

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

by Kevin McChesney

PERFORMANCE NOTES

I've found meaningful and life-changing inspiration in my spiritual walk through the simple and elegant writings of St. Francis of Assisi (1181 or 1182 – 1226). This friar and patron saint found a deep, lasting connection to God through living a life of simplicity and service. He exemplifies the highest ideals of joy in life and fitness for service through prayer, meditation, and an intelligent, rational view of life as the spiritual experience that it is intended to be. His principles are ideas and methods to live by and offer hope through finding a simple, powerful connection with God in our daily living.

In the "St. Francis Suite," I offer a series of scenes that reflect my emotions in responding to this astonishing spiritual mentor's extraordinary words. Just as the music can be related to not one but several of St. Francis' prayers, there are a number of possibilities for performance of this work through several versions:

Handbell Choir alone
Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra
Handbell Choir and Flute Choir
Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble, and Chamber Orchestra

Here is the list of original works that, in various configurations, make up the St. Francis Suite in its several incarnations:

Fountains of Light
Interlude #1 ("Interlude" for full handbell choir versions)
Interlude #2 (only included in the guitar and handbell ensemble version)
Make Me An Instrument Of Thy Peace
Psalm
Sonnet
Tempest
Toccata #1
Toccata #2
Toccata #3

The most meaningful of St. Francis' prayers for me personally is widely-known and is titled simply "Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi." It reads (the line numbers are my addition to facilitate these performance notes, connecting line numbers to individual pieces on the following page):

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

- (1) Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
- (2) where there is hatred, let me sow love;
- (3) where there is injury, pardon;
- (4) where there is doubt, faith;
- (5) where there is despair, hope;
- (6) where there is darkness, light;
- (7) where there is sadness, joy.
- (8) O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
- (9) to be understood, as to understand;
- (10) to be loved, as to love.
- (11) For it is in giving that we receive,
- (12) it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
- (13) and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

These lines are sometimes added after line (3) -

- (3a) where there is discord, harmony;
- (3b) where there is error, truth;

The essential structure of the St. Francis Suite is six movements long, representing lines 2 through 7 of this prayer, but I offer options for extended presentations, adding line (1) and/or lines (3a) and (3b). The tone of each movement is expressive of my thoughts and feelings concerning these lines, and often the juxtaposition of the words (hatred/love, injury/pardon, etc.) are also represented by contrasts in the music.

The selections of the movements in this version of the Suite are detailed on the following page.

Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra:

Chamber Orchestra Instrumentation –

Flute
Oboe

Clarinet in Bb
Bassoon

Violin I
Violin II

Viola
Cello

(2) **Toccata #1** – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9352); Orchestra Score and Parts (Sonology Music SM14-04)

(3) **Interlude** – Handbell Choir (Sonology Music SM14-01); Orchestra Score and Parts (Sonology Music SM14-05)

(4) **Toccata #2** – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9408); Orchestra Score and Parts (Sonology Music SM14-06)

Changes to bell part:

play beat one of m. 63 (treble ring as dotted half note, lower treble and bass mallet), tacet (do not play) the rest of m. 63 through m. 74

play beat one of m. 85 (treble ring as dotted half note, bass mallet), tacet the rest of m. 85 through m. 96

m. 97 – bass mallets as written, omit C5 and treble chords beat one

(5) **Sonnet** – Handbell Choir (Sonology Music SM14-02); Orchestra Score and Parts (Sonology Music SM14-07)

Change to bell part:

do not play (tacet) m. 50-52

(6) **Fountains of Light** (originally titled "Fountains") – Handbell Choir (Ringing Word Publications MRW8193) or Handbell Quartet/Ensemble (STEP (The Solo To Ensemble Project) STEP14-08); optional solo flute part is part of the download from STEP or is available as MRW8193F.

(7) **Toccata #3** – Handbell Choir (Sonology Music SM14-03); Orchestra Score and Parts (Sonology Music SM14-08)

Change to bell part:

play first beat of m. 54 (A major chord) as a rung dotted quarter note, tacet for the rest of m. 54 and for m. 55-60

Additions for extended version:

(1) **Make Me An Instrument Of Thy Peace** – 3-5 octaves, Level II+ – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9296); use optional parts for two C instruments [flute/oboe, flute/violin, etc.] (JHS9296B). Other instrumental parts are available for brass and/or keyboard; these options may also be used, though these instruments are not used in any of the rest of the Suite.

(3a) **Tempest** – 4-7 octaves, Level VI – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9257); orchestra tacet

(3b) **Psalm** – 4-7 octaves, Level VI – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9332); comes with optional solo flute or violin part

Following are two more texts that the St. Francis Suite may be based on. I've listed the titles that match the texts' individual lines after each line.

