



## THE PRAYER OF THE TREES

Often, when I walk in the woods that surround the monastery, I remember these words from the writer Rabindranath Tagore, “Be silent, the trees are praying.” I can feel its truth as I look around and see all those living pillars, stretching out towards the sky in praise and thanksgiving. A temple of vivid colors with a congregation of creatures of all sizes and shapes, all worshipping their Creator simply by being. Why can’t we do the same?

When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, he began with the words “Our Father”. God is for us not only the Creator, as he is for trees and animals, but much more. Next Wednesday, as we receive the ashes to mark the beginning of Lent and as a sign of our desire for conversion, we might do well to remember that we were made of the same dirt as all other creatures. May we be humbled by this fact that unites us with all that is. Then we will be able to look up, like the leaves turn towards the sun and, moved by the wind of the Spirit, whisper with a contrite and grateful heart, “Our Father”.