

LITURGY OF THE BLESSING OF ANIMALS
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI DAY
CHRIST CHURCH PARISH
ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA



Wonderful are all the works of God.
Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Response:

Now and for ever. Amen

INTRODUCTION

Animals are an integral part of God's plan and creation...they inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the ways of human beings. They have a part in our lives. Saint Francis of Assisi, for whose life and works we give thanks today, recognized this when he called the animals, wild and tame, his brothers and sisters. Remembering Francis' love for those in our care, we gather now to ask God's blessing on these animals...we thank him for letting us share the earth with all creatures. This very church and the road on which it stands is a direct part of the legacy of St Francis of Assisi...this day has, therefore, additional meaning for us...for this we offer additional thanks.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS:

[In the beginning] God said, "Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky. And so it happened: God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of swimming creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds." God saw how good it was, and God blessed them, saying, Be fertile, multiply, and fill the water of the seas; and let the birds multiply on the earth. Evening came and morning followed-the fifth day.

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals of all kinds." And so it happened: God made all kinds of wild animals, all kinds of cattle, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. God saw how good it was. (Genesis 1:20-25)

This is the Word of the Lord.

Response:

Thanks be to God.

INTERCESSIONS

O God, you have done all things wisely; in your goodness you have made us in your image and given us care over other living things.

Reach out with your right hand and grant that these animals may serve our needs and that your bounty in the resources of this life may move us to seek more confidently the goal of eternal life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

May God, who created the animals of this earth as a help to us, continue to protect and sustain us with the grace his blessing brings, now and for ever.

R. Amen.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

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 ✦ these pets. By the power of your love, enable them to live according to your plan. May we always give you thanks for all creation. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, in all your creatures. Amen.

The priest then blesses each of the animals with Holy Water

HYMN: All Things Bright and Beautiful

Hymnal 311

NOTES ON THE LITURGY:

The observance of St Francis Day at Christ Church Parish follows a long established and evolving tradition. The service is developed by the several clergy who have served the parish since its founding. Other parts are adapted from a variety of Anglican, Roman Catholic and Lutheran resources. The blessing source is *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers* by Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The parish is grateful for all the contributions that enable this meaningful observance.

Father John Altberg