

St Francis

The Canticle of the Creatures Pardon and Peace

***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 10-11)



Peace Lily - *Spathiphyllum floribundum*
Jotbepe
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After the opening words of the Canticle, these words do not fit easily into the flow of words of praise for creation. I could well imagine that any editor suggesting that these verses and the following verses 12-13 should be taken out of the canticle and become the starting point for a new canticle where the focus is on suffering. These verses were added to the original Canticle of the Creatures. Francis was in decline, and they were dictated to the brothers caring for him, by Francis toward the end of his life.

In these words, the poem changes from words of praise for creation to humanity and pain and suffering that is never far away. In a matter of 33 words, Francis brought a message of giving pardon and living with infirmity and tribulation, '*. . . both these things involve 'enduring in peace'; both dispel bitterness.*' (John Watts)

Francis had written with passion about the beauty of creation, he wanted the words to ring out, but he knew that in the midst of so much beauty, there could be pain and conflict and Francis knew this first hand. He had endured much physical pain and suffering and was aware of personal conflicts.

There had been conflict between the Bishop of Assisi and the Podesta of Assisi, the Mayor. According to some sources these words were written to address this quarrel and was sung by some of the friars in the presence of the bishop and mayor. The conflict was resolved.

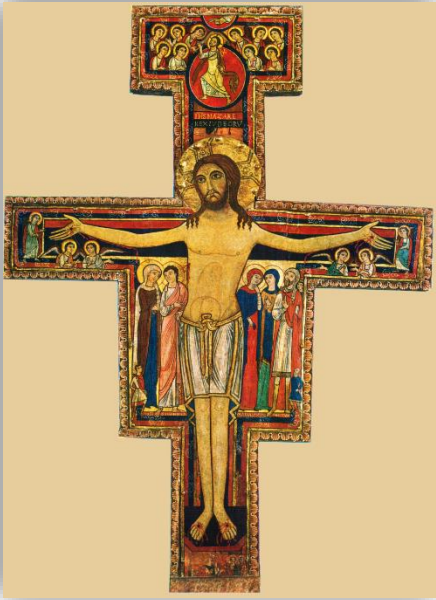
Commentators on these verses, not surprisingly, draw comparisons to the Beatitudes in Matthew's gospel. Some have referred to these words from Matthew as being 'topsy-turvy'. The world, for example, does not see the poor in spirit as blessed or the meek as those who will inherit the world. Its upside down but despite this they have a power.

The words 'enduring in peace' the midst of conflict, pain and suffering can be seen as words of resignation, weak words. But they are not. In the spirit of the Beatitudes they can be seen as powerful words, perhaps quietly strong. I have known people

who have endured so much yet they had a serenity, a peace that reached out to those around them. They were an example of being blessed, I recall visiting Ivy, she was physically small, she was close to death. Before I left and used the words 'peace be with you' she responded with a big smile and the words 'and also with you'. She was an example of someone who endured in peace.

The whole text of the Canticle is at the end of this reflection should you wish to read it again.

A Channel of Peace



Find your favourite space for this time of prayerful reflection

light a candle and look upon the San Damiano cross.

Slow down, breathe calmly, be comfortable and relax.



The opening words from the Prayer of St Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

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)

My Peace I give you – The Poor Clares of Arundel



https://youtu.be/vBfsIdwPSms?si=Qz1_ef_HEOWw-K9F

Words from the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew's Gospel (5:2-10)

Then He (Jesus) opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the ^[a]earth.

Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Let pause for a moment and a prayerfully reflecting on:

- The blessings in our lives and giving thanks and praise to God.
- Are we experiencing illness or a stressful and unsettled time in our lives, if so bring them to God.
- Are we aggrieved with someone, have we upset someone, may time to resolve the issue.
- Can we be a channel for peace?

Let us pray in confidence using the words of Saviour gave us:

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

We come to a close with a song associated with the life of St Francis. It was produced by Gisltoe. It has a dramatic video to accompany the words.

Make me a channel of your peace



<https://youtu.be/sE9std-lwXQ?si=IFQ9EW7ofGR7etvf>

The closing words of the Prayer of 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.

Blessed those who endure in peace,
for by You, Most High,
shall they be crowned.
(Verse 11)

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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Image - San Damiano cross - Unknown author - Public domain

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.