

Publication Date: May 12, 2026

Reflection Date: May 17, 2026 - [Seventh Sunday of Easter](#)

So That They May Be One

Hours before he was arrested and crucified, Jesus offered a passionate, heartfelt prayer to God that we hear in the passage from the Gospel of John for the [Seventh Sunday of Easter](#): “Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your son, so that your son may glorify you.”

During this prayer, Jesus is not alone in the garden or on a mountainside with the disciples nearby as they struggle to keep their eyes open. Instead, Jesus offers this prayer to God while at the table with his friends, after sharing a meal and having an extended conversation about what is to come for Jesus and his followers. The disciples hear every single word that Jesus prays. And so do we.



NASA astronaut and Artemis II Commander Reid Wiseman peers out of one of the Orion spacecraft's main cabin windows, looking back at Earth, as the crew travels towards the Moon. (April 4, 2026) (NASA)

If we listen carefully to the closing words of Jesus' prayer, we hear his longing for oneness with God and his desire for us to be one with God and each other. “And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are.” How amazing that the quality of oneness between Jesus and God is the measure of our oneness with one another and all creation.

Recently, we heard echoes of this profound sense of “oneness” from the four-person crew of astronauts who traveled to the far side of the moon. They describe seeing Earth as a “single, borderless unit.” This perspective shifts our understanding of humanity's shared existence and gives rise to a deep sense of oneness and responsibility.

It is challenging to feel that “oneness” with all that divides us in these times. So much seems intended to separate us: political polarization, distrust in institutions, social media algorithms, contentious cultural and religious beliefs.

Yet, in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, we are called to be symbols and builders of unity by reconciling humanity and creation through radical compassion and repairing divisions by meeting others with love. Every precious encounter with a family seeking asylum, or mother and child held in a detention center, or a hungry man holding a sign at the intersection builds the beloved community of “oneness.” FAN gives us opportunities to show our oneness with all of them.

Louise Lears, SC

Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati

Suggested Action: Contact your representatives in Congress about passing a clean version of the **Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1144)**, a critical piece of bipartisan legislation on human trafficking.

Suggested Petitions:

We pray that we may be strong enough to make peace with our neighbors, to recognize you in those with whom we disagree. May we remember that we will find you in the most unexpected people and places. Loving God, hear our prayer.

We pray for unity among all people, that we will never cease to question ourselves and that we will meet others' points of view with a genuine desire to understand. Compassionate God, hear our prayer.

Prayer

**In this century and in any century,
Our deepest hope, our most tender prayer,
Is that we learn to listen.**

**May we listen to one another in openness and mercy
May we listen to plants and animals in wonder and respect
May We listen to our own hearts in love and forgiveness
May we listen to God in quietness and awe.
And in this listening,
Which is boundless in its beauty,
May we find the wisdom to cooperate**

**With a healing spirit, a divine spirit
Who beckons us into peace and community and creativity.**

Amen.

(Jay McDaniel, Professor of Religion, Hendrix College, Arkansas)

Featured Speaker Announced for FAN's 2026 Benefit



FAN is excited to welcome Sister Norma Pimentel as our featured speaker for our 2026 online benefit. Sr. Norma is a Missionary of Jesus and the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley. Sr. Norma's dedicated service to uplifting the dignity of the poor and marginalized has helped countless people, earning her recognition as one of Time Magazine's 'Women of the Year' this year.

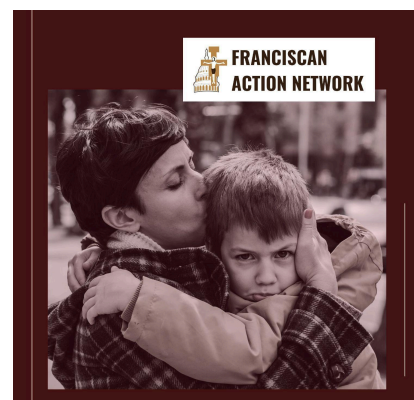
Please join us for FAN's most important fundraiser of the year, our annual online Benefit, **Dignity First: Nourishing Lives, Transforming Communities**, on **Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 7 pm Eastern Time on Zoom**. As we have done since 2023, guests are invited to sponsor or purchase a ticket, with the option

to "give away" their meal to someone in need, while joining a live online program rooted in Franciscan values. This year's program will take us to the **Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit**, which has served the community for nearly a century through meals, clothing, and supportive services. Join us and together, we can put dignity first. [Join us](#).

