

The Blessing of the Animals

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

We gather to honor the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, and to honor the animals who share our lives. St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and of ecology. Brother Francis gloried in the beauty of the world God created, and we recall many tales of his affection for animals and their trust in him. Today we thank God for the gifts of companionship and beauty which animals bring to our lives and homes, and ask God's blessing on them.

Collect for St. Francis

Most high, omnipotent good Lord, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may for love of you delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy. O God, you have made us and all living things. You are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these companions who bring us joy. As you take care of us, so also we ask your help that we might take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all creation. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

A Reading from The Canticle of the Sun

Most High, Omnipotent, Good Lord, yours is the praise, the glory, the honor, and all blessing. To you alone, Most High, do they belong.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially for Brother Sun, through whom you give us light. He is beautiful and radiant with splendor and his light teaches us of your Light, O Most High.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and all the stars who shine so clear, so precious and so lovely in the heavens you formed.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, the cloudy or clear and every kind of weather, by which you give sustenance to your creatures.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is so useful and precious and so pure.

Be praised, my Lord, in Brother Fire, by whom you light the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, full of power and strength.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Earth, our mother who sustains and nurtures us, and gives us all the fruits and flowers, and all the birds and beasts.

Be praised, my Lord, in all those who forgive others for your love's sake, and bear weakness and tribulation.

Blessed are those that live at peace with all for love of you, for by you, Most High, they will be crowned.

Praise and bless my Lord and give him thanks, and serve him with great humility.

—St. Francis of Assisi, c. 1225

THE BLESSING PRAYER

Most high, almighty Lord, our Creator, yours are the praise, the glory, the honor and all blessings! To you alone do all things belong. Be praised for giving us the animals, birds and fish which fill your world. May we think of you and thank you when we play with and care for our companions. Be praised for making us so happy to have our companions and to have them to play with. We ask you, Lord, that we may be good to them always, so that they may be happy also. Help us always to take care of them so that they will be healthy. O God, your world is wonderful. May we all come into your even greater world of the kingdom of heaven where we shall see even more wonderful things and where we shall live and love for ever. This we ask to your eternal praise, and to our blessing. Amen.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God our Creator for all the gifts so freely bestowed upon us and for the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea;
All: **We thank you, Lord.**

Leader: For the richness of the mountains, plains and rivers;
All: **We thank you, Lord.**

Leader: For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women;
All: **We thank you, Lord.**

Leader: For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life;
All: **We thank you, Lord.**

Leader: For the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers and trees;
All: **We thank you, Lord.**

Leader: For the trust you have shown in giving into our care these, our pets;
All: **We thank you, Lord.**

Leader: That each pet here may be treasured with care;
All: **We pray to you, Lord.**

Leader: That we may love and honor all your works, O God;
All: **We pray to you, Lord.**

Leader: That we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation; All: To the honor and glory of your name, now and forever, we pray to you, Lord. Amen.

THE BLESSING OF EACH PET

The blessing is usually done with the sprinkling of holy water over the companion and the person.

"(name of companion) may you be blessed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May you and (the name of the "person") enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you."

