

The Dancing Francis and St. Francis and the Birds

reviewed by [Richard A. Kauffman](#) in the [April 3, 2013](#) issue



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Many people are still inspired by the figure of St. Francis (d. 1226), who gave up a life of relative ease to become a simple follower of Jesus and a friend of all God's creatures. Millions of tourists and pilgrims flock to Assisi, St. Francis's hometown in central Italy. The garden at St. Anthony's Guest House in Assisi, run by the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, has two modern sculptures. *The Dancing Francis*, by American artist Paul T. Granlund, is based on Francis's canticle "Brother Sun, Sister Moon." It portrays him dancing with God and holding up a sunlike disc containing a cutout of Jesus. Light passes through it and onto Francis. *St. Francis and the Birds*, by Dutch-American artist Frederick Franck, is based on legends about Francis befriending and even preaching to birds and other animals.