

Family Prayer

St Francis of Assisi

by Jacinta Roberts | Identity and Encounter



Speaking to Country

This prayer was written on Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Country. The lands, seas, skies and waterways of the region now known as Cairns, were, are and always will be those of the Yidinji people. I pay my respects to the Elders past and present, for they are the knowledge holders, the storytellers and teachers in the family, community and beyond. We can learn so much from First Nations peoples on this Country and across other parts of the Diocese about being in relationship with others and the world and about treading lightly on this earth.

I encourage you to take time to pause...to feel the land beneath your feet...to focus on what you can see of the Land or water around you. Consider the Country you have travelled over...remember the Country where you grew up. Take the time now to honour the people who have cared for these lands and waterways for thousands of years...those who traversed the land, seeking connection with it and with the people on it and all those who continue to care and to teach.

May we continue to work towards a sustainable future where the land is nurtured, respected, and shared by all, walking in the footsteps of the Ancestors and Elders, and of St Francis of Assisi.



Figure 1

Context

"...following the example of the Saint of Assisi, may himself become a model of holiness of life and a constant witness of peace."

Pope Leo XIV

In the Catholic Church, 2026 is a special year for St Francis, as it is 800 years since his death. He is one of the most popular and influential saints in the Church. Traditionally, his Feast Day falls on October 4. St Francis referred to the presence of God in all things. Creation is to be treasured, protected, loved and cared for. The example of St Francis calls us to live simply, to care for others and to be peacemakers in our world.

Scripture: Psalm 96:11-13

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it.
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
before the Lord.

Prayer

May we celebrate the blessing of God in all creation...

God of glistening sun on the ocean,
The wind whispering in the trees,
The laughter of children,
The wisdom of the Elders.
Help us to recognise
The oneness of all things
And celebrate human creativity,
Compassion, endurance and love.
May we always acknowledge
The oneness of all things
In the wonder of your creation.
Amen.



Figure 2

Reflection

As a reflection, or alternative prayer, please see a prayer inspired by Saint Francis' Canticle of the Sun, encouraging us all to care for the Earth and our most vulnerable brothers and sisters.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3X4tv19Muk4>

Call to Action

In this Year of St Francis of Assisi, it might be a good opportunity to find out more about Francis, or to take action in the light of his example.

- Pray to St Francis. Get to know him.
- Do something meaningful for the environment.
- Find God in the people you encounter and in your world.
- Celebrate the beauty and simplicity in life.
- Incorporate meditation into daily routines.
- Be a peacemaker.
- Experience the joy of being out in God's creation.
- Share the things you are grateful for each day.

References

[1] "Pope Leo XIV proclaims a 'Special Year of St Francis'," Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay, accessed September 15, 2026. <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/news/latest-news/pope-leo-xiv-proclaims-a-special-year-of-st-francis>

Figure 1: St Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) in Meditation: oil on canvas, c1639, by Francisco de Zurbarán.. Fine Art. Encyclopædia Britannica ImageQuest, Accessed September 15, 2026. https://quest.eb.com/images/140_1647535.

Figure 2: AI generated image