

## Day 35—Tuesday 20 March

### Scripture for Prayer

**Stilling:** Take a few minutes to become still.

**God is Present:** God is with you. Ask God to inspire your prayer time.

**Ask for what you desire.** What gift, what grace do you want right now?

- Read the passage slowly.
- Savour words and phrases
- Talk to God in your own words
- Stay in silent meditation

If you get distracted, move back to the scripture passage and continue the cycle.

#### **Daniel 3:40-65 (RSVCA)**

Bless the Lord, sun and moon, Bless the Lord, stars of heaven, Bless the Lord, all rain and dew, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, all winds, Bless the Lord, fire and heat, Bless the Lord, winter cold and summer heat, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, dews and snows, Bless the Lord, nights and days, Bless the Lord, light and darkness, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever. Let the earth bless the Lord; let it sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord, mountains and hills, Bless the Lord, all things that grow on the earth, Bless the Lord, you springs, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, seas and rivers, Bless the Lord, you whales and all creatures that move in the waters, Bless the Lord, all birds of the air, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, all beasts and cattle, Bless the Lord, you sons of men, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, spirits and souls of the righteous, Bless the Lord, you who are holy and humble in heart, sing praise to him and highly exalt him for ever.

**A Prayer:** End with a formal prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer/Our Father.

## Review of Prayer

At the end of your prayer you can look back and ask: Does it have something to say to you? How does it make you feel?

## Today's Meditation

### The World as a Joyful Mystery

11. Saint Francis of Assisi helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and take us to the heart of what it is to be human. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever he would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. He communed with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them "to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason".

[19] His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists.

His disciple Saint Bonaventure tells us that, "from a reflection on the primary source of all things, filled with even more abundant piety, he would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of 'brother' or 'sister'". Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour. If we approach nature and the environment without this 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. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.

12. What is more, Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness.

"Through the greatness and the beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker" (Wisdom 13:5); indeed, "his eternal power and divinity have been made known through his works since the creation of the world" (Romans 1:20).

For this reason, Francis asked that part of the friary garden always be left untouched, so that wild flowers and herbs could grow there, and those who saw them could raise their minds to God, the Creator of such beauty. Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise.

Pope Francis - Laudato Si'