

PRAYER SERVICE FOR 4TH OCTOBER

FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OCTOBER 4TH 2018

Resources adapted from www.seasonofcreation.org

INTRODUCTION

The originally harmonious relationship between human beings and nature has become conflictual (cf. Gen 3:17-19). Through universal reconciliation with every creature, Saint Francis in some way returned to the state of original innocence. (LS 66) In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one of a personal conversion, recognising our failures and leading to a heartfelt desire to change. (LS 218)

May the power and the light of the grace we have received also be evident in our relationship to other creatures and to the world around us. [Let us] help nurture that relationship with all creation which Saint Francis of Assisi so radiantly embodied. (LS 221) Brothers and Sisters in Francis, let us begin our Evening Prayer/ Animal Blessing by uniting our hearts and voices with grateful songs to the Lord.

HYMN

READING: GENESIS 1:20-25

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. **This is the Word of the Lord!**

PSALM READING Psalm 104

Response: Living things both great and small

Leader: O Lord, how many are your works! In wisdom you have made them all;
All: Living things both small and great

Leader: Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there,
All: Living things both small and great.

Leader: These all look to you to give them their food in due season;
All: Living things both small and great.

Leader: When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
All: Living things both small and great.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 6:25-34 or Luke 12:22-32

Pause for reflection/silence

BLESSING FOR ANIMALS:

(RITE FOR THE BLESSING OF WATER may be inserted here, when employed.)

Blessed are you, Lord God, maker of all living creatures. You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air and animals on the land. You inspired St. Francis to call all of them his brothers and sisters. We ask you to bless our pets. By the power of your love, enable them to live according to your plan. May we always praise you for all your beauty in creation. Blessed are you, Lord our God, in all your creatures! Amen.”

HYMN: *(While blessing is going on)*

BLESSING OF ANIMALS:

Bless O Lord (name of Pet) and fill the heart of (owner) with thanksgiving in the gift given to them. We are created and loved by God. God bless you both. In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER OF REMEMBRANCE FOR DECEASED PETS

Let us pray. This we know: every living thing is yours and returns to you. As we ponder this mystery we give you thanks for the lives of our beloved companions, which we name now before you (_____). We commit them into your loving hands. Comfort us now in our grief and loss of our dear friend. We know that you, O Lord, share our loss and offer us hope. Grant us your Divine peace, knowing that you hold all things in your eternal love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God creates all things, renews all things, and celebrates all things.

We believe that Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God’s presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a part of Earth, a human being called Jesus, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation, and filling the cosmos.

We believe that the Spirit renews life in creation, groans in empathy with a suffering creation, and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation. Amen

SENDING:

Go as instruments of God's peace. Where there is hatred, sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, peace; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the eternal Spirit of God. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION FOR PARISHIONERS:

- ❖ Spend some time outside each day.
- ❖ Start to grow some of your own food; support local producers.
- ❖ Compost your garden and food waste.
- ❖ Avoid or reduce the use of chemicals in your home and garden.
- ❖ Use (vinegar, baking soda) and buy eco- friendly cleaners (www.ecoverdirect.com)
- ❖ Plant pollinator friendly plants in your window box or/ and garden at home or/ and in your parish grounds. www.biodiversityireland.ie
- ❖ Shop wisely-Buy Fairtrade and buy locally made products when possible.
- ❖ Refuse packaging – Reduce - Re-use –Recycle -Upcycle.
- ❖ Learn how to read your energy bills and make your home more energy efficient.
- ❖ Explore the use of renewable energy in your home, business and school, parish buildings (www.seai.ie).
- ❖ Volunteer your time in some creative project. Join an existing group.
- ❖ Offer a welcome to newcomers where you live.
- ❖ Become an Eco - Congregation. www.ecocongregationireland.com
- ❖ Take the *Laudato Si'* Pledge (www.CatholicClimateMovement.global/petition)

Plastic

- ❖ Refuse single use plastics such as cling film, straws, plastic cutlery.
- ❖ Switch to a reusable water bottle /travel cup.
- ❖ Avoid plastic wrapping when possible
- ❖ Use cloth bags for shopping &
- ❖ Bring /Use your own containers when possible.
- ❖ Check for and then avoid microbeads in products.
- ❖ Reduce-Repair- Re-use.-Recycle-Upcycle.
- ❖ Check the new recycling list www.recyclinglistireland.ie
- ❖ Organise a recycling workshop in your parish/community www.voiceireland.org
- ❖ Show a film or documentary on the topic in your parish/community
- ❖ Participate in a beach, stream, river, park, street, area, road cleanup.
- ❖ Volunteer your time in some creative project. Join an existing group.
- ❖ Take the *Laudato Si'* Pledge - www.CatholicClimateMovement.global/petition