

Publication Date: February 24, 2026

Reflection Date: March 1, 2026 - [Second Sunday of Lent](#)

## An Engagement with Faith

Several years ago, during an airport layover, I received a text message from my brother with great news: one of my nieces and her longtime boyfriend were engaged! The short message was accompanied by a photo of the smiling couple and my niece flashing her ring.

I felt a combination of joy, awe, hope, and fear. I was in awe of their commitment. I hoped and prayed that they would have a long and happy marriage. But I was also afraid.



Photo by Kadarius Seegars on Unsplash

Marriages and families face many headwinds these days. The financial, cultural, social, and spiritual pressures on couples and their children can be tremendous, and some families suffer and even break apart as a result. Part of FAN's mission is to advocate for policies that reduce those pressures, promote human dignity, and enhance family life.

Serving God as a spouse, parent, priest, consecrated religious, or single person has never been easy. In his letter to Timothy in the readings for the [Second Sunday of Lent](#), St. Paul offers encouragement and reminds him that living the gospel almost inevitably involves hardship. We may have to make difficult choices, risk misunderstanding or opposition, surrender things that once seemed important, and live with some failures. However, we can endure, learn, and grow from those hardships. Struggles will come, but God is with us.

We may be called to leave the security of what we know and “step out in faith” to the place God needs us to be. At God’s command, Abraham left his land and relatives for the promise of something greater.

The Transfiguration of Jesus similarly offered a promise to Peter, James, and John—and a glimpse of hope in the wake of the Lord’s shocking prediction of his suffering, death, and resurrection. They had left everything to follow him. Through the manifestation of his glory as the fulfillment of the Law and the prophets, as well as his Father’s dramatic testimony, Jesus assured his disciples that his promise would be fulfilled and their sacrifices would not be in vain.

Lent is our time to get engaged—in strengthening our commitment to discipleship, continuing our journey of conversion, and placing our hope in the promises of Jesus. No ring is necessary.

### ***John Celichowski, OFM Cap.***

*FAN Board Member*

**Suggested Action:** As we prepare for the midterm elections later this year, spend some time examining the candidates’ positions on the host of issues that impact children and families. Note that faith isn’t spelled with an “R” or a “D.”

### **Suggested Petitions:**

*That all spouses and families who experience struggles may experience God’s grace and help through the outreach of the Church.*

*That our governmental leaders may support policies and programs that enhance family life.*

*That families separated by war, political differences, or poverty may be reunited.*

### **Prayer**

**Dear God,**

**We pray that this Lenten season may draw each of us and our Church into conversion and deeper commitment to our vocation of living the gospel and revealing Christ to the world.**

**Amen.**

**‘Time to Act for Citizenship’ Webinar**

## Time to Act for Citizenship

Feb 26, 2026 7:00 PM ET  
Zoom Webinar



## Time to Act for Citizenship

Thursday, February 26, 2026

7:00p ET / 6p CT / 5p MT / 4p PT

Immigration policy is shifting rapidly, with enforcement and detention increasing while long-term solutions remain unresolved. Join Franciscan Action Network for a webinar on Thursday, February 26 at 7PM ET/6PM CT offering a clear overview of the current immigration landscape, a faith-rooted reflection on why a pathway to citizenship matters, and practical ways to take action, including opportunities to engage through FAN's April Advocacy Days. We will also hear directly from a DACA recipient.

Please register [here](#).

In addition, after FAN's *Time to Act for Citizenship* webinar, all are invited to an **Online Prayer Vigil for Immigrants** created and hosted by the Phoenix Franciscan Justice Circle. The vigil, which begins at 8:30 PM ET on February 26, will be available on Zoom [here](#).

## 'Present Dynamics in Palestine and Effective Action Opportunities' Webinar

Present Dynamics in Palestine and  
Effective Action Opportunities  
Tuesday, March 3  
1:00-2:30 PM ET



What is happening on the ground in Gaza and the West Bank today? What strategic nonviolent actions might we take in accord with the way of just peace? Join us on **Tuesday, March 3, 1:00-2:30 PM ET** in reflection and discussion at this critical time as attacks and annexation increase in the West Bank, while killing continues in Gaza along with aid being significantly restricted.

The webinar will feature the following panelists: Omar Haramy, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Jerusalem; Amira Musallam, Unarmed Civilian Protection in Palestine, Bethlehem; Rabbi Alissa Wise, Rabbis for Ceasefire, U.S.; Br. Jacek Orzechowski, Franciscan, OFM, Siena College; Olivia Katbi, National Coalition to Boycott Chevron, U.S.; and Nusaiba Mubarak, American Friends

Service Committee.

[Click here](#) to register.

**More Peace News: Iran**

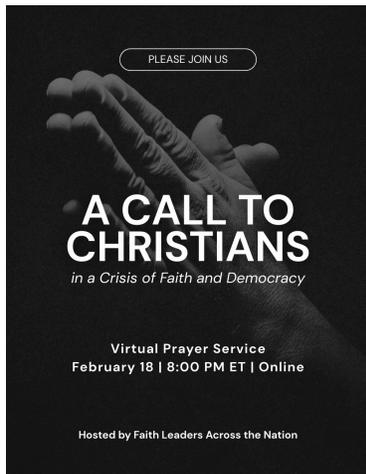
President Trump has been increasing military pressure on Iran, recently giving them 10 days to make a deal. You can learn more in this article: [Why is Trump on the verge of bombing Iran again?](#). One way to potentially slow down this process is to ask Congress to assert its authority and demand authorization before the President unilaterally engages in military action. You can [contact Congress here](#).

## Fishes & Loaves Lenten Prayer Service Recording

FAN staff and friends came together for a Franciscan prayer night dedicated to anti-hunger and poverty alleviation on Thursday, February 19. It was the opening event of FAN's 2026 anti-hunger campaign, Fishes & Loaves. You can view this Lenten prayer service [here](#).



## A Call to Christians in a Crisis of Faith and Democracy



On Ash Wednesday, the Franciscan Action Network joined with a diverse group of Christian leaders across traditions to launch **A Call to Christians in a Crisis of Faith and Democracy**, a bold call to courage in the face of cruelty, growing authoritarianism, and the misuse and abuse of our faith. These efforts are featured in a [new article](#) at *Religion News Service*. You can read and sign the statement [here](#).

## Ash Wednesday on Capitol Hill



On Ash Wednesday, FAN joined together with our partner organizations in a prayer service near the US Capitol to pray and call for repentance and conversion so that our society might live out the gospel call to love, justice, peace, and reverence for all life and God's creation. You can see more pictures and hear the prayers offered by FAN staff members on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

## Franciscan Justice Circles

Members of the **Richmond, VA-area FJC** attended the annual interfaith advocacy day at the state capitol, Day for All People, along with hundreds of other people of faith. They met with state lawmakers on multiple issues including affordable housing on properties of houses of worship; healthcare access for pregnant women; paid sick leave; energy efficiency standards; and considering cumulative impacts of polluting in the permitting process.

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

**CT-RI FJC:** Tue. Feb. 24 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Texas FJC:** Tue. Feb. 24 at 7:15 pm CT / 6:15 pm MT via Zoom

**SE Wisconsin FJC:** Fri. Feb. 27 at 3:00 pm CT via Zoom

**Virtual New York / St. Kateri Tekawitha FJC:** Mon. March 2 at 4:00 pm ET via Zoom

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

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

**Virtual FJC:** Thur. March 5 at 2:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Chicagoland FJC:** Sat. March 7 at 10:00 am CT 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](#).

