

The Stations of Creation



INTRODUCTION *In the Canticle of the Creatures, St Francis of Assisi praises God for some of the wonders of our 'common home', the Earth. Francis believed that everything in the natural world was a gift from God, to be appreciated and valued. His love for everything that exists flowed from his experience of a deep and intimate joy in the inter-connection of all creation - so for Francis sun, wind, air and fire are his brothers and moon, stars, earth and water are his sisters. With Francis as our guide, let us walk these Stations of Creation, discovering nature as God's first revelation of His love and so glimpse His Presence in every atom of the Cosmos. In the Name of the Father, + and of the Son and the Holy Spirit ... AMEN!*

Pope Francis writes: 'Laudato si, o' mi Signore' (Praise be to you, my Lord). In the words of this beautiful canticle, St 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 fruits with coloured flowers and herbs'.

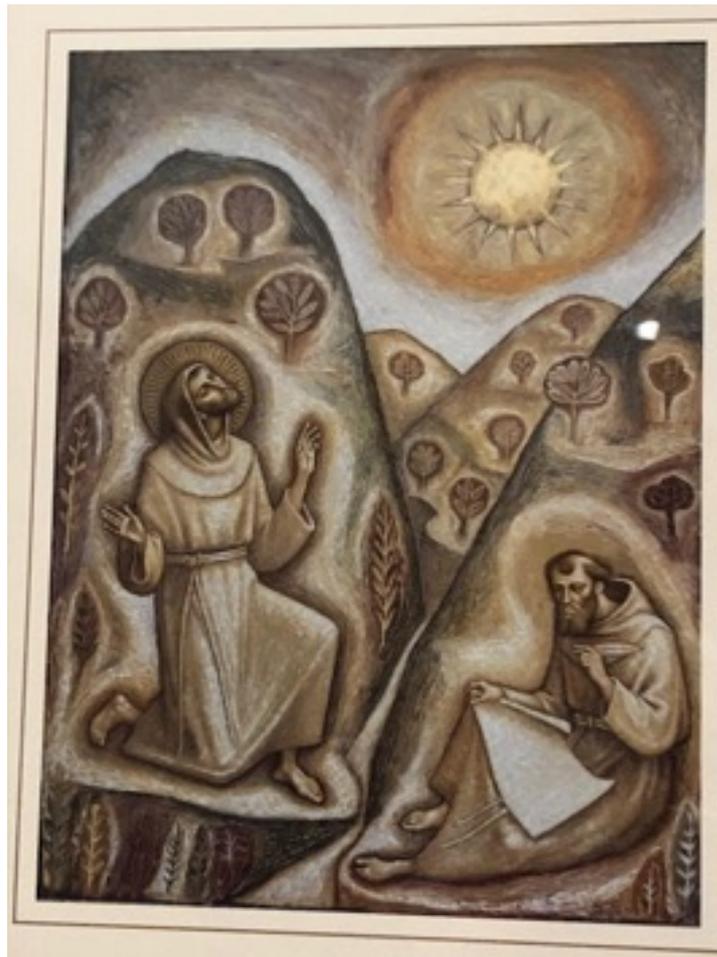
This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of all with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she 'groans in travail'

SING No 700

**Come praise the Lord, the Almighty, the King of all nations!
Tell forth His fame. O ye peoples, with loud acclamations!
His love is sure; faithful His word shall endure,
steadfast through all generations!**

**Praise to the Father most gracious, the Lord of Creation!
Praise to His Son, the Redeemer who wrought our salvation!
O heav'nly Dove, praise to Thee fruit of their love,
Giver of all consolation!**

FIRST STATION: THE GOD OF BLESSING



V/ Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture (Psalm 36: 5-6):

Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.

Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, your justice like the deep.

You, Lord preserve both people and animals.

How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!

Together we say:

Most High, all-powerful, all good Lord!

All praise is yours, all glory, all honour, and all blessing.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong

and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your name.

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 76 & 77

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the word 'creation' has a broader meaning than 'nature', for it has to do with God's loving plan in which every creature has its own value and significance ... Creation can only be understood as a gift from the outstretched hand of the Father of all, and as a reality illuminated by the love which calls us together into universal communion ... Creation is of the order of love. God's love is the fundamental moving force in all created things.

