

Publication Date: May 5, 2026

Reflection Date: May 10, 2026 - [Sixth Sunday of Easter](#)

## The Reason for My Hope

*“Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.” (1 Peter 3:15)*

Recently, I had the opportunity to travel on a pilgrimage to the beautiful Assisi, Italy. To be present where my namesake, Saint Clare, and our patron, Saint Francis, transformed the world was deeply impactful, both professionally and personally.



From all over the world, Franciscan-hearted folks gathered to learn more about ‘what is ours to do.’ *How can I be a nonviolent activist? How am I called to be a steward to my global community? How can I use prayer and Scripture to find wells of sustenance?*

Journeying with Fr. Mike Lasky, OFM Conv, Michele Dunne, and Pace e Bene’s Ken Butigan helped me answer these questions through the Mass and group reflection.

In our second reading for the [Sixth Sunday of Easter](#), Peter reminds us that we should always be ready and able to explain the source of our hope. This Assisi journey certainly gave me more than one reason for the hope that shapes my work and my life.

When I traveled on the plane back to the United States, I felt like I was in an unpopable bubble full of peace, gratitude, and community—truly a feeling of Heaven on Earth. But, once I began to check my email after landing, somehow that bubble felt a bit more poppable.

After no restoration of funding to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the House still voted to pass the deeply flawed Farm Bill. The US Supreme Court last week struck down Louisiana's congressional district map, setting the stage for elimination of a Black-majority district, and essentially rewrote Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, undermining protections against racial discrimination.

After an amazing trip, this felt like: back to reality. But, the pilgrimage was not an escape from reality for me or the 34 other peacemakers. It prepared us for exactly this moment and these challenges. It gave us a durable grounding in hope.

So how can I maintain that hopeful 'bubble' and share my hope as Peter asks of us? The only way I know how is to expand it. I can work to ensure opportunities for hope for millions of others.

When Assisi was under attack, instead of wallowing in either fear or despair, Saint Clare protected the city with her active nonviolence and hope. I can do the same thing for the United States today.

I have many emails and calls to make to Congress to express my disapproval of the Farm Bill. There is work to be done in all avenues of justice. However, just as God was present in Assisi, God is present in the United States too.

We have pilgrims actively sharing the good news of our journey on three different continents! And what a gift that sharing is.

My hope endures, as I know that this responsibility to the common good is shared with my 34 co-pilgrims and with all of you—and our hope grows together! Nothing on this Earth is a solo mission. How could I not have hope when I am inspired by such beacons of God's creation? Together, let us remain united in hope and take action to make that hope tangible for those on the margins who truly need the *good news* that is the foundation of that hope.

***Claire Fisher***

*Advocacy Associate, Franciscan Action Network*

**Suggested Action:** Consider how you can continue to advocate for the hope of all. After the passing of the Farm Bill in the House, we invite you to [call or email](#) your Senators and ask them to NOT pass a Farm Bill without adequate restoration and federal spending to the Farm Bill. Our Holy Father Pope Leo XIV's prayer intention for the month of May is that everyone might have food. This bill is a concrete way to ensure this in the United States.

### **Suggested Petitions:**

*For the 2026 Franciscan Action Network & Pace e Bene pilgrims, that they continue to share the good news of peacemaking, nonviolent communication, and radical love with their local communities, Lord, hear our prayer.*

*In gratitude for the witness of Saints Francis & Clare, that we continue to use them as a source of strength and courage, Lord, hear our prayer.*

### **Prayer**

**Creator God, I pray in gratitude for the opportunity to see and feel Your hope. Help me to not keep this hope solely for myself, but to become inspired to share and extend that hope to my sisters and brothers.**

**Help us to find wells of encouragement to find & create moments of pilgrimage in our everyday lives, no matter where we may live.**

