



# Creation and the Eucharist

## **Stations of Creation**

*Originally compiled by Colin Wilfred SSF*

In this service the Stations of Creation, based on St. Francis' Canticle of the Creatures (following the pattern of the Stations of the Cross) are woven within the Eucharist and make up the Penitence and the Bible readings, the Prayers and our commitment to God's good earth and each other. The text owes much to Earthsongs by Wayne Simsic, St Mary's Press, USA and was first used at Compton Durville for a conference on the Care of Creation.

# The Gathering

## Call to Worship

### STATION I - God of the Universe - *Call to Worship*

Most High, all powerful, good Lord to you be the praises,  
the glory and the honour, and all blessing.

**To you alone, Most High, do they belong,  
and no-one is worthy to call upon your name.**

**Bible reading:** *Psalm 36v5-10*

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,  
your faithfulness to the clouds.

Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,  
your judgements are like the great deep;  
you save humans and animals alike, O Lord.

How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.  
They feast on the abundance of your house,

and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

For with you is the fountain of life;  
in your light we see light.

O continue your steadfast love to those who know you,  
and your salvation to the upright of heart!

By the word of God

**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Help us grow in a consciousness which  
embraces the vastness of interstellar space and the  
minuteness of a drop of water and a snowflake.

Help us realise it is our joy and responsibility to meet you  
at the centre of this beautiful world you have created,  
moving beyond self-interest to values that protect  
the environment that all may share in peace and justice.

## Silence

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:  
Give us a vision that embraces earth and sky, stars and  
galaxies, that we may know that the whole of creation is  
enfolded in your enduring love made known to us in your  
Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## Introit Hymn

## The Welcome

*The president greets the people*

The Lord be with you

**And also with you**

Rejoice in the Lord always

**And again I say, Rejoice!**

God forbid that we should glory

**Save in the cross of Christ our Lord**

## Confession and Absolution

### **STATION X - Sister Death - Confession**

Praised be you, our Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,  
from whom no one living can escape.

**Woe to those who die in mortal sin.**

**Bible reading:** Sirach 41v1-4

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

O death, how bitter is the thought of you  
to one at peace among possessions,  
who has nothing to worry about and is prosperous in  
everything,  
and still is vigorous enough to enjoy food!  
O death, how welcome is your sentence  
to one who is needy and failing in strength,  
worn down by age and anxious about everything;  
to one who is contrary, and has lost all patience!  
Do not fear death's decree for you;  
remember those who went before you and those  
who will come after.  
This is the Lord's decree for all flesh;  
why then should you reject the will of the Most High?  
Whether life lasts for ten years or a hundred or a thousand,  
there are no questions asked in Hades.

**By the word of God  
Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Everything in the world, including us, dies. If we stand on a hillside almost everything, if we look carefully, is in the process of dying in front of us. But without this marvel of nature which is constantly renewed we would be surrounded by stones and deserts. Help us see the life which is your gift new every morning.

### **Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:  
You renew this lovely earth through the rhythm of life  
and death. Help us see your hand in all life, the creator and  
source of all things. May we live in a harmony of hope found  
in Jesus our Saviour.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## **STATION IX - Forgiveness from God for misuse of creation - Absolution**

Praised be you, our Lord, through those who forgive  
for love of you, and bear weakness and tribulation.

**Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by you, Most High, shall they be crowned.**

**Bible reading:** *Psalm 103: 1, 3, 12-13, 17.*

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me,  
bless his holy name.  
who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases,  
as far as the east is from the west,  
so far he removes our transgressions from us.  
As a father has compassion for his children,  
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.  
But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to  
everlasting  
on those who fear him,  
and his righteousness to children's children,

By the word of God

**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** We need the forgiveness of God for our selfishness and greed, our exploitation and money-grabbing; our use of power to destroy the weak and fragile; our thoughtlessness of the needs of others, the needs of our earth which is God's earth. In our weakness and tribulation help us not to lose heart but to endure in peace that our world and the whole human family may be crowned with all-embracing love and deep humility.