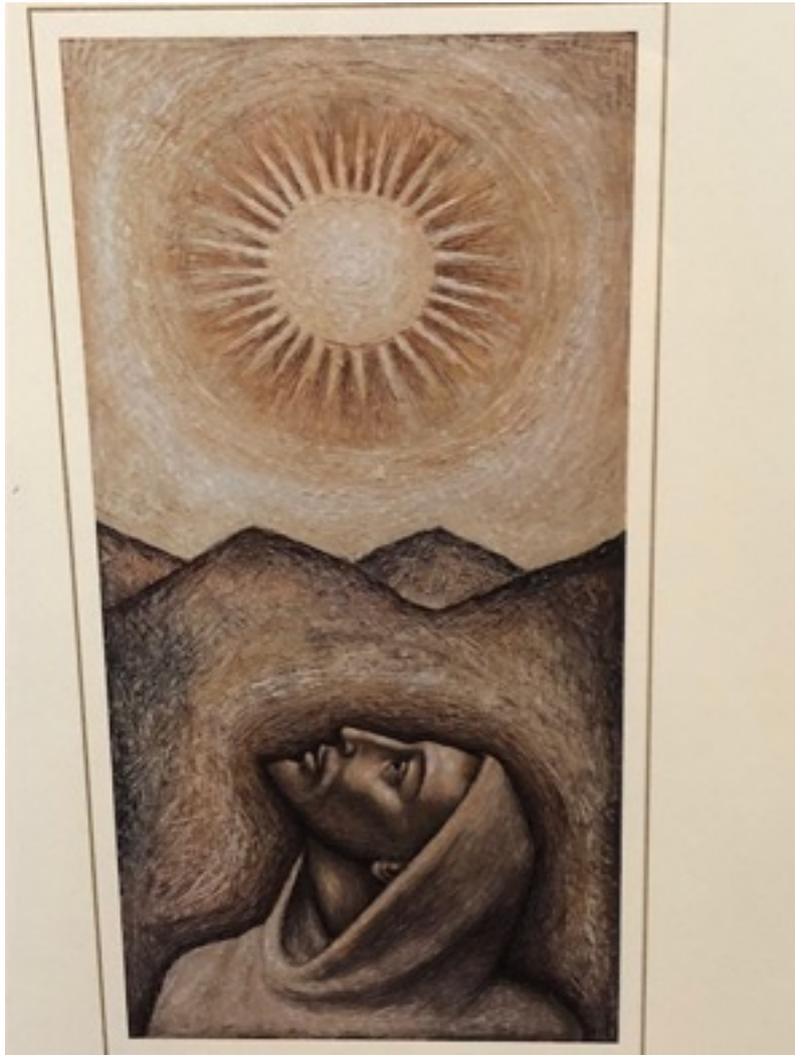
Let us pray together:

*Blessed are You, God of the universe; give us a vision that embraces Earth and sky, constellations and galaxies, that we may know that the whole of creation comes from your self-giving love and is embraced in your enduring care made known to us in Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Brother...
Amen*

SING:

**Sing to the Lord O my soul
and all that is in me proclaim God's salvation,
Sing to the Lord O my soul
and remember all of God's marvellous deeds!**

SECOND STATION: BROTHER SUN



V/ Bless the Lord, you heavens, sun giving warmth and light
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture (Ecclesiasticus 43: 2-3):

The sun, when it appears, proclaims as it rises what a marvellous instrument it is, the work of the Most High. At noon it parches the land, and who can withstand its burning heat. Great is the Lord who made it; at His orders it hurries on its course.

Together we say:

**All praise be Yours, my Lord, through all that you have made,
and first my Lord Brother Sun, who brings the day;
and light you give to us through him.**

**How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendour!
Of You, Most High, he bears the likeness.**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 119 & 82

Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God. Otherwise, it would be nothing more than romantic individualism dressed up in ecological garb...

