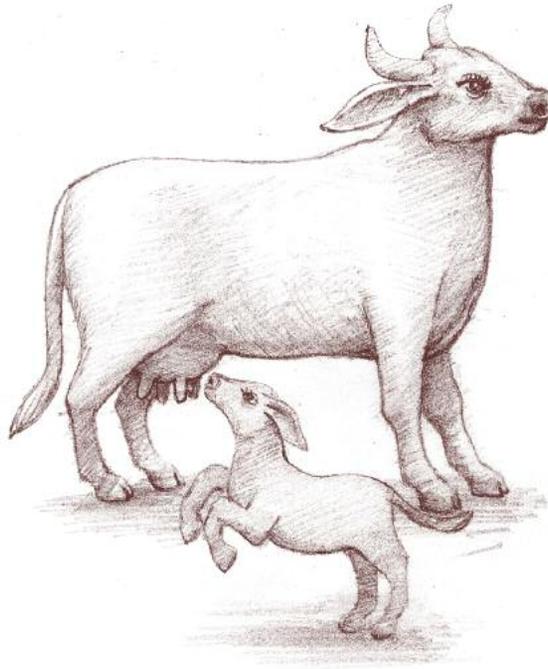


LESSON FOUR



IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

HEARING THE VOICES OF CREATION TEACHER'S PACK

(BACKGROUND TEXTS TO LESSON 4)

ALL CREATION SINGS TOGETHER

The need to restore our relationship with nature, to see in all life around us a family of creation, is common to many religions. In the early thirteenth century St. Francis, a saint revered by Christians of many traditions and the patron saint of ecology for Catholics, put this vision into a poem *The Canticle of the Creatures*. The sun, the wind, water, earth, moon and fire are described as members of our family; not strangers or threats, but noble, happy, powerful, strong. Which members of the family does St Francis give names to from the natural world?

GOOD LORD, most high almighty,
To you all praise is due,
All glory, honour, blessing,
Belong alone to you;
There is no one whose lips
Are fit to frame your name.

Be praised then my Lord God,
In and through all your creatures,
Especially among them,
Through our Noble Brother Sun,
By whom you light our day;
In his radiant splendid beauty He reminds us, Lord, of you.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and all the stars;
You have made the sky shine in their lovely light.

In Brother Wind be praised, my Lord.
And in the air,

HEARING THE VOICES OF CREATION TEACHER'S PACK

(BACKGROUND TEXTS TO LESSON 4)

In clouds, in calm,
In all weather moods that cherish life.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water;
She is most useful, humble, precious, pure.
And Brother Fire, by whom you lighten the night;
How fine is he, how happy, powerful, strong.

Through our dear Mother Earth be praised, my Lord,
She feeds us, guides, us, gives us plants, bright flowers,
And all her fruits.

Be praised, my Lord, through us
When out of love for you
We pardon one another.
When we endure
In sickness and in sorrow
Blessed are they who persevere in peace;
From you, Most High, they will receive their prize.

Be praised, my Lord, praised for our Sister Death,
From whom no one alive can hope to hide;
Wretched are they who die deep in their sin.
And blessed those whom Death finds doing your will...
For them there is no further death to fear.

O All People, all Creation! Praise God and bless him,
Give him thanks
And serve him very humbly.

Translated by Molly Reid