

## ***Canticle of Electric Light***

*Francis of New York*

Lord of the five boroughs  
And every suburb  
Country and region,  
All praise is incommensurate  
With your goodness and your glory.

Our headlines show our nothingness,  
Our rivers of words are empty,  
No one can say your name,  
No one is worthy.

Be praised, our Lord, for the vastness of cities,  
For they are a furnace of souls  
That are purified and brought back to you.  
And they are the vast peopled deserts  
Where those who love you can be most alone.

Be praised, our Lord, for invention,  
Whereby man returns your gift to you,  
And bodies are cured and warmed and fed  
And joy is made new.

Be praised, my Lord, for the struggle of life,  
For it teaches us to know Adam's sin  
And helps us to be useful one to another.

Be praised, my Lord, for constant noise and change  
That teach us to find our rest in you  
Amid the world's great yearning.

Be praised, my Lord, for kindness  
And words that heal from strangers.  
For humanity and benevolence  
Wherever it be found  
For they are a sign of you.

Be praised, my Lord, for cemeteries  
And the bones of the pious dead  
And monuments and the dense shadow  
Of history in time gone by.  
They are the world you made and are redeeming

Be praised, my God, in animals and children  
In whom we find our souls.

And though this city be sometimes as wicked  
As Sodom and Gomorrah,  
Those proud cities once purified and cleansed  
By your refining fire,  
A few just souls did live here once.

For them, not us,  
Spare us this next little while.

With the small part of the sky that is seen by us  
And only the occasional star  
May we worship you  
In the dense texture of this life  
Lived with our fellow men  
Where each day we are humbled by things that will vanish  
And astonished by your unseen greatness and love.