It would be mistaken to view other living beings as mere objects for arbitrary human domination, completely at odds with the ideals of harmony, justice, fraternity and peace as proposed by Jesus

Let us pray together:

Lord, help us to value everything that depends on the Sun's heat and light for its existence. Help us to love all others as our family and to treasure this small world as our 'common home', in the love that we know through Jesus Christ, Your Word of Love made Flesh ... Amen

SING: No 694 v 1

**All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Thou burning sun with golden beam,
thou silver moon with sifter gleam:
O praise Him, O praise Him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

THIRD STATION: SISTERS MOON AND STARS



V/ Bless the Lord, gentle moon and all you stars
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture (Psalm 19: 1-4):

*The heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the Earth and their worlds to the end of the world.*

Together we say:

**All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and Stars;
in the heavens you have made them, bright and precious and fair.**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 11

If we approach nature and the environment without openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.

Let us pray together:

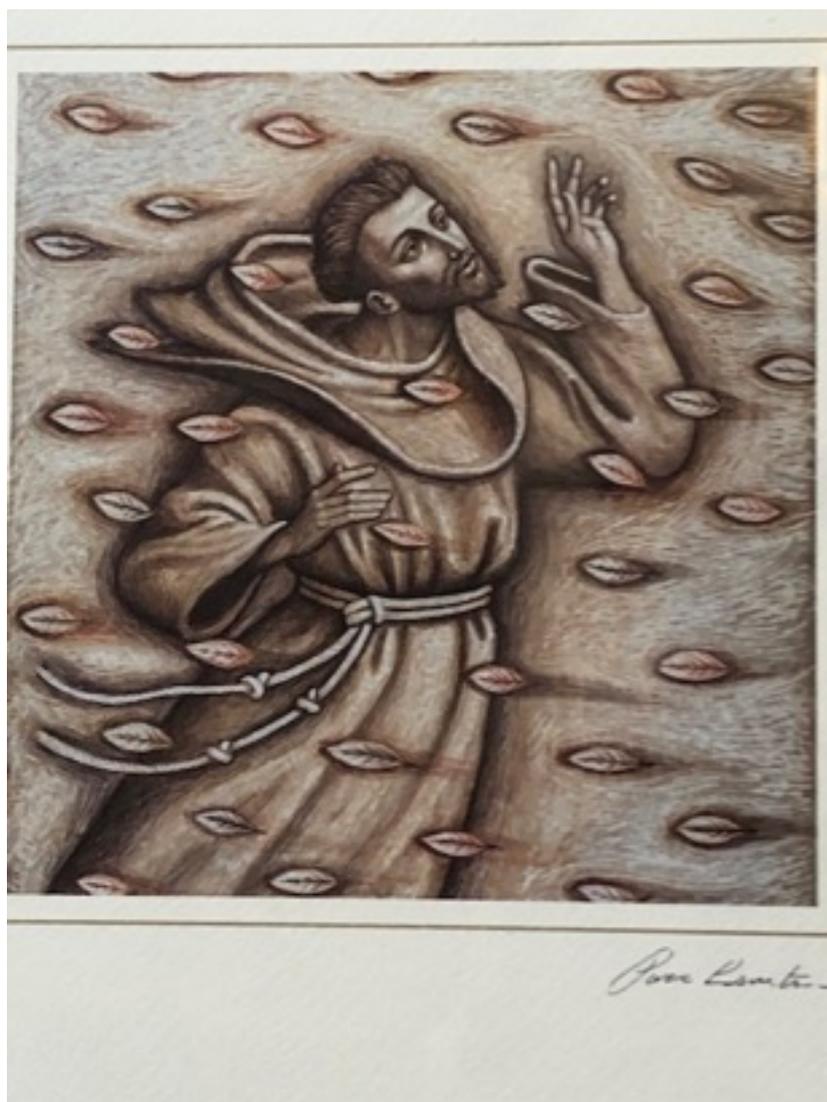
*Gracious God, You have revealed to humanity Your creativity and splendour.
You have shown us that Your Light is strong and Your Love is near:
Draw us beyond all imagination into a deeper experience of Your infinite
Love as we gaze into the darkness of the Night and behold Your Light
AMEN!*

SING: No 956 v 4 'I watch the moonlight'

**I watch the moonlight
guarding the night,
waiting till morning comes.
The air is silent, earth is at rest -
only your peace is near me.**

**Yes, you are always close to me
following all my ways.
May I be always close to You
following all Your ways, Lord**

FOURTH STATION: BROTHERS WIND AND AIR



V/ Bless the Lord, all winds that blow, all breeze that cools
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: Exodus 14: vv21-22 & Ezechiel 37: v9

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them ...

