

THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

October 11, 2020

The Opening Acclamation

Celebrant: Lord, open our lips.

People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Celebrant and People

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.
Alleluia.

The Canticle

Celebrant and People say together

Glorify the Lord, all you works of the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

In the high vault of heaven, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Let the earth glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O mountains
and hills, and all that grows upon the earth, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams, *
O whales and all that move in the waters.

All birds of the air, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild, *
and all you flocks and herds.

O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Let us glorify the Lord: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

In the high vault of heaven, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

The Lesson

A Reading from Genesis

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Collect

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Blessing of the Animals

[*Pet's Name,*] the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you and those who love and care for you that together you may rejoice in the wonders of creation.

The Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth into the world,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
People: Thanks be to God.

About Francis of Assisi, Friar, 1226

Francis, the son of a prosperous merchant of Assisi, was born in 1182. His early youth was spent in harmless revelry and fruitless attempts to win military glory.

Various encounters with beggars and lepers pricked the young man's conscience, and he decided to embrace a life devoted to Lady Poverty. Despite his father's intense opposition, Francis totally renounced all material values, and devoted himself to serve the poor. In 1210 Pope Innocent the Third confirmed the simple Rule for the Order of Friars Minor, a name Francis chose to emphasize his desire to be numbered among the "least" of God's servants.

The order grew rapidly all over Europe. But by 1221 Francis had lost control of it, since his ideal of strict and absolute poverty, both for the individual friars and for the order as a whole, was found to be too difficult to maintain. His last years were spent in much suffering of body and spirit, but his unconquerable joy never failed.

Not long before his death, during a retreat on Mount La Verna, Francis received, on September 14, Holy Cross Day, the marks of the Lord's wounds, the *stigmata*, in his own hands and feet and side. Pope Gregory the Ninth, a former patron of the Franciscans, canonized Francis in 1228, and began the erection of the great basilica in Assisi where Francis is buried.

Of all the saints, Francis is the most popular and admired, but probably the least imitated; few have attained to his total

identification with the poverty and suffering of Christ. Francis left few writings; but, of these, his spirit of joyous faith comes through most truly in the “Canticle of the Sun,” which he composed at Clare’s convent of St. Damian’s. The Hymnal version begins:

Most High, omnipotent, good Lord,
To thee be ceaseless praise outpoured,
 And blessing without measure.
Let creatures all give thanks to thee
And serve in great humility.

Scripture Reading taken from *The New Revised Standard Version*.
The collect and biography are from *Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2000*.
The canticle is Canticle 12 from *Enriching Our Worship 1*
All other material is from *The Book of Common Prayer 1979* with modifications.