The Canticle of the Sun

by Francis of Assisi

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. (Toccata #1)

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them, precious and beautiful. (Interlude #1)

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

Be praised, My Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure. (Fountains of Light)

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, and powerful and strong. (Toccata #2)

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

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. (Psalm or Interlude #2)

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. (Toccata #3)

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

Prayer Before the Crucifix

"Most High, Glorious God, (Toccata #1)
enlighten the darkness of my mind, (Interlude #1)
give me right faith, (Toccata #2)
a firm hope and perfect charity, (Sonnet)
sense and knowledge (Fountains of Light)
so that I may always and in all things act according to Your Holy Will. Amen. (Toccata #3)

alternate wording –

Most High, Glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart,
and give me correct faith,
sure hope and perfect charity,
with understanding and knowledge, Lord,
so that I may fulfill your holy and true command,
Amen.

for my wife, Tracy

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

III. Toccata #2

for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Kevin McChesney

♩ = c. 172

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in B \flat

Bassoon

Handbells

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

f

5 octave choirs omit notes in ().
*B2 is not used in the 6 octave version.

5

Fl. *f*

Ob. *f*

Cl. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Hb.

9

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

13

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

17

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

R

cresc.

20

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I.

Vln. II.

Vla.

Vc.

ff

ff

ff

ff

Handwritten musical score for measures 24-27. The score is for a 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra. The instruments are Handbell (Hb.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The time signature is 2/4. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. A large watermark 'Return to SonologyMusic.com to purchase' is visible across the page.

Handwritten musical score for measures 28-31. The score is for a 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra. The instruments are Handbell (Hb.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The time signature is 2/4. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. A large watermark 'Return to SonologyMusic.com to purchase' is visible across the page. The word 'dim.' is written above the Handbell part in measure 31.

36

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

R

40

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

44

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

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51

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

mf

cresc.

mf

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

54

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

mf

cresc.

57

Fl. *f*

Ob. *f*

Cl. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Hb. *f*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

61

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

64

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

67

Fl. *f*

Ob. *f*

Cl. *f*

Bsn. *f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

71

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

||

Handbell (Hb.) score, measures 75-80. The music is in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and chords, with some notes marked with a '7' (seventh) and parentheses indicating specific articulation or phrasing.

Handbell (Hb.) score, measures 81-86. The music continues in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and chords, with some notes marked with a '7' (seventh) and parentheses indicating specific articulation or phrasing.

Handbell (Hb.) score, measures 87-92. The music is in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and chords, with some notes marked with a '7' (seventh) and parentheses indicating specific articulation or phrasing. A large 'R' is visible in the background, likely a watermark or page marker.

89

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

93

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

mf

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

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101

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p Sk *f*

105

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f

The musical score is for a 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra. It features staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Handbell (Hb.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in 4/4 time and features a variety of notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A large watermark 'PREVIEW' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

==

109

Hb.

R

Handbell part for measures 109-112. The music is in 8/8, 2/4, 8/8, and 2/4 time signatures. The right hand plays a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a bass line with occasional chords.

113

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

f

Woodwind and brass parts for measures 113-116. The Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet parts are in 8/8, 2/4, 8/8, and 2/4 time signatures. The Bassoon part is in 8/8, 2/4, 8/8, and 2/4 time signatures. All parts start with a forte (*f*) dynamic.

Hb.

Handbell part for measures 113-116. The music is in 8/8, 2/4, 8/8, and 2/4 time signatures. The right hand plays a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a bass line with occasional chords.

117

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f

f

f

f

120

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

R

cresc.

124

Hb.

ff

dim.

Vln. I

ff

Vln. II

ff

Vla.

ff

Vc.

ff

132

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

R

136

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f

f

140

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

144

Fl. *mf*

Ob.

Cl. *mf*

Bsn.

Hb. *mf* R

148

Fl. *mf cresc.*

Ob. *mf cresc.*

Cl. *cresc.*

Bsn. *mf cresc.*

Hb. *cresc.*

152

Fl. *ff*

Ob. *ff*

Cl. *ff*

Bsn. *ff*

Hb. *ff*

156

Hb. *ff* *cresc.*

Vln. I *ff* *cresc.*

Vln. II *ff* *cresc.*

Vla. *ff* *cresc.*

Vc. *ff* *cresc.*

R *cresc.*

164

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

168

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

fff

fff

fff

R

179

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hb.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

RT

for my wife, Tracy
ST. FRANCIS SUITE
III. Toccata #2
for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Flute

Kevin McChesney

♩ = c. 172

5 *f*

9

13

17

21

25

29 **4** *f*

34

37

41

45

49 *mf*

53 *mf cresc.*

57 *f*

67 *f*

71

75

86 *mf*

90

98 *f*

106 *f*

114

118 *4*

129 *f*

133

137

141 *mf*

145

149 *mf* *cresc.* *ff*

153 4 3 4 6 4 9 2 4

163 2 9 2 9 2

167 *fff*

171 *mf*

175 *cresc.* *no rit.* *fff*

179

for my wife, Tracy
ST. FRANCIS SUITE
III. Toccata #2
for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Oboe

