Most high, all powerful, all good Lord! All praise is yours, all glory, all honor, and all blessing. To you, alone, Most High, do they belong. No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce 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.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them, precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and clouds and storms, and all the weather, through which you give your creatures sustenance.

Be praised, My Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, and powerful and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Be praised, my Lord, through those who forgive for love of you; through those who endure sickness and trial. Happy those who endure in peace, for by you, Most High, they will be crowned.

Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whose embrace no living person can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy those she finds doing your most holy will. The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks, and serve him with great humility.
Character and legacy

Contemporary Franciscan friar
Saint Francis of Assisi; born Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone, nicknamed Francesco; 1181/1182 – October 3, 1226. He founded the men’s Order of Friars Minor, the women’s Order of St. Clare (Chiara), and the Third Order of Saint Francis for men and women not able to live the lives of itinerant preachers. It has been argued that no one else in history was as dedicated as Francis to imitate the life, and work of Christ, in Christ’s own way. This is important in understanding Francis’ character and his affinity for the Eucharist and respect for the priests who carried out the sacrament. He and his followers celebrated and even venerated poverty. Poverty was so central to his character that in his last written work, The Testament, he said that absolute personal and corporate poverty was the essential lifestyle for the members of his Order.

Francis believed that nature itself was the mirror of God. He called all creatures his “brothers” and “sisters,” and even preached to the birds and supposedly persuaded a wolf to stop attacking some locals if they agreed to feed the wolf. In his “Canticle of the Sun”, he mentioned the “Brother Sun” and “Sister Moon,” the wind and water, and “Sister Death.” He referred to his chronic illnesses as his “sisters.” His deep sense of brotherhood under God embraced others. He declared that “he considered himself no friend of Christ if he did not cherish those for whom Christ died.”
Francis preached the teaching of the Catholic Church that the world was created good and beautiful by God, but suffers a need for redemption because of the primordial sin of man. He preached to man and beast the universal ability and duty of all creatures to praise God (a common theme in the Psalms) and the duty of men to protect and enjoy nature as both the stewards of God's creation and as creatures ourselves. On November 29, 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis the Patron Saint of Ecology.
By: Saint Francis of Assisi

The Poverello, as we learn from his early biographer, Thomas of Celano, did not hesitate to address himself directly to the rulers of the world. The First Life, 43, narrates an incident in which Emperor Otto IV passed the friars' hovel at Rivo Torto, near Assisi, on his way to Rome to be crowned by the Pope. Francis sent a friar to call out repeatedly that his glory would last only a short while. The Second Life, 200, expressed his wish that emperors would enact laws that on Christmas Day more than the usual amount of hay be given to the birds, the oxen, and the asses. He would have no fear, then, to write such a letter as this to remind rulers of their responsibility before God.

Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples: To all mayors and consuls, magistrates and rulers throughout the world, and to everyone who may receive these letters: Brother Francis, your little and despicable servant in the Lord God, sends his wishes of health and peace to all of you.

Pause and reflect, for the day of death is approaching. I beg you, therefore, with all possible respect, not to forget the Lord or turn away from His commandments by reason of the cares and preoccupations of this world, for all those who are oblivious of Him and turn away from His commands are cursed and will be totally forgotten by Him. And when the day of death does come, everything which they think they have will be taken from them. And the wiser and more powerful they may have been in this world, so much greater will be the punishments they will endure in hell.

Therefore, I firmly advise you, my lords, to put aside all care and preoccupation and receive with joy the most holy Body and the most holy Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in holy remembrance of Him.

And you should manifest such honor to the Lord among the people entrusted to you that every evening an announcement be made by a town crier or some other signal that praise and thanks may be given by all people to the all-powerful Lord God. And if you do not do this, know that you must render an account before the Lord your God, Jesus Christ, on the day of judgment.

Let those who keep this writing with them and observe it know that they will be blessed by the Lord God.
A CALL TO THE
LEADERS OF THE WORLD
for the end of nuclear weapon development
and the total elimination of all existing nuclear weapons.

Justice and Peace
Letter from the Franciscan Leaders:
The Inter-Franciscan Justice and Peace Council (IFCJP)
June 1998
LETTER
A call to the leaders of the world for the end of nuclear weapon development and the total elimination of all existing nuclear weapons.

Inspired by St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226 C.E.) who wrote to his early followers that they were not to bear arms for any reason, Franciscan men and women throughout the world have continued to advocate peace and to challenge those caught up in the threatening arms race. The recent nuclear weapons tests in India and Pakistan make us aware once more how perilous are the threats to peace. A territorial war between these two countries could lead to desperate use of atomic weapons across the border. We are aware that other nations are attempting to develop or purchase nuclear arms. The decrease in the control of the tens of thousands of existing nuclear weapons makes the possibility of nuclear outbreak even more frightening.