## Silence

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:  
Giver of harmony and interweaving love, help us to live as  
kinfolk with all your creatures, and to appreciate them in their  
own right. May we learn from them all that will help us to live  
in peace with creation in the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

*The President leads the Absolution*

Let us return to the Lord our God and say to Him:

**Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you.  
We are not worthy to be called your children.  
We turn to you again.  
Have mercy on us, bring us back to yourself  
as those who once were dead but now have life  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## The Collect

*The president leads the saying of the Collect*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who, when the world was growing cold  
raised up blessed Francis  
bearing in his body the marks of your passion;  
inflame our hearts by the fire of your love  
and mercifully grant to us, your people  
true penitence and grace to bear the Cross  
for love of you, for you are alive and reign  
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

# The Liturgy of the Word

## Prayers of Intercession - Part I

### **STATION II - Brother Sun - *The Intercessions***

Praised be you, our Lord, with all your creatures,  
especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day  
and through whom you give us light,  
**He is beautiful and radiant with great splendour,  
and bears a likeness to you, Most High One.**

**Bible reading:** Sirach 43v2-5

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

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?  
A man tending a furnace works in burning heat,  
but three times as hot is the sun scorching the mountains;  
it breathes out fiery vapours,  
and its bright rays blind the eyes.  
Great is the Lord who made it;  
at his orders it hurries on its course.

By the word of God

**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Face-to-face with Sir Brother Sun,  
we know the immensity of his power surpassing  
anything on earth and yet sustaining all that lives.  
Help us delight in sunrise and sunset and be ever grateful to  
acknowledge the source of our life.

## Silence

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:  
Open our hearts to the light that proclaims your glory  
day after day. The sky resounds with a song that  
rings in the hills, rises from the fields, and enlivens the rivers  
and the seas. In your light may we see light through  
Jesus Christ our Saviour.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## STATION III - Sister Moon and the stars - *The Intercessions*

Praised be you, our Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars.  
**In heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.**

**Bible reading:** Sirach 43v6-10

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

It is the moon that marks the changing seasons,  
governing the times, their everlasting sign.  
From the moon comes the sign for festal days,  
a light that wanes when it completes its course.  
The new moon, as its name suggests, renews itself;  
how marvellous it is in this change,  
a beacon to the hosts on high,  
shining in the vault of the heavens!

The glory of the stars is the beauty of heaven,  
a glittering array in the heights of the Lord.  
On the orders of the Holy One they stand  
in their appointed places;  
they never relax in their watches.

By the word of God  
**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Holy God, thank you for the light in the darkness of Sister Moon and the stars. We thank you for the unfolding pattern of times and seasons. Help us rediscover the natural rhythms of your creation that we may be more in tune with the universe, both in the darkness and in the light of our human and earthly lives.

### **Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe: You are the light that opens our eyes to see the divine light that penetrates the world, revealing its endless possibilities. May our eyes be gentle and our hearts open that we may know the radiance of your timeless and transcendent love revealed to us in Jesus our Redeemer.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## **Admission of Novices**

*If any are to be admitted as Novices they take place here.*

## **Renewals**

*If there are any Renewals they take place here.*

## **Professions**

*If there are any Professions they take place here.*

## **Hymn**

# Prayers of Intercession - Part II

## STATION V - Sister Water - *The Intercessions*

Praised be you, our Lord through Sister Water  
**Who is useful and humble, and precious and chaste.**

**Bible reading:** *John 4v13-14*

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

Jesus said 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of 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 gushing up to eternal life.'

By the word of God

**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Sister Water, you are so useful and yet you are so humble that we may be constantly tempted to ignore you and not treat you reverently, as source of both life and beauty. Help us delight in the sweet liquid that flows from the hills and springs out of the depths of the earth. May we work together that your human children may share plentifully in this precious gift for our sustenance, cleansing and delight.

### Silence

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:

Your gift of water refreshes our spirit and delights our imagination. In it you offer us both hope and rebirth.

