The Canticle Garden

Stations of the
Canticle of St. Francis

V1.1 — 05-2025

First Station — Brother Sun

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 1

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 1:** Praise for the sun, the bringer of day, he carries the light of the Lord in his rays; the moon and the stars who light up the way unto your throne.*

Canticle of St. Francis

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord, All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings. To you alone, Most High, do they belong, and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name. Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, Who is the day through whom You give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor, Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

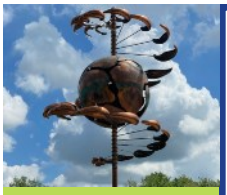
Reflection

Without the Sun , Earth's land, water, and air would all be frozen solid! Life on Earth would cease to exist. That's because almost all living things rely on the steady light and heat of the Sun. The Sun's heat makes liquid water on our planet possible. And all life that we know of — from bacteria to elephants — needs liquid water to survive.

Aside from its heat and visible light, the Sun also shines in ultraviolet (UV) light. Ozone in Earth's upper atmosphere blocks much of the UV. However, pollution can weaken the ozone shield. Then the Sun's UV light can harm living things on the ground and in the top layers of the oceans. Even when the ozone shield is strong, the UV that gets through help form smog from car exhausts and other pollution.

People can harness the heat and light of the Sun to generate electricity. Solar energy is becoming cheaper and more widespread. Someday it could supply most of our electricity. That would allow us to burn less fossil fuels like coal or oil. The burning of these fuels causes global warming by emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, where it traps the Sun's heat.

Our Father (Creation Prayer)



Second Station — Sister/Mother Earth

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 5

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 5:** Praise for the earth who makes life to grow, the creatures you made to let your life show; the flowers and trees that help us to know the heart of love*

Canticle of St. Francis

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister, Mother Earth who sustains and governs us, producing varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs. Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon for love of You and bear sickness and trial.

Reflection

(Excerpted from Spring 2020 Issue of the TAU-USA)

In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. “Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs”. ~ From the opening of Laudato Si’, 2015

Pope Francis also writes in Laudato Si’: *“This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she ’groans in travail.’. We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth; our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.*

Our Father (Creation Prayer)

Third Station — Sisters Moon and Stars and Sister Saturn

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 1

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 1:** Praise for the sun, the bringer of day, he carries the light of the Lord in his rays; the moon and the stars who light up the way unto your throne.*

Canticle of St. Francis

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars;
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Reflection

(Excerpted from the Blog A guide to becoming a Backyard Astronomer)

Psalm 8 records King David's exclamation of wonder when he looked up at the night sky and saw God's handiwork there. David wrote:

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens… When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have… crowned him with glory and honor… O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

We are all in need of a vision of God's glory and we can learn to see it everywhere –even, like David, in the night sky with our moon, the planets, and the stars.

Our Father (Creation Prayer)

Fourth Station — Brother Wind

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 3

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 3:** Praise for the sun, the bringer of day, he carries the light of the Lord in his rays; the moon and the stars who light up the way unto your throne.*

Canticle of St. Francis

Praise for the wind that blows through the trees, the seas' mighty storms, the gentlest breeze; they blow where they will, they blow where they please to please the Lord.

Reflection

"St Francis calls the wind his brother. And wind has indeed been a brother to humanity in a very special way for as long as there have been sailing ships and windmills. These have been replaced, of course, by the more sophisticated and technical inventions of modern times.

Yet, all the while, the wind has gone on blowing. Now it has called us back to itself. We have realized that it is an important energy source… Wind power is of the highest ecological significance. Therefore, not only can we call the wind our brother; the wind itself has fraternal love for us." (Eric Doyle)

Winds! All bless he Lord! Birds of heaven! All bless the Lord: give glory and eternal praise to him!