It is abundantly clear that no power, neither an individual nation nor the United Nations, can prevent the widening spiral of proliferation, despite the fact that 148 nations have signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. World health professionals insist that the medical requirements of a nuclear exchange are unimaginable and unavailable. The cost in human suffering would be enormous. Yet the fateful day of such an exchange looms closer and closer.

Although there are many signatories to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, we know that not all countries have signed. Even among those who have signed, the necessary ratification by proper government bodies is by no means certain. We are also aware that the treaty is interpreted by some as allowing for various forms of sub-critical tests and tests by simulation through new highly complex computer processes. Even with the signed Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CNTB), the development of new, more lethal nuclear weapons continues by the major powers while proliferation among formerly non-nuclear states continues.

It is striking that India, for example, so long an advocate of the abolition of all nuclear weapons, should be the most recent source of nuclear expansionism. India still insists that it is ready to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and to join the signers of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty if they see the major nuclear powers clearly moving towards the elimination of all nuclear weapons as required by Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Unfortunately, it is obvious that the major powers, while willing to negotiate some reductions in arms, plan to maintain sizable nuclear forces well into the next millennium which provides India, and other countries, with the excuse not to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CNTB).

We genuinely believe that there is an overwhelming desire among the people of the earth to remove the specter of nuclear devastation from the face of the planet. The world's number one agenda should be how to safely rid the world of the instruments of evil and destruction. We urge all nations, especially the major nuclear powers, to respond positively to the challenge for the abolition of all nuclear weapons.
In October 1997 Archbishop Renato Martino spoke on behalf of Pope John Paul II to the United Nations:
"Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st century. They cannot be justified. They deserve condemnation. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands an unequivocal commitment to their abolition. This is a moral challenge, a legal challenge and a political challenge. That multi-based challenge must be met by the application of our humanity. Let not the immensity of their task dissuade us from efforts needed to free humanity from such a scourge."
This statement reflects an earlier historic call by the International Court of Justice July, 1996. The court stated:
"The threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of International law applicable to armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law. There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control."
There was a period of time when it was considered acceptable for a nation to keep some nuclear weapons for deterrence while proceeding to remove them from existence. However, the nuclear powers do not intend to completely rid themselves of their huge stockpiles of massive and indiscriminate means of destruction. In fact they are proceeding to test and develop even more sophisticated nuclear weapons.
Again we call for the total abolition of nuclear weapons. The number and disbursement of nuclear weapons throughout the world makes their sudden use dangerously imminent. We also draw attention to the drastic impact that the nuclear weapons industry has on the poor, especially children. It is not only the destruction caused in the event of their use, but we protest the vast amounts of resources invested in research, development and production of these weapons of mass destruction.

INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE

Inspired by St. Francis of Assisi, we work for the rights of every human being, especially the most marginalized, as well as the respect for all of creation. In our International gatherings we have reiterated our abhorrence of war and have especially condemned the building, stockpiling, research and the use of nuclear weapons.
As we enter the Third Millennium, we address this letter to you in the same spirit as St. Francis had when he addressed his "Letter to the Rulers of the People." He wrote out of concern, both for the Rulers and for the people. So too, we write to you with sincere concern for all the nations of the world. We Franciscans urge you to abolish all nuclear weapons and to commit our resources to the human and spiritual needs of the world community. Unless we do this, the horrendous dangers that threaten the human race are unthinkable.

Peace and Good,
For 800 years men and women have been inspired to follow the way of St. Francis of Assisi, joyfully bringing the Gospel message to people of every age and culture.

In that spirit, the Franciscan Friars of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus have dedicated themselves to serving the People of God along the East coast for over a century.

“Holy Name Province is an evangelical and missionary fraternity called to minister in the Eastern United States and abroad. Rooted in the Catholic and Franciscan tradition, we are disciples of Christ who seek to bring the Gospel into the everyday experience of all people through Franciscan witness, popular preaching, teaching, and pastoral leadership. We foster Christian discipleship by collaborating with those whom we serve and by standing in solidarity with all people, especially the alienated, the immigrant, and the poor.” We are the largest province of the world-wide Order of Friars Minor (O.F.M.) in the United States, with men ministering in colleges, urban ministry centers, parishes, overseas missions and a wide variety of social services reaching out to the very poor in our society. Following the popular spirit of St. Francis of Assisi we try to meet people where they are and respond to the genuine needs of the least of the Lord’s brothers and sisters.