Help us to share this gift generously in the spirit of Him who is the living water, Jesus our Saviour.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## STATION VI - Brother Fire - *The Intercessions*

Praised be you, our Lord, through Brother Fire,  
through whom you light up the night,  
**He is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.**

**Bible reading:** *1 Corinthians 3v13-15*

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

For that day dawns in fire, and the fire will test the worth of each man's work. If a man's building stands, he will be rewarded: if it burns, he will have to bear the loss; and yet he will escape with his life, as one might from a fire. The work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If the work is burned, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.

By the word of God

**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Brother Fire, on a winter's night, in your dancing flames we see your beauty and your playfulness.

Down the ages, men, women and children have met around you for warmth and comfort, to tell stories and to prepare for rest in the struggle for life. In wildfires we witness your incredible power for destruction yet marvel at the regeneration of trees and shrubs and plants this brings. Help us treat you with love and respect.

**Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:

For Brother Fire, a symbol of your life-giving and challenging Spirit; ever dancing in the light, destroying our deadness and bringing renewal to our lives in Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

# Refreshment Break

## The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### The Peace

#### **STATION IV - Brother Wind - *The Peace***

Praised be you, our Lord through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,  
**Through whom you give sustenance to your creatures.**

**Bible reading:** *Ecclesiastes 11v4-5*

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

Whoever observes the wind will not sow;  
and whoever regards the clouds will not reap.

Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother's womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything.

By the word of God

**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Brother Wind is invisible and yet so powerful in its effect; he makes the tall grass sway on a summer's day, he whips up the lake into a dangerous frenzy, he causes an autumn leaf to jump and dance. The weather is ever-changing, ever full of possibilities for new life or terrible destruction. Give us compassionate hearts for those affected by natural disasters: storm or tsunami, drought or famine, and to work for a human community that protects both people and our environment.

## Silence

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe;  
Your Spirit, like the wind, sweeps through us. Give us strength  
to accept her gifts of freedom and change that we may be  
transformed in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

*The President leads the Sharing of the Peace*  
As a sign of the blessing and peace we are for each other,  
let us extend our hands in blessing and pray.

**May God bless and protect you,  
May God look on you with mercy,  
May God give you peace my brothers and sisters.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer each other a sign of that peace.

## Offertory Hymn

## Presentation of the Gifts

### STATION VII - Sister Mother Earth and animals - Offertory

Praised be you, our Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,  
**Who sustains us and governs us.**

**Bible reading:** *Job 38v4-7*  
Listen for the word of the Lord  
**Our ears are open.**

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?  
Tell me, if you have understanding.  
Who determined its measurements - surely you know!  
Or who stretched the line upon it?  
On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone  
when the morning stars sang together  
and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

By the word of God  
**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Creator God, 'the *fragile earth, our island home*' is truly both our Sister and our Mother. Maternally, she is both the source and the sustainer of life and the life of all animals and birds, insects and reptiles. She is the sister with whom all our human sisters and brothers are members of the same family. Help us delight in our life-giving earth which is alive and dynamic ever singing its praises to you. May we guard her life with love and tender care, always walking gently upon her.

### **Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe:  
Teach us to see our Sister Mother Earth not as property but as a bearer of your revelation of love. Deepen our sense of the interdependence of life with her. Help us hear and feel the music of sky and sea, mountains and deserts; the eternal song of the divine Word, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## **STATION VIII - Sister Mother Earth and plants - Offertory**

Praised be you, our Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,  
**Who provides us fruits and coloured flowers and herbs**

**Bible reading:** *Deuteronomy 8v7-10*  
Listen for the word of the Lord  
**Our ears are open.**

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.

**By the word of God  
Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** You promised your people a fertile land, a land of promise that would flourish under your care-giving eye. We rejoice in the never-ending kaleidoscope of flowers and trees, the harvest of the fruits of the earth and the herbs which flavour our lives. Help us to grow in respect and appreciation of the land you have entrusted to us, particularly by what we buy and what we consume, that all may be truly enriched.

