

Publication Date: August 18, 2026

Reflection Date: August 23, 2026 - [Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

Jesus, Forever Key

Let's think about keys. In the scripture readings for the [Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) , the prophet Isaiah refers to “the Key of the House of David,” God’s servant Eliakim, foreshadowing Jesus, the Christ. In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus gives Peter “the keys to the kingdom of heaven” after Peter acknowledges that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Keys are a profound biblical symbol representing sovereign authority and royal stewardship. Scriptural keys open and shut, bind and loosen.



Sourced from *Unsplash*

In today’s world, keys are often replaced by electronic devices: remotes to open and close car doors and a button to turn on an engine; an app on a phone to open doors in buildings. But even if keys someday become obsolete, Jesus, Key of David, who built his church on Peter the Rock, by handing him keys to the Kingdom of heaven, will never be obsolete. For Christians, belief in Jesus, “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” is key to our faith.

How do I, do we, respond to the critical question Jesus put to his disciples: “Who do you say that I am?” Jesus may be a friend, or teacher, or healer, or consoler, or companion, or questioner and challenger. In times of doubt or darkness, Jesus may seem like a distant relative who exists but with whom I do not feel a close relationship. But even with shifts, we respond with Peter, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” You, Jesus, are my forever key. I believe “that from (you), and through (you), and for (you) are all things.”

From the moment that Francis of Assisi encountered the crucified Jesus in the San Damiano crucifix, Jesus Christ became his all in all, his hope, his joy, his love, **his forever key**. As we celebrate the Jubilee Year of St. Francis, invoked by Pope Leo as a year of peace, may we reflect on how we can be peacemakers in a world of conflict and division.

Sister Marie Lucey, OSF

Associate Director, Franciscan Action Network

Suggested Action: Join Franciscan Action Network in supporting creative peacebuilding by [asking your senators](#) to vote NO on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), S. 4784, which includes a massive increase to Pentagon spending to \$1.15 trillion.

Suggested Petitions:

That we not only pray for peace, but take action as peacemakers, we pray to the Lord.

That each of us considers how to answer, “Who do you say that I am,” we pray to the Lord.

Prayer: Saint Francis, our brother, you who eight hundred years ago went to meet Sister Death as a man of peace, intercede for us before the Lord. . . .

In this time afflicted by conflict and division, intercede for us so that we may become peacemakers: unarmed and disarming witnesses of the peace that comes from Christ. **Amen.**

From the [Prayer to St. Francis for Peace, written by Pope Leo IV](#)

FAN Staff Transitions

This week, FAN said farewell to three staff members: Advocacy associate Br. James LaGrutta, OFM, and our summer interns, Alexis Serio and Celestine Adjaglo.

Br James has spent the past two years advocating on poverty alleviation, specifically on affordable housing, while he worked at St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia. He will transition to the Laudato Si’ Center for Integral Ecology at Siena University.

Alexis and Celeste helped with many FAN projects, including policy research and preparation for our Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference. Alexis will be returning to St. Bonaventure University for her senior year as an on-campus FAN intern, and Celeste will begin studying the LSAT, applying for Law Schools, and exploring job opportunities as she enters the workforce.

We wish all three of them the best and pray for them on their journeys!



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.

This summer, 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.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, challenging key figures in his own Republican party, has [criticized](#) these plans for mass deportation, pointing to the positive impact of Haitians in Ohio and the difficult conditions that remain in Haiti. Catholic Bishop Brendan Cahill cautioned, “Revoking the legal status of hundreds of thousands of people residing in our country creates a moral crisis when returning to their country of origin is not a safe or reasonable option.”

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

TAKE ACTION BUTTON

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

Upcoming Environmental Webinars

The Arctic: "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins"

Tuesday, August 25, 2026
7:00 PM EDT - 8:00 PM EDT

An unexpected trip to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is soul changing. **Sr. Joan Brown**, a Sister of St. Francis of Rochester MN, will share her experience of what the Gwich'in people call "the sacred place where life begins." Join us for FAN's next webinar



to learn how we can protect the Arctic from oil and gas development. Register [here](#).

Moving Beyond Plastics in a “Throwaway Culture”

Thursday, September 10, 2026

7:00 PM EDT - 8:00 PM EDT

Judith Enck, author of "[The Problem with Plastic](#)" and founder of Beyond Plastics, will share with us about the impacts of plastics on Mother Earth and on vulnerable communities. Judith will outline how we can get involved at the local and state levels to cut toxic plastic pollution. **Students from Siena University** will also share their work to combat plastics pollution in the state of New York.

Muslim Reflection on Saint Clare



Our recent prayer on the feast of St. Clare provoked a beautiful [reflection](#) on the saint's leadership qualities and how they connect to Muslim teachings from Imam Dr. Talib Shareef, President of the Nation's Mosque. We hope you will enjoy reading it.

Button: [[Read Imam Shareef's reflection here](#)]

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 is open for the **2026 Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference: Ours to do** on **November 7-9, 2026** in the Washington DC area. Learn more, hear from people who attended last year's conference and register [here](#). Sponsorship information is available [here](#).



Franciscan Justice Circles



Several members of the **Ohio FJC** participated in community response gatherings on Sunday mornings to stand nonviolently in witness outside an ICE field office to show support for the many Haitian residents ordered to report there from other parts of Ohio. FJC members showed up to sing and raise awareness about what is happening with orders for check-in and the ankle monitors being put on those coming to the appointments. Most people who came for their appointments have been given new dates that they will need to appear for another check-in— an order that is increasingly difficult as the stripping of Temporary Protected Status invalidates everyone's driver's licenses and work permits.

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

Michigan FJC: Wed. Aug. 19 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Virtual FJC (ltd. mobility): Thur. Aug. 20 at 11:00 am PT/2:00 pm ET via Zoom

Pacific Northwest FJC: Thur. Aug. 20 at 1:00 pm PT via Zoom

Asheville, NC FJC: Thur. Aug. 20 at 6:00 pm ET via Zoom

NYC-area FJC: Thur. Aug. 20 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

Arizona FJC: Thur. Aug. 20 at 6:30 pm MST via Zoom

Chicagoland FJC: Sat. Aug. 22 at 10:00 am CT via Zoom

Colorado FJC: Mon. Aug. 24 at 7:00 pm MT via Zoom

Bay Area & Northern CA FJC: Mon. Aug. 24 at 7:00 pm PT via Zoom

Texas FJC: Tue. Aug. 25 at 7:15 pm CT/ 6:15 pm MT via Zoom

Winston-Salem FJC: Wed. Aug. 26 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

Massachusetts FJC: Thu. Aug. 27 at 7:00 pm ET via Zoom

W. Pennsylvania FJC: Thu. Aug. 27 at 7:30 pm ET via Zoom

SoCal FJC: Thu. Aug. 27 at 6:00 pm PT via Zoom

SE Wisconsin FJC: Fri. Aug. 28 at 4:00 pm 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](#).

The FAN newsletter will be taking a vacation during the week of August 24. We will see you in September!