

## 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.

### **Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble, and Chamber Orchestra:**

The Scores and Parts [Fl, Ob, Cl in Bb, Bassoon, Handbell Ensemble (G4 – A7), Classical Guitar, Vln 1, Vln 2, Vla, Cello] for all movements of this suite are downloadable from Sonology Music. Each piece is available individually (listed below) and the whole suite is available as one product as well (STEP14-07).

Order is:

- (2) **Toccata #1** (STEP14-01)
- (3) **Interlude #1** (STEP14-02)
- (4) **Toccata #2** (STEP14-03)
- (5) **Sonnet** (STEP14-04)
- (6) **Interlude #2** (STEP14-05)
- (7) **Toccata #3** (STEP14-06)

No additions for extended version.

#### **Handbell Assignments**

The handbell part to the *Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble, and Chamber Orchestra* version of the St. Francis Suite spans the diatonic notes from G4 to A7. The part may be played by anywhere from 6 to 9 ringers. However, since the notes from G4 through C5 do not play often, it is suggested that the part be played by 6 or 7 ringers.

See the following two pages for notes on suggested assignments.

**For 6 ringers, the basis for assigning is:**

- 1) D5, E5      3) A5, B5/6      5) E6/7, F6/7  
2) F5, G5      4) C6/7, D6/7      6) G6/7, A6/7

Note: for movement I (Toccata #1), assigning B6 to ringer 6 may prove to be more practical than the octave assignment above.

Suggested assignments of G4-C5:

- I. Toccata #1**  
Ringer 1 plays G4 and A4  
Ringer 2 plays E5 in measure 41  
Ringer 4 plays B4 and C#5
- II. Interlude #1** (handbells tacet)
- III. Sonnet**  
Have one ringer play E6/7, F6/7, G6, A6, and all accidentals using four-in-hand and weaving. This leaves a ringer free (position at lower end of table) to play G4 through C#5 with the following exceptions:  
Ringer 1 plays Bb4 in measures 21-22 and C#5 in measures 64-65 and 71-75  
Ringer 2 plays E5 in measure 65
- IV. Toccata #2**  
Ringer 3 plays A4  
Ringer 4 plays duplicate Bb4 and Ringer 6 plays duplicate C5 in measures 51 and 146 – these notes may be omitted if duplicates are unavailable  
Ringer 1 plays G4-C5 and Ringer 2 plays D5-G5 in measures 75-82  
Ringer 1 plays C5 in measures 121-123 and measure 171  
Ringer 1 plays Bb4 in measures 172-173  
Ringer 2 plays Eb5 in measure 173  
Ringer 2 plays E5 in measures 174-181
- V. Interlude #2**  
Have one ringer play E6, F6, G6, and A6 using four-in-hand and weaving. This leaves a ringer free (position at lower end of table) to play G4 and A4 throughout.  
Ringer 4 plays Bb4 and C5. In measures 23-24 and 31-32, some four-in-hand is necessary.
- VI. Toccata #3**  
Ringer 1 plays A4 and C#5  
Ringer 2 plays C5  
Ringer 2 plays E5 on beat 4 of measures 12 and 96, continues playing and passes to Ringer 1 in measures 13 and 97  
Ringer 2 plays B4 in measures 34, 38, 118, and 122  
Ringer 1 plays B4 in measures 36, 39, 120, and 123  
Ringer 2 plays E5 in measure 84

**For 7 ringers, the basis for assigning is:**

- 1) G4-C5 where practical    2) D5, E5    3) F5, G5    4) A5, B5/6    5) C6/7, D6/7    6) E6/7, F6/7    7) G6/7, A6/7

Note: for movement I (Toccata #1), assigning B6 to ringer 7 may prove to be more practical than the octave assignment above.

One ringer cannot effectively play G4-C5 throughout, so note the following:

**I. Toccata #1**

Ringer 2 plays C#5 in measure 9

**II. Interlude #1** (handbells tacet)

**III. Sonnet**

Ringer 2 plays Bb4 in measures 21-22 and C#5 in measures 64-65 and 71-75

Ringer 3 plays E5 in measure 65

**IV. Toccata #2**

G4-C5 is practical for one ringer

**V. Interlude #2**

Ringer 1 plays G4 and A4 throughout

Ringer 7 plays Bb4, C5, G6, and A6 throughout

OR

Ringer 7 moves to lower end of table and plays Bb4 and C5

Ringer 6 plays E6, F6, G6, and A6

OR

Ringer 1 plays G4-C5 where practical

Duplicate Bb4 and C5 are assigned to other ringers for measures 3-5 and 11-12

OR

Ringer 1 plays G4-C5 using four-in-hand

**VI. Toccata #3**

G4-C5 is practical for one ringer

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

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble, and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 92

The musical score is arranged in a system of eight staves. The top four staves are for woodwinds: Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in Bb, and Bassoon. The fifth staff is for Guitar, which begins with a melody marked *mf*. The bottom three staves are for strings: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. A tempo marking of ♩ = 92 is indicated at the top left. A large diagonal watermark reading 'PREVIEW' is overlaid across the score.