### **Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe: You give us the seasons, the planting and the harvesting as we share in the work of creation. May we listen attentively to the needs of the soil and, loving the land as we love ourselves, share its bounty in the name of Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## **The Eucharistic Prayer**

**The Lord is here  
God's Spirit is with us**

Lift up your hearts  
**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise**

Most High and Glorious God, we give you thanks for your good gifts around us; singing of your love, they call us to be one family in you.

We give you thanks for Brother Sun, radiant and bright  
in great splendour, shedding light on each day.  
For Sister Moon and the company of the stars,  
precious and lovely, they adorn your heaven.  
For the breath of Brother Wind,  
made visible in clouds and clear skies,  
bringing all weathers to sustain your creation.  
For the laughter of Sister Water,  
precious and humble; ever willing to be our servant.  
For the warmth of Brother Fire,  
bringing light to our darkness and strength to our labours.

Glorious God, we give you thanks most of all  
for the gift of our Brother Jesus, your Word of Life,  
to a world which continually speaks your Name.

So with joy in our hearts, and with those who have worshipped you through the ages, we sing the song of heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

When our Brother Jesus came to us, he showed us your great love in a meal. Taking bread and wine, the gifts of gracious Mother Earth, he brought all creation together in a single moment of praise.

Gathered with his disciples, he took bread,  
blessed the name of the Most High,  
broke it and gave it to them saying;  
Eat this, it is my body, broken for you,  
do this in memory of me.

He also took wine,  
blessed the name of the Most High,  
and shared it amongst them saying,  
Drink this, it is my blood poured out for you and for many;  
a reminder of the love between us,  
and proof of the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this in memory of me.

Gracious God, we remember all Jesus did for us.  
Showing your love, he gave up his life on the cross  
and rose again to new life.  
At his ascension he gave us the promise of your perfect reign of  
peace, and with joy-filled hearts we look for his return amongst us.

Jesus Christ is Lord:  
**Lord, by your cross and resurrection  
you have set us free.  
You are the Saviour of the world.**

Set free to praise your name we ask, that your Holy Spirit would be  
with us and bless this bread and wine, that it may become  
the body and blood of Christ, to nourish us and strengthen us  
to live within your holy will.

In the power of the same Spirit  
strengthen us that, as brothers and sisters,  
we would lead lives of forgiveness,  
lives of humility, lives of peace,  
lives of obedience to your gentle will.

Jesus our Brother, walk with us in this world  
that at the last we will be gently welcomed by Sister Death  
to our heavenly home where, with you and the whole of Creation  
we will praise and bless your name for ever.

**Blessing and honour and glory and power  
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

# Our Daily Bread

A version of the Lord's Prayer

This bread which we break is the new manna in the desert.  
Though fear may stalk us like a lion or despair like a wolf,  
still this bread of life will be ours to bless, break, and share.  
Let us pray to the Father:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

When we are in desert places and our spirits wither like grass:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

When the fire of Christian love dies down in us and the ashes of self-love threaten to choke our souls:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

When we forget your promises, Lord, and hope vanishes like smoke:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

When we taste the tears of sorrow and forget the bread of life:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

When we are tempted to turn our faces and look away from our brothers and sisters in need:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

When we drift from this table of fellowship and starve in the desert of loneliness:  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**



## **Breaking of the Bread**

*The president breaks the consecrated bread.*

Our Father gives us the bread from heaven  
and the saving cup brimming with life.  
May this bread broken and cup poured out  
bring us together in charity and peace  
so that we may become living signs of the Lord's Kingdom.

Come now and receive the body and blood of Christ.  
*The President and people receive communion.*

## **The Dismissal**

### **STATION XI - God's Holy Will - Post Communion**

Blessed are those whom death finds doing  
your most holy will,  
**For the second death will do them no harm.**

**Bible reading:** *Psalm 25: 4-5, 10*

Listen for the word of the Lord

**Our ears are open.**

Make me to know your ways, O Lord;  
teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth, and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation;  
for you I wait all day long.