As an integral part of Franciscan life, the JPIC Office and Directorate exist to assist HNP in meeting the challenges of our call to minister in solidarity with the alienated, the poor, and the immigrant, as well as to care for God’s creation."

Immigration Reform

To welcome is ‘to walk with’.

Francis of Assisi and those who followed in the Franciscan movement were known for their hospitality to strangers. In our country today, we are invited to respond to the new “strangers” at our door, our immigrant brothers and sisters.

As Franciscans, we believe that our calling is to welcome immigrants and to stand with them in their struggle for justice. We recognize that the immigration reform issue is complex, often
dividing people of good will. Yet our faith compels us to love, to care for, and to seek justice for the stranger among us, remembering that we are all God’s children.

**Care of Creation**

Francis of Assisi had many of his most profound experiences of God while interacting in the natural world. Centuries ago, Francis understood the fundamental interdependence of all life on Earth. Today, his life and teachings offer Franciscans everywhere a spiritual grounding that helps us appreciate this relationship with creation — and to see it as a blessing! St. Francis is the Patron Saint of ecology.

**Climate Change and the Economy**

Many people are critical of action on climate change on economic grounds, arguing that the costs associated with environmental protection, including action on climate change, would significantly slow the already impeded U.S. economic recovery.

In the course of his Jan. 24, 2013 Secretary of State Confirmation Hearings, John Kerry took a strong position on climate change and the role of renewable energy in revitalizing the U.S. economy. Take a minute to view the video of his response when Sen. John Barrasso (R-WV) asked him for his specific thoughts on the issue.

**Global Climate Change: A Franciscan Challenge**

Global climate change is one of the most serious and urgent issues facing the human family. The poor, the most vulnerable and future generations will pay the heaviest price for the harm that has already been done to our environment.

As men and women inspired by St. Francis, the patron saint of ecology, we must be proactive in our response to this spiritual and moral crisis. Challenged by the words of Pope Benedict XVI, who said “our earth is speaking to us and we must listen and decipher its message, if we want to survive,” the time to act is now.

Consider taking one or two of the following steps. As part of your daily spiritual practice, seek guidance for those actions you are able to take and, one day at a time, slowly build in more steps as you are empowered and emboldened.

**Gain Insight from the Province’s Climate Change Statement**

- Holy Name Province Franciscan Statement on Climate Change.

**Learn the Facts about Global Climate Change**

- View “Climate Change and Intergenerational Evil,” a video with Michael Dowd. Michael Dowd (born 1958) is an American evolutionary theologian and bestselling author. His book Thank God for Evolution is noteworthy for its breadth and depth of endorsements, including six from Nobel Prize-winning scientists. On April 2, 2009 at the United Nations, Dowd addressed the lack of an evolutionary worldview which he maintains has resulted in a global integrity crisis that requires a deep-time view of
human nature, values and social systems to provide a solution for going forward. He maintains a
Christian perspective and accepts the theory of evolution.

- Watch 131 years of global warming in 26 seconds.
- View the documentary, “Home”. We are living in exceptional times. Scientists tell us that we have a few
years to change the way we live, avert the depletion of natural resources and the catastrophic evolution
of the Earth’s climate. However, there are many signs of hope. There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit is
leading us to a more just and sustainable future. Dare to be part of this new transformation? Watch this
video.
- See more clearly how climate change will have the most harmful effects upon persons who are poor.
- Understand the myths and truths about global climate change.
- Read the National Academies Report on climate change.

Reflect on Climate Change using Our Faith Tradition

- Watch the video “Who’s Under Your Carbon Footprint?”
- Read the message of Pope Benedict XVI “If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation”.
- Learn about the Church’s teachings regarding climate change.
- Reflect on a Franciscan approach to climate change.
- Read the book Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth by Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF, Br. Keith
Warner, OFM, and Pamela Wood.
- Learn about what the challenge of climate change has to do with your baptism.

Take Action

- Take the St. Francis Pledge.
- Consider various ways to save energy and your money. Interfaith Power & Light has wonderful
resources to assist local communities in energy saving.
- Share your desire to do something about global climate change with your pastor or lay leaders.
Encourage them to offer in your parish an adult Faith Formation program: God’s Creation Cries for
Justice/ Climate Change: Impacts and Faithful Response.
- Ask the decision-makers in your parish to consider promoting in your local Church Lent 4.5 Christian
Simplicity: A 7-week faith formation program for Lent with special bulletin inserts and school resource
books.
- Support local, clean-energy initiatives.