



Franciscan Action Network

Transforming the World in the Spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare

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Interactive “Canticle of the Creatures”

(Adapted from the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut)

Instructions

- Before we proclaim, with St. Francis, his hymn of praise and thanks to God for all the gifts of creation, take a few minutes to read through the canticle.
- Recall your own experiences of creation, near home or in a special place. What most gives you joy or fills you with wonder? What do you depend upon most? What would you miss most if it ceased to exist?
- Francis speaks of the heavenly bodies and uses the medieval categories of earth, air, water and fire. Let your imagination expand these categories.
- If you wish, write a brief phrase, experience or name of something or someone in any categories.

Now we will recite the stanzas together. Call out your word or phrase after each prompt. We will begin the next stanza when everyone who wishes has spoken.

Canticle of the Creatures (Adapted Version)

O most High, almighty, good Lord God, to you belong praise, honor 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 splendor: O Lord, he signifies you to us!

We give you praise for:

- The light of Christ, which has come into the world.
- Sunlight, which travels 93 million miles to reach our Earth.
- Solar energy, which warms the land and sea, making life possible and creating our weather.
- The beauty of sunrise and sunset, marking our days.
- And for...

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

We give you praise for:

- The vast reaches of the universe, billions of stars in billions of galaxies, giving You glory.
- The explosive supernova death of stars, creating and sending the elements needed for life into our solar system and planet Earth.
- The delicate beauty of a new crescent moon and the golden splendor of a harvest moon.
- The moon-governed tides that shape the life of ocean shores.
- And for...

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

We give you praise for:

- The balance of gases in the atmosphere, the ocean of air in which we live and breathe.
- Winds that move clouds of moisture around our planet, giving us rain.
- The ozone layer, protecting life from harmful rays.
- And for...

Praised be my Lord for our sister water, which is very serviceable to us, and humble, and precious, and clean.

We give you praise for:

- The waters of Baptism and blessing, of new life and grace.
- Water that makes plant and animal life possible.
- Water that makes up more than half the substance of a human body.
- The power of flowing rivers that generates electricity.
- Marshes and wetlands, streams, lakes, waterfalls and rainbows.
- All the creatures, great and small, that fill Earth's waters.
- And for...

Praised be my Lord for brother fire, through which you give us light in the darkness; and he is bright, and pleasant, and very mighty, and strong.

We give you praise for:

- Sources of light that give us extra hours of day.
- Fossil fuels, products of ancient sunlight, accumulated over the ages, burned to give us energy.
- Flames and candles that pierce the darkness at the Easter Vigil.
- And for...

Praised be my Lord for our mother the Earth, which sustains us and keeps us, and yields diverse fruits, and flowers of many colors, and grass.

We give you praise for:

- The work of photosynthesis by plankton and plants, converting sunlight, carbon dioxide and nutrients into food for other creatures.
- The incredible beauty, intricacy and diversity of flowers and foliage.
- Grasses—rice, wheat, corn, barley, oats, millet—the staff of life.
- Wheat and grapes, fruits of the Earth, which become our Eucharistic banquet.
- Earthworms, fungi, and all small creatures that create fertile soil.
- Bees and all pollinators, whose work is essential for the life and fruitfulness of many plants.
- All creatures who serve God's purpose and vision for creation.
- And for...

Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for God's love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation; blessed are they who peaceably endure, for you, O most High, shall give them a crown!

We give you praise for the lives and work of:

- St. Francis of Assisi, who rejoiced in the whole community of life and understood himself as brother to all people and all creatures.
- Cesar Chavez, who worked to protect those who harvest our food, and all who struggle for just and healthy conditions for farm workers and food processors.
- Sister Dorothy Stang and Chico Mendez, who gave their lives in the pursuit of justice for small farmers, rubber tappers and the landless poor of Brazil.
- Wangaari Mathai, former political prisoner who leads Kenya's Green Belt Movement and the Billion Tree Campaign.
- All who work to protect human life and dignity.
- And for...

Praised be my Lord for our sister, the death of the body, from which no one escapes; woe to him who died in mortal sin! Blessed are they who are found walking by your most holy will, for the second death shall have no power to do them harm.

We give you praise for:

- All the elements of the earth that form our bodies in our mother's wombs, cycling through us from the plants and animals we eat, returning to the Earth when we no longer need them.
- And for...

Praise you and bless you the Lord and give thanks to God, and serve God with great humility. Amen.