All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,  
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

By the word of God  
**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** Loving God, we know that a heart which is open and full of love is the truest compass pointing the way to you. May your holy wisdom guide us to trust that path rather than the one paved with our own interests and concerns. Give us strength to follow the road less travelled which leads to you beyond all forms of death.

### **Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe: Companion and guide, you help us find the path of humility, love and joy. Watching over us in pathways that are both rough and smooth, you guide us to treasure the earth and each other, that we may know we are travelling to you with your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## **The Absorbeat**

**May the power  
of Your love,  
Lord Christ,  
fiery and sweet  
as honey,  
so absorb our hearts  
as to withdraw them  
from all that is  
under heaven.**

**Grant that  
we may be ready  
to die for love  
of Your love,  
as You died for love  
of our love.**

**Amen**



*(Francis of Assisi)*

## **STATION XII - Blessing God, serving with Humility - Sending**

Praise and bless our Lord and give him thanks  
**And serve him with great humility.**

**Bible reading:** *Jude 24-25*

Listen for the word of the Lord  
**Our ears are open.**

Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.

By the word of God  
**Our souls are fed.**

**Reflection:** The transformation of heaven and earth does not happen only at the end of time. The universe, this earth and all things visible and invisible, are already being drawn with cords of love to find their fulfilment in the Christ of the whole cosmos. Help us serve you with a humility that is profound, and with a love that is without bounds.

### **Silence**

**Prayer:** Blessed are you, God of the universe: Your plan and purpose is to draw all of creation to yourself. Help us uncover a vision of hope for the whole earth, when all things shall be made new in Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who is alive and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Blessed be God for ever! [Alleluia!]**

## The Blessing

*The President gives the blessing.*

To the prayers of the saints I commend you.  
May the most pure Virgin, Mother of God,  
Patroness of all Franciscans, pray for you.  
May Saint Francis, our father,  
who bore the marks of the Lord Jesus, pray for you.  
May Saint Antony, illustrious preacher, pray for you.  
May Saint Bonaventure, seraphic doctor, pray for you.  
May Saint Bernardine, lover of the Holy Name of Jesus, pray for you.  
May Saint Clare, first-born of the Second Order, pray for you.  
May Saint Louis, Saint Elizabeth  
and the illustrious saints of the Third Order, pray for you.  
May all the saints of God pray for you.  
May the holy angels befriend you  
and watch around you to protect you  
And I will pronounce upon you the blessing  
which Francis gave to Brother Leo, his companion:  
the LORD bless you and watch over you,  
the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you,  
the LORD look kindly on you and give you peace.  
My brothers and sisters, the LORD bless you.  
**Amen.**

In the footsteps of Christ, Francis did what was his to do.  
Let us celebrate this gift and go forth in the footsteps of Francis,  
to do what is ours to do!

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the Name of Christ. Amen.**

## Final Hymn

(T. Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory)

My ears have heard the music of the herald of the King,  
As he danced the hills of Umbria, God's praises glad to sing;  
While calling us to journey to our homes in heaven above,  
In poverty and love.

*Praise we now the King of Heaven!  
Sing, all peoples, Alleluia!  
Christ, who came to dwell among us,  
In the fullness of his love.*

My life will speak in silence of the splendour of his grace,  
As I kneel in contemplation of the beauty of his face;  
As I bow in supplication that the world may be set free  
By the Son who died for me.

*Praise and glory to the Saviour!  
Sing, all peoples, Alleluia!  
Worship Jesus, the Redeemer,  
Who died to win our love.*

My eyes have seen the radiance of the everlasting hills,  
And my ears have heard the music which all earthly clamour stills;  
My heart is filled with longing for my Lord in heaven above,  
and the fullness of his love.

*Glory be to God the Father.  
Sing, all peoples, Alleluia!  
Praise to Son and Holy Spirit -  
Blest Trinity of Love.*

**Copyright acknowledgement:**  
Some material included in this service is copyright:

*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England,  
material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000.  
Scripture quotations are copyright © New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicized Edition,  
Material adapted from 'Earthsongs: Praying with Nature' (St Mary's Press, U.S.) is copyright © Wayne Simsic 1995*