6

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

12

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

19

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

25

Fl. *mf*

Ob.

Cl. solo *mf*

Bsn. *mf*

Gtr.

Vln. I pizz.

Vln. II pizz.

Vla. pizz.

Vc. pizz.

30

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

(end solo)



41

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

arco

*mf*

*f*

arco

*mf*

*f*

arco

*mf*

*f*

arco

*mf*

*f*

47

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*dim.* *mf*

*dim.* *mf*

*dim.* *mf*

*dim.* *mf*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*dim.*

*dim.*



52

Fl. *mf* *mp* *rit.*

Ob. *mf* *mp*

Cl. *mf* *mp*

Bsn. *mf* *mp*

Gtr. *mp*

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

58 *a tempo*

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

*f*

2/4

2/4

2/4

2/4

2/4

2/4

2/4

2/4

65

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Gtr.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*rit.*

for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

Flute

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 92

24 *mf*

30

37 *mf* *f*

46 *f* *mf* *mf* *mp*

54 *rit.* 2 6 *a tempo* 7 *rit.* 3

for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

Oboe

♩ = 92

31

*mf*

39

*mf* *f*

48

*f* *mf* *mf* *mp*

56

*rit.* 2 *a tempo* 4 7 *rit.* 3

for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

Clarinet in B $\flat$

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

$\text{♩} = 92$   
**24** solo  
*mf*

31 (end solo) **3**

40 *f* **2** *f > mf*

50 **2** *mf* *mp* **2**

56 rit. **2** *a tempo* **4** **7** rit. **3**

for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

Bassoon

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

♩ = 92

27 *mf* 2 *mf*

35 *f* 3

46 2 2 *f* *mf* *mf* *mp*

54 *rit.* 6 *a tempo* 7 *rit.* 3

*for my wife, Tracy*

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Handbells

Kevin McChesney

TACET





for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

Guitar

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

The musical score is written for guitar in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 92. The score consists of six staves of music, with measure numbers 7, 14, 21, 27, and 32 indicated at the beginning of their respective lines. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). Roman numerals CII, CIX, and CIII are placed above the staff to indicate specific chords or positions. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'Return to songgymusic.com to purchase' is overlaid across the score.

Guitar

37

42

46

50

57

64

*mf*

*mp*

*f*

*mf*

*p*

*dim.*

*rit.*

*a tempo*

1/2CII

CII

CIX

1/2CII

The musical score for guitar consists of six systems of music. The first system (measures 37-41) features a melodic line with a bracketed phrase and a bass line with a dotted half note. The second system (measures 42-45) continues the melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The third system (measures 46-49) shows the melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and the bass line with a slur and a fermata. The fourth system (measures 50-56) includes a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a bass line with a slur and a fermata. The fifth system (measures 57-63) features a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a bass line with a slur and a fermata. The sixth system (measures 64-68) includes a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a bass line with a slur and a fermata. The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *mf*, and *p*, as well as performance instructions like *dim.*, *rit.*, and *a tempo*. Chord diagrams for 1/2CII, CII, CIX, and 1/2CII are provided.

for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

Violin I

♩ = 92

11

*mp* < *mf*

20

pizz.

28

36

arco

6

*mf* < *f* dim.

49

*mp*

56

rit. 2 a tempo 4 7 rit. 2

*p*

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for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

Violin II

♩ = 92

12

*mf*

20

pizz.

28

36

arco

*mf* *f* *dim.*

50

*mp*

56

rit.

a tempo 4

7

rit.

2

*p*

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for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

Viola

♩ = 92

12

*mf*

21

pizz.

29

37

arco

*mf* *f* *dim.*

52

*mp* *rit.*

57

*a tempo* 4 7 *rit.* 2

*p*

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for my wife, Tracy

# ST. FRANCIS SUITE

for Classical Guitar, Handbell Ensemble,  
and Chamber Orchestra

## II. Interlude #1

Kevin McChesney

Violoncello

♩ = 92

**12**

*mf*

22

pizz.

31

**7** arco

*mf*

45

*f* *dim.* *mp*

54

**2** rit. *mp* *a tempo* **4** **7** rit. **2** *p*

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