Georges Morin, ofm

Our Father (Creation Prayer)

Fifth Station — Sister Death

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 6

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 6:** Praise for our death that makes our life real, the knowledge of loss that helps us to feel; the gift of your-self, your presence revealed to bring us home.*

Canticle of St. Francis

Praised be You, my Lord, for our Sister Death, whom we must all face. I praise and bless you, Lord, and I give thanks to you, and I will serve you in all humility.

Reflection

Sister Death – A Sister who takes me by the hand for the transition or doorway from this life of time to the life of Eternal Life with the Creator.

As I stand reflecting on the Pendulum Sculpture, I think of the swinging pendulum with its square center opening as it reveals passing glimpses of the transition doorway into the life to come. It reminds me of the experience of passing glimpses of the life to come that inspires my life of Faith and Hope symbolic of my life and spirit lived in time. When the pendulum stops the square center signals a pass through from this side of time into Eternal Life. (Reflection paraphrased from a conversation by John Reichart as he gazed on the sculpture of Sister Death at the Canticle Garden)

Our Father (Creation Prayer)

Sixth Station — Sister Water

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 3

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 3:** Praise for the rain that waters our fields, and blesses our crops so all the earth yields; from death unto life her mystery revealed springs forth in joy*

Canticle of St. Francis

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Reflection

In his 2015 encyclical Laudato Si', Pope Francis mentions water 46 times. He emphasizes that water is a gift from the Earth that is essential for life, health, agriculture, and industry. He also discusses the damage to water sources and the need to protect access to clean drinking water.
What does Laudato Si' say about water?

- Water is a fundamental human right and a condition for exercising other rights
- Water is a precious gift from the Earth
- Water is damaged by human activity
- Access to clean drinking water is essential for human life
- Water sources are necessary for agriculture, industry, and health care
- The oceans are a common heritage of humanity
- Human malice, selfishness, and environmental neglect threaten the purity of water

Our Father (Creation Prayer)

Seventh Station — Brother Fire

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 4

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 4:** Praise for the fire who gives us the light, the warmth of the sun to brighten our night; he dances with joy, his spirit so bright, he sings of you.*

Canticle of St. Francis

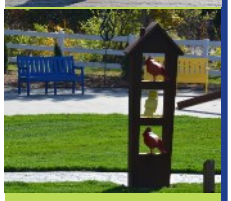
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night;
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Reflection

In Pope Francis's encyclical "Laudato Si," references to "fire" are primarily used metaphorically to highlight the destructive potential of human actions on the environment, often relating to the burning of fossil fuels and the resulting climate change, which is described as a "fever" or "burning" of the planet; essentially depicting the Earth as being "on fire" due to human activity.

As I reflect on Brother Fire gazing on the fire bowl at the Canticle Garden, I am struck by the Phoenix crafted into the sculpture. The Phoenix arises out of the ashes as a symbol of transformation and new beginnings. (Fr. Al Veik OFM Cap)

Our Father (Creation Prayer)



Eighth Station — Sister/Brother Creatures

Canticle of The Sun by Marty Haugen vs 5

***Refrain**: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy. Come, dance in the forest, come play in the field, and sing sing to the glory of the Lord*

***Vs 5:** Praise for the earth who makes life to grow, the creatures you made to let your life show; the flowers and trees that help us to know the heart of love*

Canticle of St. Francis

Praised be You my Lord through our Sister/Brother Creatures.

Reflection

The Eighth Station provides the integrating opportunity to view the Canticle Garden with its art and sculptures as a whole. As is true in our experience of nature, the birds of the air, the fish, all of the animals and smallest of creatures, bees and insects, grace the expanse of our lived space, as is true of the Canticle Garden space as we view and experience it.

As I view the Garden from its highest point near the Sister/Mother Earth Sculpture I view the various sculptures that integrate the Creatures, the birds, the fish, the various plants, even the insects and the bees carved into the Corten steel of some of the sculptures. The Owl winks at me as it seems to address me: “Hi there, brother, I am your sibling Sister.” (Fr. Al Veik OFM Cap.)

Our Father (Creation Prayer)