

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 Flute Choir:

- (2) **Toccata #1** – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9352); Score and Parts for Flute Choir [Opt. Piccolo, Fl 1, Fl 2, Fl 3, Alto Fl, Bass Fl, Opt. Contrabass Fl] (Sonology Music SM14-10)
- (3) **Interlude** – Handbell Choir tacet; Score and Parts for Flute Choir [Fl 1, Fl 2, Fl 3, Fl 4, Alto Fl, Bass Fl, Opt. Contrabass Fl] (Sonology Music SM14-11)
- (4) **Toccata #2** – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9408); Flute Choir tacet
- (5) **Sonnet** – Handbell Choir (Sonology Music SM14-02); Score and Parts for Flute Choir [Fl 1, Fl 2, Alto Fl, Bass Fl] (Sonology Music SM14-12)

Change to bell part:

do not play (tacet) m. 50-52

Note: In the premiere, a quartet played the flute parts through m. 52, then the full ensemble joined at m. 55, to beautiful effect.

- (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); Score and Parts for Flute Choir [Picc/Fl 1, Fl 2, Fl 3, Fl 4, Alto Fl, Bass Fl, Opt. Contrabass Fl] (Sonology Music SM14-13)

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); optional parts for one or two flutes are available (JHS9296B)
- (3a) **Tempest** – 4-7 octaves, Level VI – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9257); flutes tacet
- (3b) **Psalm** – 3-5 octaves, Level III – Handbell Choir (Jeffers Handbell Supply JHS9332); comes with optional solo flute 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, (Toccatà #1)
enlighten the darkness of my mind, (Interlude #1)
give me right faith, (Toccatà #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. (Toccatà #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
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 132

Piccolo/Flute 1

Flute 2

Flute 3

Flute 4

Alto Flute

Bass Flute

Contrabass Flute (Optional)

Handbells

mf LV

R

4 octave choirs omit notes in ().
Staccato notes - mallet bell on padded table.

This musical score is for the sixth movement of the St. Francis Suite, Toccata #3, by Kevin McChesney. It is arranged for a 4-7 octave handbell choir and a flute choir. The score is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piece is divided into two systems, with a double bar line and repeat sign at the beginning of the second system.

System 1 (Measures 4-7):

- Handbell (Hb.):** The upper staff plays a melodic line, while the lower staff provides harmonic support. The piece begins with a 4-measure rest, followed by measures 5, 6, and 7. Measure 5 includes a 'LV' (Left Ventricle) marking, and measure 7 includes an 'R' (Right Ventricle) marking.

System 2 (Measures 8-11):

- Flute Choir:** The flute parts enter in measure 8. The parts include Piccolo (Picc.), Flute (Fl.), Alto Flute (A. Fl.), Bass Flute (B. Fl.), and Contrabass Flute (Cb. Fl.). The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is indicated for the flute parts starting in measure 8.
- Handbell (Hb.):** The handbell part continues from the previous system, with 'LV' and 'R' markings in measures 9 and 10 respectively.

12

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

LV

R

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16 Picc. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb. (R) LV LV LV

20

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV LV LV LV LV LV

24

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV R

LV LV

LV LV

LV LV

The image shows a page of musical notation for a flute and handbell ensemble. It features seven staves for woodwinds and one for handbells. The woodwind parts include Piccolo, three Flutes, Alto Flute, Bass Flute, and Contrabass Flute. The handbell part is divided into Left and Right hands. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, slurs, and dynamic markings. A large watermark is overlaid on the page.

28

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV LV LV LV LV LV LV LV

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piece titled 'St. Francis Suite - VI. Toccata #3'. The score is for a flute choir and a handbell choir. The flute choir part includes staves for Piccolo (Picc.), three Flutes (Fl.), Alto Flute (A. Fl.), Bass Flute (B. Fl.), and Contrabass Flute (Cb. Fl.). The handbell part is for a 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir (Hb.), with two staves per octave. The notation is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The flute parts have melodic lines with various articulations and dynamics. The handbell part consists of chords and arpeggiated figures, with 'LV' (Lento) markings. A large watermark 'return to sonologymusic.com to purchase' is overlaid on the score.

32

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

R

36

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

LV

39

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piece titled "St. Francis Suite - VI. Toccata #3". The score is arranged for a 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and a Flute Choir. It consists of seven staves for flutes (Piccolo, Flute 1, Flute 2, Flute 3, Alto Flute, Bass Flute, and Contrabass Flute) and one grand staff for Handbells. The music is in 7/8 time and features complex rhythmic patterns and articulation marks like "R" and "p". A large watermark "RETURN TO SONOLGYMUSIC.COM TO PURCHASE" is overlaid on the page.

43

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

Mallets

R

Fl.

mf

mf

(R)

LV

50

Picc. *f*

Fl. *f*

Fl. *f*

Fl. *f*

A. Fl. *f*

B. Fl. *f*

Cb. Fl.

Hb. *f* LV

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piece titled 'St. Francis Suite - VI. Toccata #3'. The score is for a 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir. The page number is 50. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 7/8. The dynamic marking is *f* (forte). The instruments are Piccolo (Picc.), Flute (Fl.), Alto Flute (A. Fl.), Bass Flute (B. Fl.), Contrabass Flute (Cb. Fl.), and Handbell (Hb.). The flute parts have melodic lines with slurs and accents. The handbell part consists of chords with a descending bass line. A large watermark 'Return to Sonologymusic.com to purchase' is overlaid on the page.

