

Walk Lightly

Each leaf, each petal,
each grain, each person,
sings your praises,
Creator God.

Each creature on the earth,
all the mountains
and great seas
show your glory,
Spirit of love.

And yet the hand of greed
has patented and plundered
your splendour,
has taken and not shared
your gift,
has lived as owner of the earth,
not guest.

And so
the ice is cracked
the rivers dry,
the valleys flooded
and the snow caps melt.

God our Father, show us
how to step gently,
how to live simply,
how to walk lightly
with respect and love
for all that you have made.
Amen

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Check out: praying-nature.com



Communications Committee
Franciscan Province of Ireland
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Spirit and Life *Reflections on Franciscan Spirituality*

THE GIFT OF CREATION

St Francis' Canticle of the Creatures

O most High, almighty, good Lord God,
to you belong praise, glory, honour,
and all blessing!

Praised be my Lord God with all creatures;
and especially our brother the sun,
which brings us the day, and the light;
fair is he, and shining
with a very great splendour;
O Lord, he is a sign of you to us!

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon,
and for the stars,
which God has set clear and lovely
in the heavens.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind,
and for air and cloud, calm and all weather,
by which you uphold in life all creatures.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water,
which is very serviceable to us,
and humble, and precious, and clean.
Praised be my Lord for brother fire,
through which you give us light in the darkness;
and he is bright and cheerful and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth,
which sustains us and keeps us,
and yields diverse fruits,
and coloured flowers, grass and herbs.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks to God,
and serve him with great humility.



All God's Creatures

Francis of Assisi loved all of God's creation: people and animals, plants and rocks, indeed, the entire universe. Creation is a biblical and religious term that presupposes a Creator who creates. Creation includes nature and every other created reality. In Christian belief the Creator is a loving God who loves his creation so much that he sends his Son to become one of us on this earth.



While still a young man, Francis began to feel God prompting him to question the direction of his life. Searching for inner peace, Francis visited abandoned churches and lonely places to pray for God's guidance. Surrounded by wild flowers, tumbled down walls, and bird song, Francis found the solitude he needed to hear his deepest yearnings - God speaking to him.

Eventually, Francis found his true meaning and identity in being a child of God living in union with creation reflecting God's generosity and love.

Gradually Francis realised that he was truly a brother to the sun, moon, stars, fire and water, and to the whole cosmos for he along with them was being given existence at every moment by God.

Expressing his belief through a simple and peaceful lifestyle, Francis models an ecological consciousness, a spiritual and mystical vision of all creatures as brother and sister having one source in God, the Creator and Father of all.

Through a life of prayer and relationship, Francis came to see God's goodness at the heart of all he has created. For him, all of creation, filled with the abundant goodness of God, manifests the presence of God, and deserves respect and care. "God saw all he had made and indeed it was very good." (Genesis 1:31).

As God's children we are called to praise and thank God daily for the gift of creation. Francis saw the Christian sacraments as part of a broader sacramental vision of the material world, a world that mirrors God's beauty and goodness.

All comes from God's hands and is given to be shared by all. As the Lord's disciples we seek to create a community reflecting these Gospel values.

Table Prayers: Gratitude and Responsibility

The earth needs our care just as we need the earth for our existence. This mutual dependence is what God wants. Our Creator asks us to be good stewards of the very earth that feeds us. St. Francis shows us how to live with a spirit of gratitude for the gift of creation and how to joyfully embrace our responsibility to care for that same creation.

God of love, Creator of all,
this food does not come to us without cost.
It comes to us through human effort,
And we are thankful.
Even more so, this food comes to us as a gift of the earth.
Creation has given itself so that our lives can be sustained,
And we are thankful.
In our gratitude,
We acknowledge the true cost of this food.
And in our prayer to you, O God,
Help us renew our commitment to care for the earth. Amen.

All praise be yours, my Lord,
Through Sister Earth our Mother,
By whom you give us food and drink
And care for all our needs.
All praise be yours
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayed by the Irish Franciscan friars

