

Briar Cliff University

Spring 2010

Care for

Creation



Francis of Assisi – The Green Saint

By Sister Lucy Slinger, FSPA, Ph.D., ecological advocate



As a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Admiration (FSPA), La Crosse, Wis., Sister Lucy Slinger, Ph. D., is a congregational ecological advocate. She conducts presentations and leads retreats on the Franciscan value of "Care for Creation" and Earth literacy.

My special kudos to Briar Cliff University for choosing to emphasize the Franciscan value of "Care for Creation" during this academic year and for successfully implementing their "Care for Creation" plans across campus.

Saint Francis of Assisi addressed creatures as "Sisters" and "Brothers," who are equals, not subjects to be dominated. That is why the humble figure of Saint Francis standing on the birdbath or among the shrubs, like the statue of Francis on the Briar Cliff campus, is a timeless image that is so right for our time.

Francis truly saw himself as a simple servant and caretaker of Creation - little brother to the birds, the fish and the lowly ivy. Pope John Paul II proclaimed Saint Francis of Assisi the patron of ecology in 1979, citing him for being "an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of Creation."

According to Pope Benedict XVI, "Creation is the beginning and the foundation of all God's works, and its preservation has now become essential for the pacific coexistence of mankind."

Saint Francis' view of Creation embodies all of God's work and shows us a "new way" based on unconditional love.

The theology of the Franciscan tradition provides us with choices of what we are invited to do and what we are invited to be in right relationships with self, others, God and all of Creation. Peace and all good.

Saint Francis –

The Franciscan tradition calls us to honor the relationship with sacred Mother Earth and to focus our spiritual energies and economic resources in the care of God's creation.