53

Picc. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

A. Fl. *mf*

B. Fl. *mf*

Cb. Fl. *mf*

Hb. *mf*

LV R

57

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

mf

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

61

Picc. *mp*

Fl. *mp*

Fl. *mp*

Fl. *mp*

A. Fl. *mp*

B. Fl. *mp*

Cb. Fl. *mp*

Hb. *mp*

LV LV LV R

65 LV LV LV R

Hb.

69

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

mp

A. Fl.

mp

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV LV LV R

73

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

mp

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

mp

LV

LV

LV

R

cresc.

77

Picc. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

A. Fl. *mf*

B. Fl. *mf*

Cb. Fl.

Hb. *mf* LV *

Mallets

*For ease of reading, C5 is in the treble clef m. 77-79 and m. 81-82.

80

Picc.

FL.

FL.

FL.

A. FL.

B. FL.

Cb. FL.

Hb.

R

LV

LV

83 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

f

f

f

poco rit. *a tempo*

Hb.

R

LV

R

87

Hb. R LV

91

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb. R LV

The image shows a musical score for measures 87-91. The top system (measures 87-90) features a Handbell (Hb.) part with two staves, labeled 'R' and 'LV'. The bottom system (measures 91-94) features a Flute (Fl.) choir with six staves: Piccolo (Picc.), Flute (Fl.), Flute (Fl.), Flute (Fl.), Alto Flute (A. Fl.), Bass Flute (B. Fl.), and Contrabass Flute (Cb. Fl.). The flute parts are marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A large watermark 'PREVIEW' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

95

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

R

LV

LV

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103

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

LV

LV

LV

LV

LV

107

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

LV

LV

R

LV

LV

110

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV LV LV LV LV LV

113

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

LV

LV

LV

LV

LV

116

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

R

f

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piece titled "St. Francis Suite - VI. Toccata #3". The score is for a 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir. The page number is 29. The score is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of one flat. It includes parts for Piccolo, three Flutes, Alto Flute, Bass Flute, Contrabass Flute, and Handbells. The Handbell part is divided into Left and Right hands. The score starts at measure 116 and includes dynamic markings like 'f' and articulation like 'LV' and 'R'. There is a large watermark across the page that reads "Return to sonologymusic.com to purchase".

120

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

LV

LV

R

f

124

Picc.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

A. Fl.

B. Fl.

Cb. Fl.

Hb.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Piccolo/Flute 1

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = 132$

2 3 3 3

Picc.

16 *mf*

22

27

32 2 3 4

46 Fl. *mf* *f*

52 *mf*

58 2 3 *mp*

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68 *mf*

79 *f* *poco rit.* *a tempo* 2

87 3 3 3

101 Picc. *ff*

106

111

116 *f*

122

126 *cresc.* *rit.* *ff*

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Flute 2

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 132

2 3 3 3

16 *mf*

23

29

34

40 *mf*

50 *f* *mf*

57 *mp* 2

65 3 3 3

77 *mf* *f*

83 *poco rit.* *a tempo* 2 3 3

96 3 *ff*

105

111

117 *f*

122 *cresc.*

127 *rit.* *ff*

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Flute 3

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 132

2

3

mf

11

17

23

29

35

41

4

mf

f

51

f

mf

57

2

3

mp

68 *mp* *cresc.*

77 *mf* *f* *f*

84 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *f*

95

101 *ff*

107

113 *f*

119

125 *cresc.*

128 *rit.* *ff*

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Flute 4

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 132

mf

12

19

27

36

48

55

61

mf

f

f

mf

mp

69 *mp* *cresc.*

76 *mf* *f*

82 *f* *poco rit.* *a tempo* 2 3

92 *f*

99 *ff*

106

114 *f*

120

126 *cresc.* *rit.* *ff*

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Alto Flute

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 132

2 3

mf

11

17

24

31

2 3

41

4 3

mf f

52

mf

57

2

mp

65 *mp*

74 *cresc.* *mf* *mf* *f*

82 *f* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

93 *f*

99 *ff*

105

112 *f*

120 *f*

126 *cresc.* *rit.* *ff*

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Bass Flute

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 132

2 3

mf

11

18

25

32 2 3 4

45 3 *mf* *f*

53 *mf*

58 2 3 *mp*

68

3 3 2

mp *mf*

80

mf *f* *f*

poco rit. *a tempo*

2

88

3

f

97

ff

104

111

2

119

3 3

128

rit.

f *ff*

for my wife, Tracy
Premiered by the Pikes Peak Ringers and the Pikes Peak Flute Choir,
April 29, 2012

ST. FRANCIS SUITE

VI. Toccata #3

for 4-7 Octave Handbell Choir and Flute Choir

Contrabass Flute (Optional)

Kevin McChesney

The musical score is written for Contrabass Flute (Optional) in a single system. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 132. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score consists of nine staves of music, with measure numbers 11, 17, 23, 30, 40, 54, and 59 indicated at the start of their respective staves. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several multi-measure rests labeled with numbers 2, 3, and 4. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). A large, semi-transparent watermark reading 'Return to SonologyMusic.com to purchase' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

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69 *poco rit.*

85 *a tempo*

95

101 *ff*

107

114

124 *rit.*

f *ff*