Urge Congress: Fund Human Needs, Not ICE

This week, Congress returns from recess with a plan to advance a \$72 billion dollar reconciliation bill focused on ICE, CBP, and a billion dollar White House ballroom— a bill that requires only a party-line vote and fails to pursue reforms to federal agencies to safeguard human dignity.

The proposed reconciliation bill would mark the second year in a row that Congress has used the reconciliation process to increase spending for immigration enforcement at the expense of human needs. In July 2025, the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (OBBBA) allocated



\$170 billion for federal agencies to increase arrests in communities across the country and expand detention capacity and included an estimated \$1 trillion in cuts to federal health care programs like Medicare and Medicaid and major cuts to hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Congress should prioritize funding healthcare, housing, and food with our tax dollars – not more ICE cruelty. [Click here](#) to learn more or take action [here](#).

Tell the EPA: Protect us from coal ash pollution



FAN is collecting signatures on a joint comment to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in response to proposed amendments to the Coal Combustion Residuals Regulations that would loosen regulations on coal ash. The proposed rule is a direct threat to our waterways and the health and well-being of our neighbors across the country, particularly the most vulnerable. One of our nation's leading toxic industrial waste products, coal ash is linked to cancer, heart and thyroid disease, reproductive failure, and neurological

harm. You can [click here to sign this joint comment](#).

FAN at UN Migration Meeting

FAN executive director Michele Dunne participated May 5-6 in the United Nations' International Migration Review Forum as part of the Franciscans International (FI) delegation. She also spoke about FAN's immigration advocacy in the United States at a side event entitled "Walking with the Messengers of Hope: Faith Communities Respond to the Reconfiguration of Migration in the Americas." Other side event speakers included Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, TX. The UN Forum is intended to track progress on the [Global Compact for Migration](#); the United States government is not a signatory and did not participate in the Forum. FAN and FI cooperate in many areas, particularly immigration and environmental affairs.



Don't Miss Out on Early Bird Prices for FJLC 2026



Registration is open for the **2026 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference: Ours to do** on **November 7-9, 2026**. Through Franciscan formation, inspiring speakers, hands-on training, and civic engagement on Capitol Hill, we'll explore how to live out our Franciscan values and advocate for a more just and peaceful world. See highlights and hear from people who attended last year's conference [here](#). We hope you will join us. [Click here to register](#). Sponsorship information is available [here](#).

Franciscan Justice Circles



Members of the **Twin Cities Metro FJC** joined a 'Gospel Demands More Rally on Loving our Neighbors and Healing the Sick' at the Minnesota state capitol. With their hymns and their feet they marched and prayed, demanding justice and equity around issues of healthcare, housing and immigrants and children's rights based on the teachings of God. Hennepin County Medical Center is in serious financial difficulty due to the passage of HR1 last summer and is in very real danger of closing. Given that HCMC is a trauma 1 hospital, providing health care to those with no insurance and crucial psychiatric care beds, this would be a devastating blow to an already stressed healthcare system. The FJC believes the state can do better.

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

CT-RI FJC: Tues. May 12 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

DE Valley FJC (DE, PA, NJ): Tues. May 12 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

New Mexico FJC: Tues. May 12 at 6:30 pm CT via Zoom

Monthly National FJCs call: Wed. May 13 at 4:00 pm ET / 1:00 pm PT via Zoom

Bay Area & Northern CA FJC: Wed. May 13 at 7:00 pm PT via Zoom

Rochester, NY FJC: Thur. May 14 at 3:30 pm ET via Zoom

Central Indiana FJC: Fri. May 15 at 1:00 pm ET via Zoom

Driftless Region FJC (WI, MN): Mon. May 18 at 6:00 pm CT via Zoom

Twin Cities FJC: Mon. May 18 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

Michigan FJC: Wed. May 20 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom
Virtual FJC (ltd. mobility): Thur. May 21 at 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET via Zoom
Pacific Northwest FJC: Thur. May 21 at 1:00 pm PT via Zoom
NYC-area FJC: Thur. May 21 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom
Arizona FJC: Thur. May 21 at 6:00 pm MST 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](#).