The Lord said to Ezechiel the Prophet: 'Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man. Say to the breath, "the Lord says this: Come from the four winds, breath; breathe on these dead, let them live!"'

Together we say:

**All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
All fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,
By which You cherish all that you have made.**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 169:

With regard to climate change, the advances have been regrettably few. Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most. International negotiations cannot make significant progress while countries place their national interests above the global common good... The poor end up paying the price!

Let us pray together

We thank you, Creator of the Wind and Air, for fresh air to breathe and cooling breeze; open our eyes to behold with thankfulness the swaying of the trees; open our ears to the Divine Song in the music of the wind. Give us courage to protect the air we breathe that gives us life ... AMEN!

SING No 694 v2

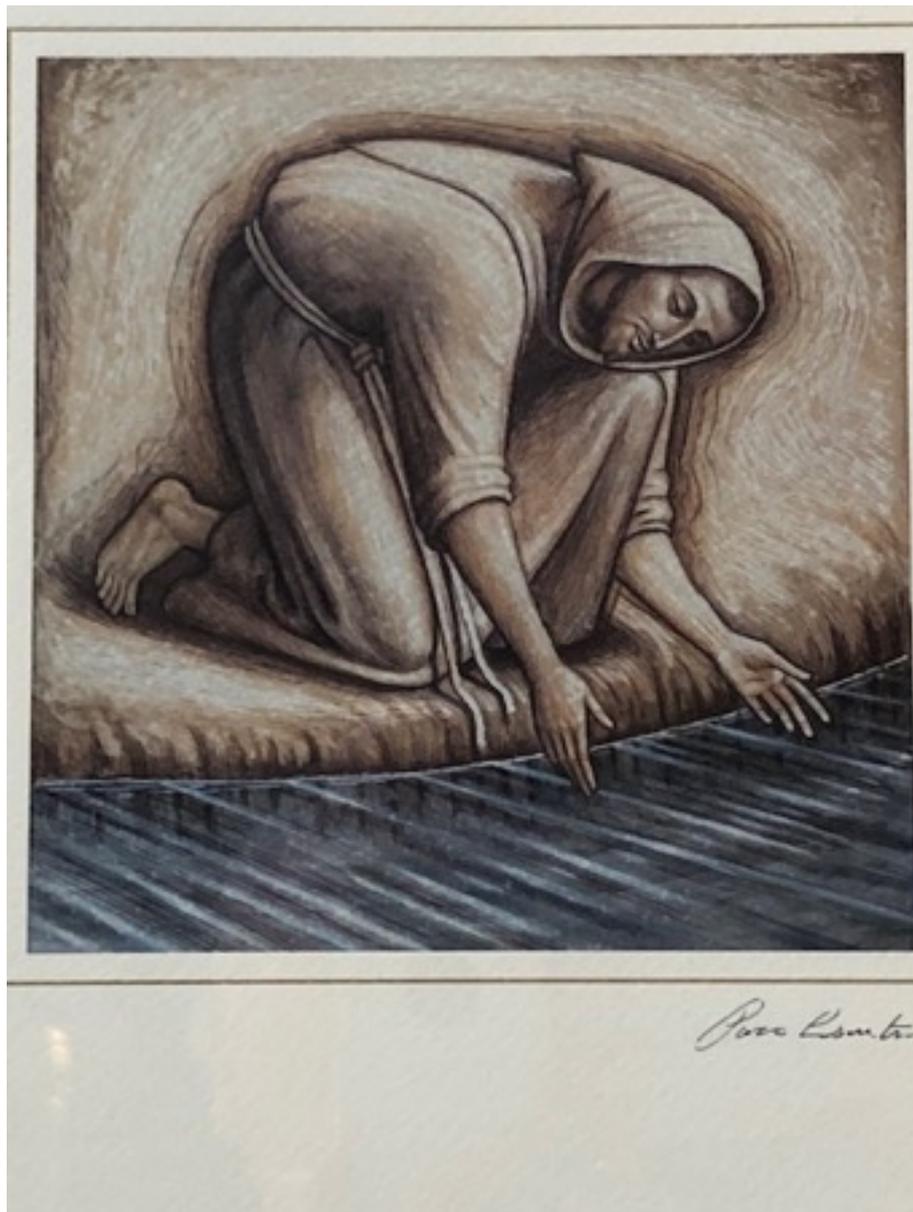
**Thou rushing wind that are so strong
ye clouds that sail in heaven along.**

O praise Him, Alleluia!

**Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
ye lights of evening, find a voice:**

**O praise Him, O praise Him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

FIFTH STATION: SISTER WATER



V/ Bless the Lord, all seas and rivers and sparkling springs
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: John 4: from 7-14

A Samaritan woman came to draw water and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'. She replied, 'How is it you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' Jesus answered her, 'If only you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would give you living water... everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water, welling up to eternal life'.

Together we say:

**All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
so useful, lowly, precious and pure**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 28 & 30

Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting all ecosystems. Sources of fresh water are essential for health care, agriculture and industry. Water poverty especially affects Africa where large sectors of the population have no access to safe drinking water or experience droughts which impeded agriculture. Yet access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.

Let us pray together:

Blessed are You, God of the Universe; Your gift of water refreshes our spirit, cleanses our body and delights our imagination. In it You offer us both hope and rebirth and its gentle force leads us to New Life in the Spirit. Help us to share Your gift of water with all who thirst for life and for justice, through Jesus Christ, source of the Living Water of the Holy Spirit ...AMEN!

SING No 965 v 1

**As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after You.
You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship You.**

**You alone are my strength, my shield,
to You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship You.**

SIXTH STATION: BROTHER FIRE



V/ Bless the Lord, you fire and heat that warms our bodies
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: Exodus 3: 2 & 5 and 19: 17-18

The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked: there was a bush but not burnt up ... 'Come no nearer', God said, 'but take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground.'...

Moses led the people out to meet God: they stood at the bottom of the mountain. The Mountain of Sinai was entirely wrapped in smoke, because the Lord had descended on it in the form of fire.

Together we say:

**All praise be Yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
Through whom you brighten up the night.
How beautiful is he, how playful! Full of power and strength**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 235

Through our worship of God, we are invited to embrace the world on a different plane. Water, oil, fire and colours are taken up in all their symbolic power and incorporated in our act of praise. The hand that blesses is an instrument of God's love and a reflection of the closeness of Jesus Christ, who came to accompany us on the journey of life.

Let us pray together:

Creator God, we thank you for fire and energy which sets the world turning, for the human harnessing of fire and energy that has released such creativity in your world and brings comfort and warmth to the human heart and body. Pour out upon us and through us upon your world Love's fire of the Holy Spirit, to transform and renew the face of the Earth, through Jesus Christ our Brother and Lord ...AMEN!

SING No 694 v3

**Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
make music for thy Lord to hear,
Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Thou fire so masterful and bright,
thou givest us both warmth and light:
O praise Him, O praise Him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

SEVENTH STATION: SISTER EARTH, OUR MOTHER



V/ Bless the Lord, all the Earth, our Mother who nurtures us
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8: 7-10

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams. with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates , a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. You shall eat your fill and bless the Lord your God for the good land that he has given you.

Together we say:

**All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Earth our mother,
Who feeds us in his sovereignty and produces
various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 25

Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will be felt by developing countries. Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to global warming. Changes in climate, to which animals and plants cannot adapt, lead them to migrate; this in turn affects the livelihood of the poor, who are then forced to leave their homes. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognised as refugees. Our lack of response to these our brothers and sisters points to the loss of a sense of responsibility for each other upon which society is founded.

