

Publication Date: July 21, 2026

Reflection Date: July 26, 2026 - [Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Bringing Forth the Old and the New

The scripture readings for the [Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) circle around the theme of divine wisdom—asking for it, recognizing it, and figuring out how to incorporate new wisdom with old.

Solomon's presence of mind—even while asleep—in the story from the First Book of Kings is impressive. Prompted by God in a dream to ask for anything, Solomon asks for “an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong,” a request that pleases God. Solomon shows excellent self awareness, admitting that he is inexperienced and unprepared to succeed his father David as king. When I pray, do I show similar humility, asking God not for specific outcomes that I might desire, but for the wisdom to see God's will in any situation and the strength to do my part in it?



Photo by Alex Shute on Unsplash

Keeping my prayers focused on God's will rather than my own is one way to build and reinforce my trust in God over time. As St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans, “We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” Do I believe that all things—even adversity and loss—ultimately contribute to the welfare for all of us

beloved of God? Certainly I am far enough along in my life to be able to look back at incidents that were painful at the time and to see now that they ultimately led to growth.

My beloved mother made her transitus to the next life recently at age 90, and I have been reflecting on her wisdom, rooted in a strong faith, shared with me over many years. There is also wisdom that I learned from other mothers—the Catholic Church, educational institutions, the American culture within which I was raised—that I treasure and draw on often, consciously and unconsciously.

At the same time, there are newer sources of wisdom for me: the Franciscan tradition I joined a decade ago, the way of nonviolence I have studied over the past 7 years, the Franciscan-hearted pursuit of justice and peace I am learning through working with FAN.

Can I be like the scribe Jesus mentions in the Gospel According to Matthew (Ch 13), who “has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven” and therefore becomes able to “bring from his storeroom both the new and the old”?

What are your old and new sources of divine wisdom, and who are the people and communities who are inspiring and schooling you now? If you are not already a member of a [Franciscan Justice Circle](#), consider finding or forming one. It might just be a place where God will help you find new divine wisdom to add to the old.

Michele Dunne, OFS
FAN Executive Director

Suggested Action: One way we seek wisdom in our society is through participation in the democratic process; through dialogue, discussion, and free elections, we open new avenues to growing in wisdom and discerning our path forward. Please consider asking your senators to oppose the [SAVE Act](#), which would suppress voting rights.

Suggested Petitions:

For the humility to seek God’s will rather than ask God to do ours, we pray.

For new sources of wisdom that can enliven our desire to seek God’s justice and peace on earth, we pray.

Prayer

**God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;**

Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him
Forever and ever in the next.

Amen.

(Serenity Prayer, Full Version)

Call and Urge Your Senators: Protect Temporary Protected Status for Haiti

Please call and urge your Senators to support S. 4814— legislation that would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to designate Haiti for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and ensure that Haitian TPS holders are not forced to return to dangerous and unstable conditions.

Last month, the Supreme Court ruled that the administration can terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 350,000 people from Haiti and 6,100 from Syria. The ruling clears a path for the potential deportation of hundreds of thousands of more people, many of whom have lived in the U.S. for decades. On July 10, the deadline for the termination of TPS for Haiti was extended to July 24th. **Please continue to call your Senators throughout July.**

Guidance on how to call and email your Senators is available [here](#).

TAKE ACTION BUTTON

<https://franciscanactionnetwork.salsalabs.org/protecttps>



Take Action Against Human Trafficking



FAN Director of Advocacy Sr. Maria Orlandini and summer intern Alexis Serio recently traveled to Capitol Hill to attend a briefing and advocate for passage of the **Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2025 (H.R. 1144)**. The bipartisan bill would strengthen efforts to prevent human trafficking, protect survivors, and expand programs that address trafficking in the United States and around the world. Human trafficking is

a crime against humanity that involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit another. It dehumanizes and commodifies human beings, persons made in the image of God, violating their innate dignity.

You can learn more about the bill [here](#). We then urge you to **call your U.S. Representative and encourage them to support and pass H.R. 1144**. You can [find your member of Congress here](#).

Urge the EPA to Protect Creation

People of faith from across the country are calling on EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin to protect human health, defend vulnerable communities, and uphold our shared responsibility to care for God's creation.

Recent EPA decisions and proposals would weaken key environmental protections, roll back safeguards against dangerous pollution, and reduce consideration of the real human costs of poor air quality and climate change. These choices threaten the dignity of human life, the well-being of current and future generations, and the communities already bearing the heaviest burdens of pollution and environmental harm.

You are invited to join other people of faith in adding your name to this letter urging Administrator Zeldin to reconsider these harmful actions and use his position to protect creation and promote human flourishing. On Friday, July 24 at 10:00 AM ET, FAN

**For Our Common Home
& The Common Good
Prayer Service at the EPA**

Join us in prayer! We will gather outside of the EPA to pray for God's creation and the common good.

Friday, July 24 at 10:00 am ET

Environmental Protection Agency
(Front Sidewalk)
1200 Constitution Avenue, NW,
Washington D.C.

Register to attend at
bit.ly/EPAPrayerService

Catholic Climate Movement SODALITY OF SAINTS FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK National Religious Partnership Sisters of St. Mary Hermans & Co. Missionaries

will join our partners in hosting a prayer service outside the EPA in Washington DC. If you would like to join us, please register [here](#).

[Add your name](#) button.

Help Stop the SAVE Act



With renewed efforts to legislate curbs on voting rights, please **contact your Senators and express your opposition to the SAVE Act**. This legislation includes voter suppression measures that would make voting more burdensome, costly, and inaccessible, all under the guise of election security. Such barriers weaken the ability of people to exercise their right to fully participate in our democracy.

[Take action](#) button

Join Us for FAN's 2026 Conference

FAN's annual leadership conference brings Franciscan-hearted people from different locations, generations, vocations, and backgrounds together to learn, grow, connect, and build a movement for justice. Registration open for the **2026 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference: Ours to do** on **November 7-9, 2026** in the Washington DC area with early bird registration prices available through **August 15**. 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. Learn more, hear from people who attended last year's conference and register [here](#). Sponsorship information is available [here](#).



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Franciscan Justice Circles

Along with many FJCs, **Rochester NY FJC** members are reaching out in support of bill S. 4814 regarding TPS for Haitians, joining daily prayers for peace and exploring how to promote unity among marginalized groups who may appear to have conflicting views.

This month members of the **Twin Cities FJC** joined a prayer vigil in front of the federal building where ICE's field office is located and which has served as the base for DHS's Operation Metro Surge.

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

Winston-Salem NC FJC: Wed. July 22 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Massachusetts FJC: Thur. July 23 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

W. Pennsylvania FJC: Thur. July 23 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

Twin Cities FJC: Mon. July 27 at 7:00 pm CT via Zoom

Colorado FJC: Mon. July 27 at 7:00 pm MT via Zoom

Bay Area & Northern CA FJC: Mon. July 27 at 7:00 pm PT via Zoom

Connecticut-Rhode Island FJC: Tue. July 28 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Texas FJC: Tue. July 28 at 7:15 pm CT / 6:15 pm MT via Zoom

Central Maryland FJC: Thur. July 30 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

SE Wisconsin FJC: Fri. July 31 at 4:00 pm CT via Zoom

Georgia FJC: Mon. Aug. 3 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](#).