

## 2 Creation as a Pathway to God (Reference to the Principle and Foundation)

### Check in

**Grace:** To encounter the sacramentality of creation

**Hymn:** *Great indeed are your works O Lord.* (Youtube)

**Explanation:** A sacrament is defined as a ritual and instrument of God's presence. Creation is the primary sacrament because it enables us to experience the presence of the divine. The universe is the medium of our encounter with God. It not only points to the Divine but also makes the Divine present to us. It is thus a sacrament in itself. The Psalms abound with passages of how God's presence and qualities are made manifest through Nature. The heavens reveal the majesty of God's name and tell of his glory (Psalm 8, Psalm 19). His voice is heard upon the waters and the wind (Psalm 29). St. Paul asserts that God has left us an enduring witness of his eternal power and divinity in all of created reality (Rm 1,20).

In the Principle and Foundation, St. Ignatius presents a vision whereby all things are ordered towards God. All created things in this world have the potential to lead us towards the goal for which we are created – to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord. When viewed in the right manner, they become pathways towards God. (SpEx 23)

Nikos Kazantzakis wrote: *I said to the almond tree, "Friend, speak to me of God. And the almond tree blossomed.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 19, 1- 6

*How clearly the sky reveals God's glory!  
How plainly it shows what he has done!  
2 Each day announces it to the following day;  
each night repeats it to the next.  
3 No speech or words are used,  
no sound is heard;  
4 yet their message goes out to all the world  
and is heard to the ends of the earth.  
God made a home in the sky for the sun;  
5 it comes out in the morning like a happy bridegroom,  
like an athlete eager to run a race.  
6 It starts at one end of the sky  
and goes across to the other.  
Nothing can hide from its heat.*

**Exercise/Prayer:** Does nature teach me something about God? Do I recognize some of God's attributes reflected in the natural processes all around me?

**Sharing:** After a period of reflection, each one shares on an aspect of the session that touched them.

**Final Prayer:** Canticle of the Sun – St. Francis of Assisi

Most High, all powerful, good Lord,  
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessing.  
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,  
and no one is worthy to mention Your name.  
Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures,  
especially through my lord Brother Sun,  
who brings the day; and you give light through him.  
And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!  
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.  
Praise 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 sustenance to Your creatures.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
which 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 Sister Mother Earth,  
who sustains us and governs us and who produces  
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for  
Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.  
Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.  
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,  
from whom no living person 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.  
Praise and bless my Lord, and give God thanks  
and serve God with great humility  
*[http://www.franciscanfriarstor.com/archive/stfrancis/stf\\_canticle\\_of\\_the\\_sun.  
htm](http://www.franciscanfriarstor.com/archive/stfrancis/stf_canticle_of_the_sun.htm)*

**Ongoing Practice:** I observe the miracle of life that keeps unfolding all around me during different seasons – green shoots, maturing of fruits, nesting of birds, first steps of a toddler, etc.

**Check out**

**Leader:** ask your group members to collect two oranges each about 8 cms in diameter, a few grains of sand, a few dried peas, a sheet of paper, a tape measure, an atlas or a laptop for the next meeting.