

Sister Elizabeth Fuhr, the middle of seven children of Robert Fuhr and Etta Hegarty Fuhr, educator-farmers from Bryant, SD, longs to respond creatively to the needs of an evolving world. She attended the Franciscan Aspirant school in 1955 and professed first vows in 1961. Her ministries included science education, youth corrections, social work, hospital chaplaincy, homeless senior's program (recorded in her simple book: *No Place to Go: A Handbook for Homeless Outreach*, 1996), drug counselor, and formation. Her Franciscan passion is expressed presently in an ongoing [Franciscan Contemplative Prayer](#) group and summer [Franciscan Rocky Mountain Retreats](#). As a climate activist she continues to collaborate through the Sacred Heart Province [Earthcare Committee](#) for the urgent needs of our Common Home, Sister Mother Earth.

Singing the Canticle of Creation by Earth Care



There is one song that has grown to be the motif of my spiritual journey: The Canticle of Creation. Francis in the last year of his life wrote "Praise Be God thru Mother Sister Earth who sustains us ...with colored flowers and herbs." It is a song, a reality that is my prayer and my ministry.

The Franciscan spirit asks us to let our senses be windows for God: to see the light on the mountains, to hear the songs and sounds of nature, and then to open the center of our beings, our hearts to receive these gifts with wonder and gratitude. This contemplation is looking at nature, even say, a blade of grass, "until it looks back at you." If someone asks, what was the source for Francis of the Canticle of Creatures? I would say, Francis, grow in mindfulness of God

pouring forth Self through the universe as the Word of Goodness and Love.

After myself finding God's healing, empowering, and enlivening love in Creation, I have invited people into nature. Each summer I host retreats in the Rocky Mountains for us together to grow like Francis into a realization of our familial relationship with Mother Sister Earth, Brother Sun.... The Canticle of the Creature rang through Francis. He just could not but create this song. My desire is that others will fall in love with God in nature and hear this melody.



Francis said that composing this song came from his deep desire that we stop abusing creation. My response to the melody in my life is: “I want to serve. I want to give back. I have received this love and my heart wants to surrender and give it back. I want to steward, to care for what I have been given. So, my ministry has evolved into care of Mother Earth. I have an invite, an ask. Is nature bidding you to contemplate, to fall in love, and to protect and cherish her?”

Liz (2019) in the Garden of San Damiano where Francis composed the Cantic of Creation.