Minnesota during our [event](#) on immigrant justice and the rule of law last Thursday, spoke with [NPR](#), saying, "The most important things are to do something, anything. And to just keep showing up. Some of us want this immediate impact, and we're not going to get immediate impact in this. But our sustained efforts will show impact – are showing impact – and if nothing else, they keep encouraging others."

Prayer and Advocacy for Immigrant Justice

The recording for FAN's January 29 '**Prayer for Immigrant Justice and Rule of Law**' event is available [here](#). In response to the events in Minneapolis, we heard testimonies from FAN staff, our Franciscan Justice Circle in the Twin Cities, and other Franciscans about what they are seeing on the ground and what to bear in mind as we try to care for our immigrant neighbors and uphold the law. There was also time for prayer and discussion.

Congress is still negotiating the DHS portion of the FY26 budget, which would send billions to ICE and CBP. Your voice continues to matter. If you haven't taken **action** yet, please do so [here](#). We also invite you to support HR 4696 / S 2468, a simple update to the long-stalled



“registry” process that would finally allow long-term residents, including DACA and TPS holders, to apply for permanent residency and eventually citizenship: [click here](#).

Green Amendments Webinar Series and Training



**Protect our
National Forests**

Did you miss FAN’s 3-part webinar series on the right to a clean and healthy environment? You can watch the recordings to catch up, including training sessions for those [in states with Green Amendments](#) and those [working to secure Green Amendments](#). Learn how to join state-level advocacy efforts to enshrine this right in U.S. state constitutions— via the national Green Amendments Movement. [Learn more here](#).

Since its enactment, **the Roadless Rule** has been considered one of the most important conservation wins in United States history, **helping to protect millions of acres of National Forest** land across the country. Unfortunately, in June 2025, Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins announced that the USDA is rescinding the Roadless Rule. As of late January, **more than 100 members of the House and Senate have signed onto legislation that would codify the Roadless Rule** so that, in the future, only an act of Congress could roll back protections for roadless areas within the National Forest System. Please act today to tell Congress to enact the Roadless Area Conservation Act (H.R.3930 and S.2042). And, please thank your Member of Congress if he or she is already a cosponsor ([76 cosponsors](#) in the House; [25 cosponsors](#) in the Senate). [Learn more here](#).

[Act today!](#)

Thank You for Helping to Protect our U.S. Coastlines from Drilling! God’s marine creation is at risk due to a proposal to reopen up 1.27 billion acres to offshore lease sales to oil and gas drilling. **FAN responded by submitting 606 signatures on a joint comment** to the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management on January 23, 2026. FAN will keep you informed on this proposal, including future advocacy options. [Learn more here](#).

Lenten Fast to End Gun Violence

Lenten Fast
TO END GUN VIOLENCE

FAN Director of Advocacy Sr. Maria Orlandini, OSF is participating in the annual **Lenten Fast to End Gun Violence**, which is organized by **Nuns Against Gun Violence**. Their invitation states: “We will join our hearts, minds, and bodies in a sacrifice—according to our capability—as an expression of love, in a spirit of generosity, willingly abstaining from food and drink or undertaking other

meaningful sacrifices as we put forth our united call for people to lay down their guns and enact gun violence prevention legislation.” You can learn more and join the fast [here](#).

Franciscan Justice Circles

The **Colorado FJC** members are actively writing thank-you letters to the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for returning land to the Lac du Flambeau Tribe and contacting Senators to oppose additional ICE funding. Additionally, some are participating in interfaith walks and promoting "Know Your Rights" resources, as well as attending prayer vigils including FAN's most recent prayer service for Immigration and the Rule of Law.

In seeking to support each other in action to promote peace and justice, the **Pacific Northwest FJC** took on the challenge in January of advocating in favor of a person or group whose rights are being violated. They shared their experience and action ideas, along with delving into the topic of "The Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers".

The **Kansas FJC** began a book study using *St. Francis: Universal Saint* by one of their own members, with an emphasis on Franciscan spirituality and values as a foundation for justice work.

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

Mid-Hudson Valley FJC: Tue. Feb. 3 at 12:00 pm ET via Zoom

Kansas FJC: Tue. Feb. 3 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

Ohio FJC: Wed. Feb. 4 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Virtual FJC (ltd. mobility): Thur. Feb. 5 at 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET via Zoom

Chicagoland FJC: Sat. Feb. 7 at 10:00 am In Person

Richmond,VA-area FJC: Mon. Feb. 9 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

CT-RI FJC: Tues. Feb. 10 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

DE-Valley FJC (PA, NJ, DE): Tues. Feb. 10 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

New Mexico FJC: Tues. Feb. 10 at 6:30 pm MT via Zoom

Monthly National FJC call: Wed. Feb. 11 at 1:00 pm PT / 4:00 pm ET via Zoom

Rochester, NY FJC: Thur. Feb. 12 at 3:30 pm ET via Zoom

Central Indiana FJC: Fri. Feb. 13 at 1:00 pm ET via Zoom

DC-area FJC: Sat. Feb. 14 at 10:00 am ET In Person

Asheville, NC FJC: Sun. Feb. 15 at 3:30 pm In Person

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](#).