

ST. FRANCIS DAY RESOURCES

Blessing of the Animals Service
St. Francis Day Eucharistic Service Outline
Other Resources for St. Francis Day

THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All : **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

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 pets 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.

Prayer of St. Francis (*said in unison*)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light; and
where there is sadness, joy.
O, God, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

THE BLESSING OF EACH PET (INDIVIDUALLY)

The blessing is usually done with the sprinkling of water over the animal and the owner.

"N., (name of animal, i.e. "Smokey", not cat/dog) 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 "owner") enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you."

or this

"N., may you be blessed in the Name of God who created you, and may you and (owner's name) enjoy life together with our God."

or this

May you be blessed in the Name God, the Creator, Redeemer and of the Sustainer. May you and your animals enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you. Amen.

THE BLESSING PRAYER

Most high, almighty Lord, our Creator, yours are the praise, the glory, the honour 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 pets. Be praised for making us so happy to have our pets and to have them to play with. We ask you, Lord, that we may be good to our pets 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.**

Adapted from <http://www.liturgies.net/saints/francis/animalblessing.htm>

ST. FRANCIS DAY EUCHARIST

OPENING HYMN

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

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 pets 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.

Song of Praise

LESSON (*Seated*)

The Creation Story (Abbreviated from Genesis 1:1-34)

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and a great dimness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. On the first day, God created light and darkness. On the second day, God created the sky above and the waters below. On the third day, God formed the land and called it Earth, and gathered the water and called it Sea. God blessed the earth with vegetation and food. On the fourth day, God separated the day from the night, creating the sun, the moon, and the stars. On the fifth day, God brought forth swarms of living creatures in the air, in the water, and on the land, and God bid them to be fruitful and multiply. On the sixth day, God created humankind in God's image, giving them dominion over the animals. God blessed them and bid them to be fruitful and multiply. On the seventh day, God saw that everything that God had made was very good and God rested and blessed the seventh day and made it sacred.

Prayer of St. Francis (*to be said in unison or sung*)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light; and
where there is sadness, joy.

O, God, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. **Amen.**

GOSPEL (*Standing*)

Minister: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (11:25-30)

People: Glory to you Lord Christ.

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, God of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, God, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Creator; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal God. 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Minister: The Gospel of the Savior.

People: Praise to you Lord Christ.

HOMILY

THE PRAYERS

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 THE ANIMALS

May you be blessed in the Name God, the Creator, Redeemer and of the Sustainer. May you and your animals enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you. **Amen.**

Ministers circulate through the congregation, blessing the animals individually.

PEACE *(Standing)*

Minister: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

HYMN

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

(Use the form of the Eucharistic Prayer you see fit for this day.)

COMMUNION MUSIC

THE CLOSING PRAYER *(said together)*

Almighty God, our great 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 pets. Be praised for making us so happy to have our pets and to have them to play with. We ask you, Lord, that we may be good to our pets 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 forever. This we ask to your eternal praise, and to our blessing. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord show his face to you and have compassion on you! May God turn his face to you and give you peace! And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always.

Amen.

CLOSING SONG

OTHER RESOURCES

Liturgy and Blessing of the Animals

St Francis Day Blessing of the Animals and Other Resources from Episcopal Relief and Development (<http://www.er-d.org/children>)

Liturgy for St. Francis Day in English and Spanish from the Diocese of Texas
<http://www.epicenter.org/curriculum-resources-for-congregations/>

Blessing of the Animals Service
<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/sr-bless-animal.php>

Story Books

Francis: The Poor Man of Assisi by Tomie di Paola
The Song of Francis by Tomie di Paola
Saint Francis by Brian Wildsmith

Stories of St. Francis Online

God's Troubadour, The Story of St. Francis of Assisi by [Sophie Jewett](#)
<http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php3?author=jewett&book=troubadour&story=contents>

Stories about St. Francis and the Animals from American Catholic

Stories abound of how St Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) could communicate with animals and felt at one with all creation. Many of these stories were first recorded by Thomas of Celano during the 13th century. Versions of them, retold by John Bookser Feister, can be found at:
www.americancatholic.org/features/francis/stories.asp