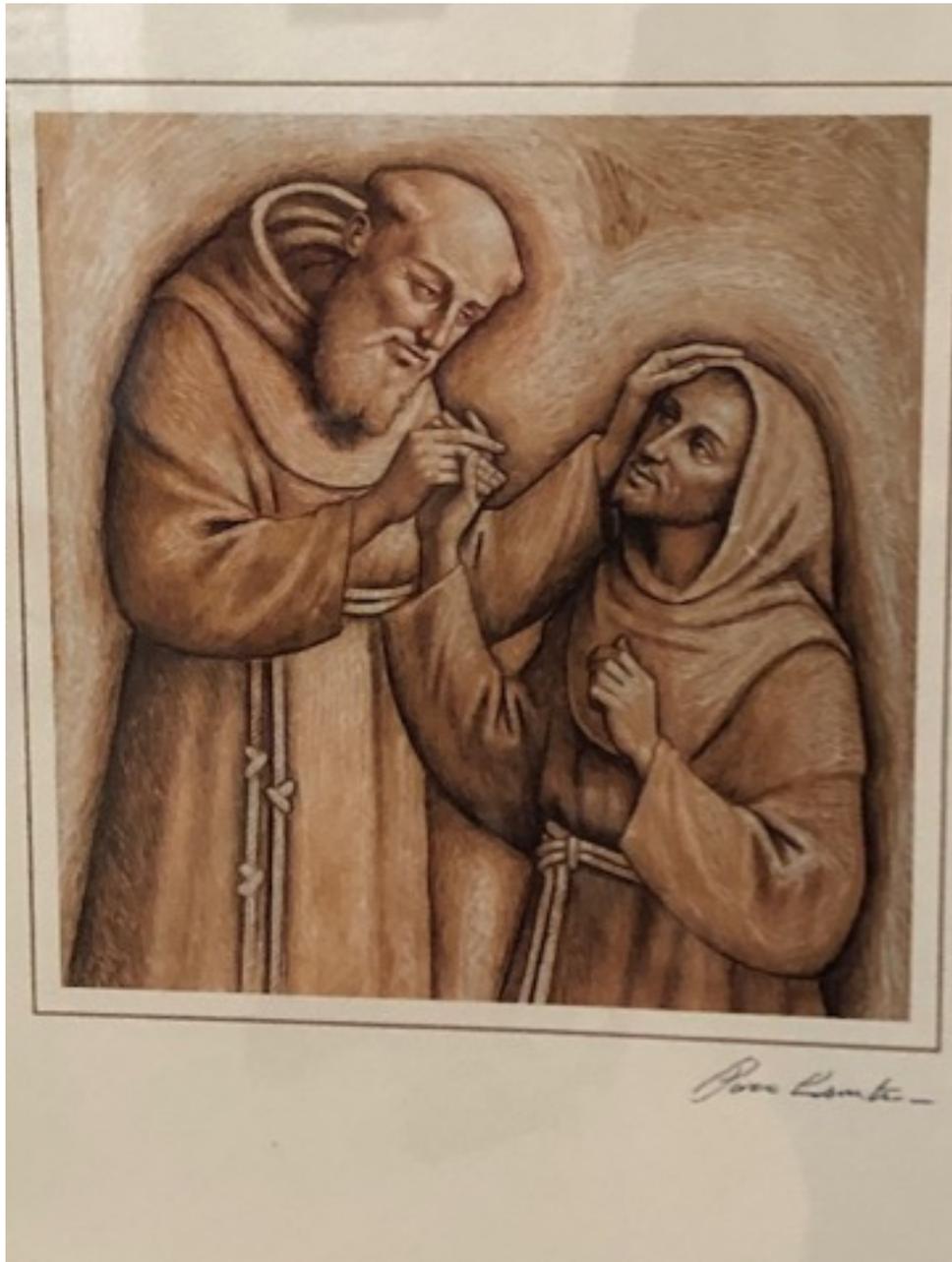
Let us pray together:

Blessed are you, God of this world, where Air, Water, Fire and Earth dance together in the infinitely fruitful creation. We repent humanity's structures of selfishness, where greed and profit endangers our planet and our societies. Teach us how to share all gifts, to care for our planet and all its peoples in the courageous love of the Holy Spirit within us ...AMEN!

SING No 694 v4

**Dear Mother Earth, who day by day,
unfoldest blessings on our way,
 O praise Him, Alleluia!
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
let them His glory ever show:
 O praise Him, O praise Him,
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

EIGHTH STATION: PEACE



V/ Bless the Lord, all people of the Earth and live in Peace
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5: 17-20

For anyone who is Christ there is a new creation; the old creation has gone and now the new one is here! It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on this reconciliation. God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, not holding men's faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. So we are ambassadors for Christ, and the appeal we make is: be reconciled to God!

Together we say:

All praise be Yours, my Lord through those who grant peace for love of You through those who endure sickness and trial.

**Happy are those who endure in peace,
by You, Most High, they will be crowned.**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 53, 225, 228, 229

We are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what He desires when He created it and correspond with His plan for peace, beauty and fulness...

Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminds us that we are all brothers and sisters... We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world...

Spirituality consists in understanding what we mean by peace, which is so much more than the absence of war. Inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good, for our common home.

Let us pray together:

Father of all mercy, whose embrace brings us peace beyond all understanding, help us to walk this Earth with humility, love and joy. Forgive us our possessiveness and the ways we exploit and abuse the riches of creation and the poor of the world. Renew us in Your love so that we might bring Your peace to the Earth and so truly glorify Your Name...AMEN!

SING No 694 v5

**And all who are of tender heart,
forgiving others, take your part,**

O sing ye, Alleluia!

**Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
praise God and on Him cast your care:**

**O praise Him, O praise Him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

NINTH STATION: SISTER DEATH



V/ Bless the Lord, Who shared our death to bring us Life
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4: 11 & 13-14 & 16-17

While we are still alive, we are consigned to our death every day, for the sake of Jesus, so that in our mortal flesh the life of Jesus, too, may be openly shown...As we have the same spirit of faith we too believe, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus to life will raise us with Jesus in our turn...That is why there is no weakening on our part, and instead, though this outer man of ours may be falling into decay, the inner person is renewed day by day. The troubles we face train us to carry a weight of eternal glory which is out of all proportion to them.

Together we say:

**All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death
from whom no one among the living can escape.
Happy those She finds doing Your will!**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 241

Mary, the Mother who cared for Jesus, now cares with motherly affection and pain for this wounded world. Just as her pierced heart mourned for the death of Jesus, so now she grieves for the sufferings of the crucified poor and for the creatures of this world laid waste by human power.

Let us pray together:

Loving Father, we thank you for the life you have given us, a life that shares joy and pain, beauty and death with all living creatures. Remind us always that we are part of creation and its evolution, and so embrace our Brothers and Sisters, even Sister Death, with love and hope. May we, like You, hear the cries of the poor, the cries of the Earth and seek to build the New Heaven and New Earth to Your glory... AMEN!

SING No 694 v6

**And thou, most kind and gentle death,
waiting to hush our latest breath,**

O praise Him, Alleluia!

**Thou leadest home the child of God,
and Christ our Lord the way hath trod:**

**O praise Him, O praise Him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

TENTH STATION: SERVE HIM WITH HUMILITY



V/ Bless the Lord, Who emptied Himself to become a servant
R/ Sing His praise and exalt Him forever

Scripture: Micah 6: 8 & Philippians 2: 5-9

This is what the Lord asks of you, only this: that you act justly, that you love tenderly that you walk humbly with your God.

In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus, who did not cling to His equality with God, but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave...and humbler yet, even accepting death on a cross. But God raised Him high!

Together we say:

**Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility**

Reflection: Laudato Si from Para 236

It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. The Lord, in the mystery of the Incarnation, chose to reach our intimate depths through a fragment of matter. He comes not from above, but from within, that we might find Him in this world of ours. In the Eucharist, fulness is already achieved; it is the living centre of the Universe, the overflowing core of love and of inexhaustible life. The Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love - Yes, Cosmic Love! The Eucharist is always celebrated on the Altar of the World, and joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation. Thus the Eucharist directs us to be Love's stewards of all creation.

Let us pray together:

Lord, in the miracle of Your humility, Your self-emptying and self-giving Love, we meet You, the creator of all things in 'the little form of bread and wine'. Send us from the Table of the Broken Bread to walk humbly on the Holy Ground of all creation, in loving communion with all our Sister and Brother creatures ... AMEN!

SING No 694 v 7

**Let all things their Creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness,**

O praise Him, Alleluia!

**Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:**

**O praise Him, O praise Him,
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

A PRAYER FOR THE EARTH by Pope Francis



**All powerful God, You are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of Your creatures.
You embrace with Your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of Your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no-one.
O God of the Poor, help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognise that we are profoundly united with every creature
as we journey towards Your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace ...AMEN!**

SING No 898

**Make me a channel of Your peace
Where there is hatred, let me bring Your love
Where there is injury, Your pardon Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in You**

**Make me a channel of Your peace
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope
Where there is darkness, only light
And where there's sadness, ever joy**

**Oh Master, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul**

**Make me a channel of Your peace
It is pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving to all men that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life**

