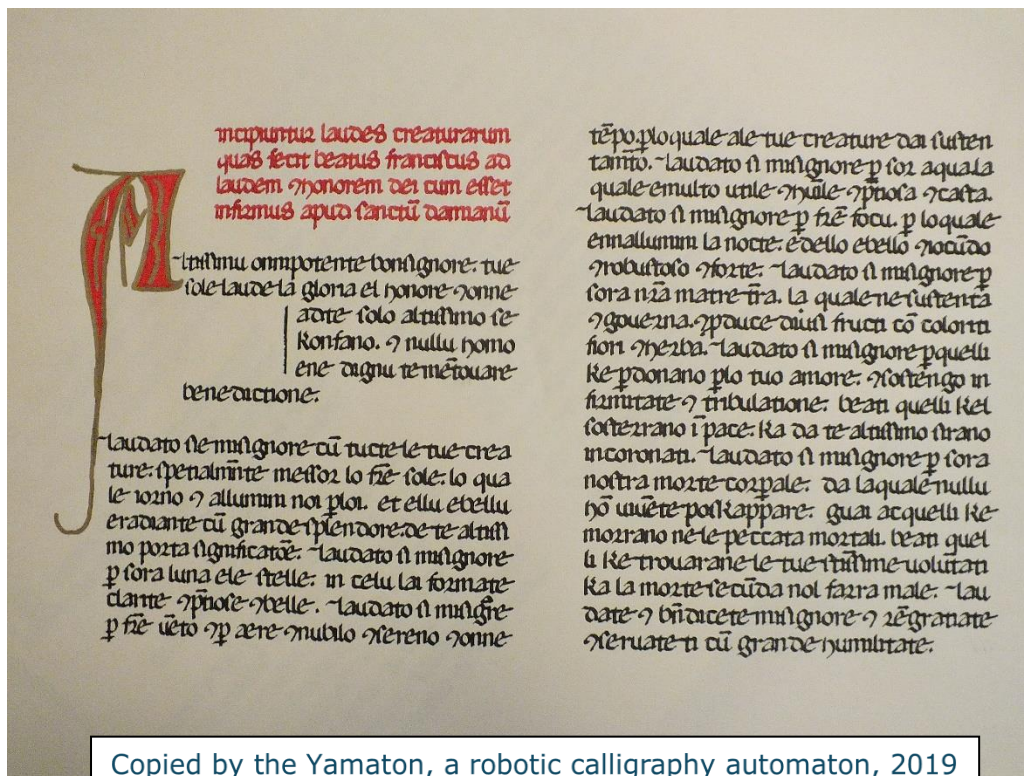


St Francis The Canticle of the Creatures

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights! (Psalm 148:1)



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Further reading

St Francis' Canticle of the Creatures by
*John Watts,
published in 2019 by
Gracewing.

I have use this book
and my main
reference source

If you wish to go
deeper into the St
Francis' Canticle of
the Creatures I
commend this book
to you.

* John Watts is a
member of the
Secular Franciscan
Order, which is an
order that has men
and women, who
live in the world,
work for a living,
and following
the Franciscan spirit
without taking vows.

The Canticle of the Creatures was written by Francis towards the end of his life. It was written over three periods of time. Verses 1-9 and 15 are believed to have been written in 1225, verses 10-11 were written in 1225 and verses 12-14 in September 1226, shortly before his death in October 1226. (see *the Canticle in and at the end of the Reflection*)

It is generally agreed that this Canticle is amongst the earliest poems to be written in the vernacular, Umbrian, as opposed to ecclesiastical Latin. It was written to be sung, the last verses were dictated by Francis to Bro Angelo and Leo and sung by them shortly before his death.

I am not a linguist, far from it, I can at times struggle with the use of language in its written form. John Watts 'Canticle of the Creatures' referred to the fact that in English, inanimate things are referred to as 'it' - this was not the case for Francis. Early Italian from the Umbrian region, as a written language, was slowly developing. In Francis' time, things were either masculine or feminine. John Watts points out that 'In an important sense, in their character and action, sun, wind and fire are felt to be masculine, and moon, stars, water and earth feminine'. He goes on to suggest that 'all ancient peoples thought of the sun as male, the moon as female, and earth as our mother. It accorded with something deep in human nature.' (page 31)

So, in the Canticle of the Creatures, we have a praise poem, referred to as Laude, in Umbrian. A 'Laude' was composed to be sung. The Canticle of the Creatures was a Song of the Creatures, a song of praise. Francis picks up the theme of Psalm 148: 1-3,7-9, the Laetare and Daniel 3:52, 57,62-78-90, the Benedicite, the Canticle of the Three Young Men in the Furnace.

These two pieces from scripture were probably the most important influence on Francis who saw in creation and the creatures who surrounded him as a reflection of the Divine. Francis has left us a poem, a song that can take us to the heart of Francis' love of and for nature and of the Creator God.

'We all owe a great debt to St. Francis of Assisi and to his Canticle of the Creatures for leading us to the conviction that all brother and sister creatures make up one family under God's loving care.' (Jack Wintz OFM - Franciscan Media)



***Find your favourite space
for this time of prayerful
reflection***

light a candle

***Slow down, breathe calmly,
be comfortable and relax***

***Sense the presence of God
in this stillness***

Our opening prayer

Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart
and give me true faith,
certain hope, and perfect charity,
sense and knowledge,
Lord, that I may carry out
Your holy and true command.

Amen

(The Anglican Society of St Francis)

Click the link below and watch the video and listen to the words of Canticle of the Creatures, in English, from The Laudato Si' website. The full text is at the end of this refectio.



https://youtu.be/kpPSZkmr_Js

For our time of reflection, we focus on these words from verses 1-9 of the Canticle and all that is beautiful in world that surrounds us. Let us have a reverence as we read these words again, being forever mindful of the potential for our presence and behaviour to damage and scare this beauty.



Picture Franciscan Media February 2019 St Anthony Messenger

Read these verses from the Canticle of the Creatures

Praised be you, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;
and bears a likeness of You, Most High one.

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

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which you give substance to your creatures.

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

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

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit
with coloured flowers and herbs.

- ❖ Quietly, think about creation, picture the animals, birds, and the plants that give us so much and then listen to

The Poor Clares of Arundel - Canticle of Creation

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/HnZt2ZeRraA?si=vZ0RedV9ApFqS-X5&t=4>

This prayer formed the basis of daily prayer for the early brothers, who could not read or write. They would say the 'Paternoster', the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen

Words attributed to St Francis

O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

We close with the hymn All creatures of our God and King

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/kJRqM45Y8Gk?si=aQQ1WQrmf5dRnEkW&t=5>

**Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility.** (Verse 15)

Fr Derek Akker

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(Derek is a retired Anglican Parish Priest and a member of the congregations of All Saints & St James. Prior to his ordination he was accredited as a Methodist Preacher in 1968 and served within the Methodist Church until returning to the Anglican Church in the mid 1980's)

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Parish of Kirklees Valley, Bury, (All Saints, Elton & St James, Woolfold) - In the Diocese of Manchester

While I seek to use only reliable sources when using websites, I cannot guarantee that the content on these websites is or will remain accurate or appropriate.

The Canticle of Creatures

The Laudato Si' translation

Verses 1-9

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honour and all blessing.
To You alone, Most High, do they belong
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.

Praised be you, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day,
and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour;
and bears a likeness of You, Most High one.

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

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather
through which you give substance to your creatures.

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

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

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit
with coloured flowers and herbs.

Verses 10-11

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed those who endure in peace, for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.

Verses 12-14

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

Verse 15

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.