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 172$

5 *f*

9

13

17

21

25

28 *f*

34

37

41

45

49

53

57

67

71

75

86

mf *cresc.*

f

mf

mf

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94

102

110

114

118

122

129

133

137

141

f

f

mf

4

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145 *mf cresc.*

149 *ff*

153 *4* *3* *4*

163

167 *fff*

171 *mf*

175 *cresc.* *no rit.* *fff*

179

for my wife, Tracy

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

III. Toccata #2

for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Clarinet in B \flat

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 172$

5 *f*

9

13

17

21

25

29 *f* 6

38 2

43

47

51

55

62

69

73

81

88

92

mf

cresc.

f

mf

96 *f*

104

112 *f*

116

120

124 *f* 6

133 2

139 *f*

143 *mf*

146 *mf* *cresc.*

150 *ff* 4

157 4

164

168 *fff*

172 *mf* *cresc.*

176 *no rit.* *fff*

180

for my wife, Tracy

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

III. Toccata #2

for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Bassoon

Kevin McChesney

♩ = c. 172

5

f

9

13

17

20

24

27

6

35 *f*

39 *mf*

46 *mf* *cresc.*

50 *f*

54 *f*

58 *f*

68

72

80 *mf*

145

mf *cresc.*

149

ff

153

fff

163

167

171

mf

175

cresc. *no rit.* *fff*

179

for my wife, Tracy

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

III. Toccata #2

for 3-7 Octave Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Violin I

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 172$

9

17

23

27

31

35

39

43

ff

f

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47  *mf*

51 

55  *f*

59 

63 

67 

75  *mf*

86 

94  *f*

102

110

114

118

122

126

130

134

138

f

ff

f

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142 *mf*

146

150 5

158 *ff* *cresc.*

162 *fff*

166

170

174 *mf* *cresc.*

178 *no rit.* *fff*

for my wife, Tracy

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

III. Toccata #2

for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Violin II

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 172$

9

17

23

27

31

35

39

43

ff

f

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47  *mf*

51  *mf*

55  *f*

59  *f*

63  *f*

67  *f*

75  *f*

86  *f*

94  *f*

102

110

118

122

126

130

134

138

142

mf

The musical score for Violin II consists of nine staves of music, numbered 102 to 142. The notation includes various time signatures: 2/4, 3/4, 6/8, and 9/8. The music features a mix of eighth, sixteenth, and quarter notes, often beamed together. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte) at measures 110 and 126, *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 122, and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 142. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'Return to sonologymusic.com to purchase' is superimposed over the entire page.

146

150

158

162

166

170

174

178

ff *cresc.*

fff

mf *cresc.*

no rit. *fff*

5

for my wife, Tracy

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

III. Toccata #2

for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Viola

Kevin McChesney

♩ = c. 172

Handwritten musical score for Viola, measures 1 through 47. The score is written on a single staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 12/8. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 23, *f* (forte) at measure 31, and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 47. The score is marked with a large, diagonal watermark reading "Return to Sonology Music.com to purchase".

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51

55

59

63

67

75

86

90

94

98

f

mf

f

102

106

110

114

118

122

126

130

134

138

f

ff

f

The musical score for the Viola part, measures 102-138, is written on a single staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 12/8 to 2/4 and back to 12/8. The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Dynamics include forte (f) and fortissimo (ff). The score is marked with a large 'R' and a diagonal line across it, indicating it is a preview or sample.

142

146

150

158

162

166

170

174

178

mf

cresc.

ff

no rit.

fff

5

mf

ff

fff

cresc.

no rit.

fff

for my wife, Tracy
ST. FRANCIS SUITE
III. Toccata #2

for 5-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Chamber Orchestra

Violoncello

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 172$

The image shows the Violoncello part of the Toccata #2 from the St. Francis Suite. The music is written on a single staff in bass clef. It begins with a tempo marking of approximately 172 beats per minute. The piece is in 2/4 time and features a series of eighth-note patterns. The dynamics range from *ff* (fortissimo) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The piece concludes with a *mf* dynamic marking.

9

17

23

27

31

35

39

43

47

ff

f

mf

51

55

59

63

67

75

86

90

94

98

102

106

110

114

118

122

126

130

134

138

142

mf

146

150

158

162

166

170

174

178

ff *cresc.*

fff

mf *cresc.*

no rit.

fff

5

The musical score for measures 146-178 is written in bass clef. Measures 146-150 are rests. Measure 151 has a fingering '5' above a whole note. Measures 152-157 are eighth notes. Measure 158 starts with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. Measures 159-161 are eighth notes. Measure 162 starts with a fortissimo (*fff*) dynamic. Measures 163-165 are eighth notes. Measure 166 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. Measures 167-169 are eighth notes. Measure 170 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. Measures 171-173 are eighth notes. Measure 174 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. Measures 175-177 are eighth notes. Measure 178 starts with a fortissimo (*fff*) dynamic and a 'no rit.' marking. The score ends with a double bar line.