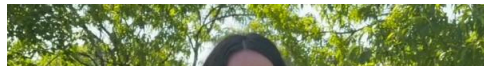
**Amen.**

## **Thank You, Rosie!**



After roughly two years of outstanding work for FAN, our beloved friend and colleague Rosie Davila is departing to pursue graduate studies in social work at Boston College. Over her time, Rosie has worn many hats, working in development, communications, and most recently, as our advocacy strategist focused on the vital issue of immigration. In addition, Rosie has created some beautiful, meaningful pieces of art for FAN, featured on our Christmas cards and in our annual benefit. We are so proud of all her good work and contributions to this network and the common good. And we are excited to see all she will do in the future to advance human dignity, peace, and justice. We invite you to send Rosie a short note, sharing your well wishes [here](#).

## **Success Achieved During Advocacy Days**



FAN is pleased to report that our April 2026 'Immigration Advocacy Days' were a success. Dozens of constituents met with Senators from California, Texas, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania to raise awareness for the DREAM Act of 2025, a bipartisan bill that would give more security to people brought to the US as children. During the course of this advocacy, three of the senators committed to supporting this important legislation. You can watch [this video](#) to hear more about this important work.

## Troubling Supreme Court Decision on Voting Rights



The Supreme Court's decision in *Louisiana v. Callais* marks a sharp turning point in American voting rights law. In a 6–3 ruling, the Court struck down Louisiana's attempt to create a second majority-Black congressional district and rewrote how Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act is applied. Instead of allowing claims based on discriminatory *outcomes*, the Court now requires proof of intentional discrimination. This is a high bar that makes it harder to challenge maps that reduce minority voting power.

What can we do? We invite you to call or email your Congressional representatives to pass the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#) to help counteract this decision, enact broader voting rights protections, and grant voters their democratic dignity.

## The Latest in Israel-Palestine

From the *BBC*: [Israel intercepts Gaza flotilla near Crete and detains 175 activists](#): "22 boats from a flotilla carrying aid for Gaza have been intercepted by Israeli forces in international waters near the Greek island of Crete. The organisers of the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) denounced the action as 'piracy', saying those on board were seized unlawfully more than 965km (600 miles) from Gaza, which is under an Israeli naval blockade."

### **Saint Francis Jubilee Pilgrimage on October 12-23, 2026:**

In October 2026, you are invited to join a delegation of pilgrims to Palestine led by Br. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM. There will be a focus on the olive harvest and holy sites. Please email [jubileepilgrimage@proton.me](mailto:jubileepilgrimage@proton.me) if you are interested. This delegation is open to all people of any faith. You can see the [flyer here](#).

**Interfaith Action for Palestine, July 5-7** — Please [fill out this interest form](#) to provide Christian witness/advocacy during the Christians United for Israel (CUFI) Annual Lobby Summit in Washington DC.



## Key Upcoming Events: Register Today



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](#).

Registration is also 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

The **Arizona FJC** signed on to a letter from Arizona-based groups to the governor as part of an advocacy effort to save Oak Flat. The letter urged the governor not to auction state trust lands for mining waste associated with the mine at Oak Flat. The Circle is planning another online prayer vigil for immigrants on June 10 at 5:15 pm ET / 2:15 pm PT and opens it to all the FJCs nationwide.

Members of the **Texas FJC** participated in a virtual meeting organized by FAN to promote the Dream Act with one of their senator's offices. They continue to explore ways to advocate in favor of creation, human dignity, and peace at the state level.

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

**Mid-Hudson Valley FJC**: Tue. May 5 at 12:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Kansas FJC**: Tue. May 5 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

**Central Maryland FJC**: Wed. May 6 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Ohio FJC**: Wed. May 6 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Virtual FJC (ltd. mobility)**: Thur. May 7 at 11:00 am PT / 2:00 pm ET via Zoom

**Metro DC-area FJC**: Sat. May 9 at 10:00 am ET In Person

**Asheville, NC FJC**: Sun. May 10 at 3:30 pm ET In Person

**Richmond, VA FJC**: Mon. May 11 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

**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

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](#).