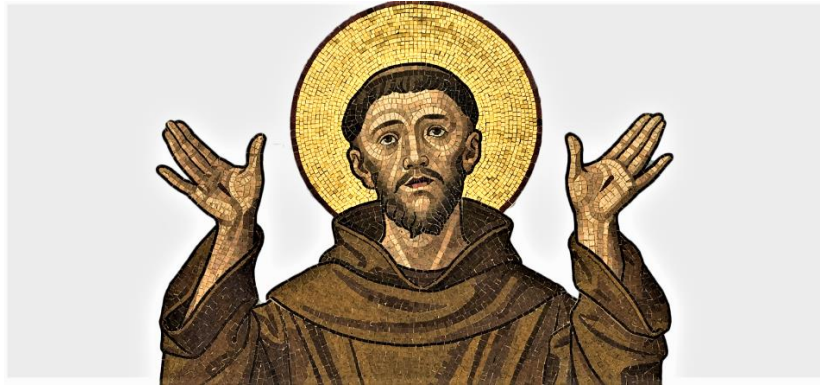


Living In the Spirit of St. Francis



Leader ~

Good and gracious God, we gather together in praise and thanksgiving for your boundless goodness to us. Help us to be aware of Your presence today in our brothers and sisters, in the events of this day, and in all of creation.

In your presence, O God, whose love encompasses all our being,

All: We thank you.

In your presence, O God, whose faithfulness steadies our spirits,

All: We thank you.

In your presence, O God, whose generosity overflows in our lives

All: We thank you.

Opening Song ~ “In the Morning, in the Evening”

Lori True

In the morning, in the evening,
God is holding you, holding you.
In the day time, in the nighttime,
God is holding you still.

Refrain ~ Anywhere you may go, God will go with you.
Anywhere you may go, you are God’s child.

In the mountains, in the ocean,
God will carry you, carry you.
In the forest, in the cities,
God will carry you still.

In the good times, in the hard times,
God will stay with you, stay with you.
In your waking, in your sleeping,
God will stay with you still.

From Album: Show by Your Life ~ Lori True
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Psalm 139

O my God, You have searched me and know me!
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You discern my innermost thoughts.
You find me on the journey and guide my steps;
You know my strengths and my weaknesses.

Even before words rise up in prayer,
Lo, You have already heard my heart call.
You enfold me with love wherever I go,
and your strength is my shield.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high;
boundless gratitude is my soul's response.
Where could I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your Presence?

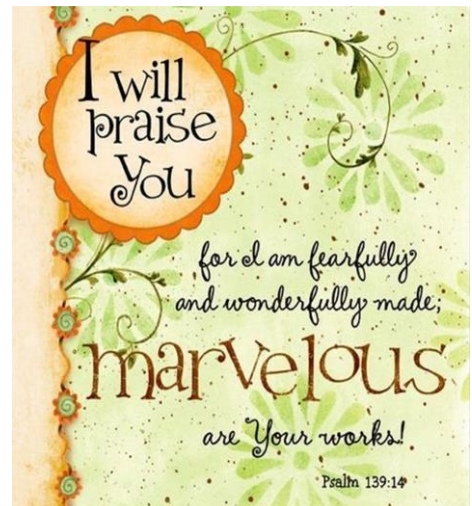
If I ascend into heaven, You are there!
If I make my bed in darkness, You are there!
If I soar on the wings of the morning
or dwell in the deepest parts of the sea,
even there your hand will lead me,
and your love will embrace me.

You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am wonderfully made;
wonderful are your works!
More than I know myself do you know me;
My bones are not hidden from you.

When I was being formed in secret,
intricately fashioned from the elements of the earth.
Your eyes saw me unformed;
in your book all are written down;
my days were shaped, before one came to be.

How precious to me are your creations, O God;
how vast the sum of them!
Who could count your unnumerable gifts and blessings?
At all times, You are with me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



Scripture ~ Ephesians 1: 3-6

Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens! God chose us in him before the world began, to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love; he likewise predestined us through Jesus Christ to be his adopted sons and daughters – such was his will and pleasure that all might praise the glorious favor he has bestowed on us in his beloved.

Pause for moment of silent reflection

How do I express my gratitude for God's endless love for me?

Reflection ~

Saint Francis had a universal perspective; his attitude was inclusive, including everyone and everything in God's creation. God was first and foremost in his life which is expressed in his prayer, "My God and My All." Francis was freely and easily able to relate to all things without possessing them.

Francis was focused on prayer in all aspects of his life; in his walking, sitting, eating and drinking. By allowing things to be, Francis discovered the mystery of God's goodness in the simple ordinary life. His heart overflowed with gratitude and love. Everything became gift for him, one not merited, but given gratuitously. Each and everything, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, had infinite value because it reflected God in its unique being. "In beautiful things, Francis saw Beauty itself."

Pause for a moment of silent reflection

In what ways can I focus on God in my daily life?



Response ~

At all times and in all places, may Jesus be on our lips and in our hearts... **At all times and in all places, may Jesus be on our lips and in our hearts.**

Whether working or praying ... **may Jesus be on our lips and in our hearts.**

Intercessions ~

As we turn to Christ who promises to be with us always, we pray:

Be with us now and always.

Christ Jesus, may we be inspired and challenged by your Word and by the goodness in the lives of our brothers and sisters, we pray ...

Christ Jesus, may our hearts be opened to our suffering brothers and sisters in our global family and respond to their needs in tangible ways, we pray ...

Christ Jesus, enable us to meet others who are different from ourselves, receiving them with reverence and deep listening, we pray ...

Christ Jesus, fill us with gratitude, when we experience your presence in our lives, we pray ...

Christ Jesus, gather all our deceased loved ones to yourself in eternal joy, we pray ...

Closing Prayer ~

Good and gracious God, open our hearts that we may see you in your world, in all peoples, in every creature. May we trust in the abundance of your great love so that in all that we do we may be women and men of action, making the whole world a new creation. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

Praise
and give thanks to *the*
Lord