

Certificate of Blessing



In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The Peace of the Lord be with you.

Know ye

that

_____, companion of _____,

*did attend the Office of Vespers
in commemoration of Saint Francis of Assisi
at Saint Paul's Church, Kinderhook, New York
and did there receive the Lord's blessing.*

Signature of clergy

date

COMMEMORATION OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI WITH BLESSING OF ALL CREATURES, GREAT AND SMALL



SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH
SILVESTER STREET
KINDERHOOK, NEW YORK

The Preces

Please silence and put away electronic devices.

Officiant O God, ✠ make speed to save us.
 People **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

**ALL Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
 Amen. Alleluia!**

Sit

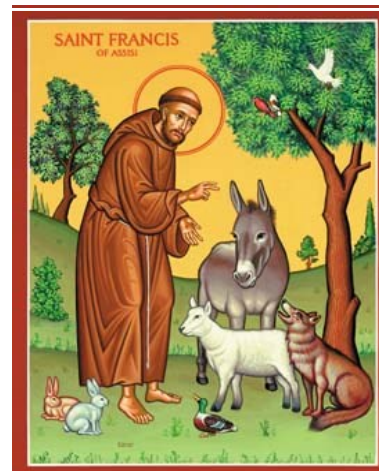
Psalm 104:1;10-24

Officiant Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
ALL let the whole earth tremble before him.

The psalm is read responsively by half-verse, the people responding with the text in bold face.

- 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul; *
**O LORD my God, how excellent is your greatness!
 you are clothed with majesty and splendor.**
- 10 You send the springs into the valleys; *
they flow between the mountains.
- 11 All the beasts of the field drink their fill from them, *
and the wild asses quench their thirst.
- 12 Beside them the birds of the air make their nests *
and sing among the branches.
- 13 You water the mountains from your dwelling on high; *
the earth is fully satisfied by the fruit of your works.
- 14 You make grass grow for flocks and herds *
and plants to serve mankind;
- 15 That they may bring forth food from the earth, *
and wine to gladden our hearts,
- 16 Oil to make a cheerful countenance, *
and bread to strengthen the heart.
- 17 The trees of the LORD are full of sap, *
the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,
- 18 In which the birds build their nests, *
and in whose tops the stork makes his dwelling.

Before he became a patron saint of pacifists, environmentalists, and social justice advocates, or the namesake of a Pope, Francis of Assisi was loved, admired, and revered as a saint. He had a special rapport with animals: if a fish was caught on a hook or in a net, or a rabbit in a trap, Francis would set it free, with an admonition to be more careful in the future. Often the animal would remain until Francis dismissed it. Once, when a noisy flock of birds was disturbing the friars at their prayers, Francis went to get rid of them; but when they did not fly off as expected, Francis asked if they would like to hear the Word of God; they looked at him attentively, so he preached to them of God's loving providence, and instructed them to praise their Creator in good weather and bad. He once negotiated a truce between a marauding wolf and the village of Gubbio.



These episodes from Francis's life illustrate the Gospel that transformed him from a self-indulgent playboy and soldier of fortune into a joyful, unwashed beggar who lived by the 12th-century equivalent of dumpster diving ... except that he saved his choicest finds for the lepers whose sores he cleaned and kissed. In this he emulated Jesus, who dealt tenderly with the unclean, and whose Good Samaritan cared for an injured stranger. The truce with the wolf of Gubbio required that enmity be set aside; Francis also undertook a personal mission to preach the Gospel to the Muslims in the Holy Land during the Crusades. He failed to convert their general, but the easy confidence with which he volunteered to undergo torture and death for Christ persuaded that leader to agree to a truce there as well. His words to birds, fish, and rabbits recall admonitions to "rejoice always," (Philippians 4:4) and to "be sober-minded, be watchful" (1 Peter 5:8-9a), lest we become ensnared and fall prey to the enemy. Though often misquoted as saying "preach the Gospel — use words when necessary", Francis often used many winsome words to communicate the love of the Christ he himself passionately loved.

He "married Lady Poverty," trading the prospect of family life for celibate chastity, and found such joy and freedom in it that his erstwhile fiancée, Clare, was herself inspired to found a community of women living the same life of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Francis's movement grew so explosively that it was one of the miracles cited in his canonization process. People flocked to the joy he had in following Christ regardless of circumstances.

Yet joy came at a price. His father disowned him for taking silk from the family business and using the profits from its sale to restore a church. His own followers rejected his vision of radical poverty: the rule of the order was changed, Francis stepped down as leader, and he would die in constant, intractable pain from his stigmata (the wounds of Jesus' crucifixion which appeared on Francis's hands and feet).

We revere Francis, not for the causes he espoused or the adversity he endured, but because of his conformity to Jesus, whose love extends to all creation. Francis was not naïve about sin or the fallen state of creation. He urged repentance as a hallmark of life in Christ. Though he knew, better than most, that being a disciple of Jesus would cost everything (Luke 12:33, 16:9, 14:25-33; Acts 2:45, 4:34-35), his joy came from the sure and certain hope that those who are willing to let go of everything — security, power, wealth, comfort, dignity, pleasure, influence, health, respect, the love of family, even life itself — for his sake, and for the sake of the Gospel, will see it all restored, and an even greater reward besides (Matthew 19:29; Mark 10:21-31).

Saint Paul's Church KINDERHOOK, NEW YORK

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SUNDAY MASSES 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

Visit us at www.saintpaulskinderhook.org or on Facebook

The Blessing

Officiant Blessed are you, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe,
for through your goodness you have filled the world with all manner of creatures
that move upon the earth, swim in the waters, or fly through the heavens.

Grant us wisdom to treat kindly the world we share with them and one another.

Make us grateful for them:

for their affection and companionship,
for the delight they give us by their form and behavior;
for the ways they lighten our toil,
mystify us with their intelligence and strength,
terrify us with their ferocity,
and touch our hearts by their vulnerability.

Grant us grace to safeguard these your creatures for our posterity
to the honor and glory of your holy Name.

Teach us to treasure the ones you have placed under our protection,
and grant us, through them,
humility to learn the lesson of trust in your providence.

Set all creation free from its subjection to futility and from bondage to decay.

Let it find in us the glorious liberty of the children of God
for which it has been groaning in travail and hope
until the coming of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ;
who by the blood of his Cross has reconciled all things in earth and heaven to you.

And now, O Lord,
pour out in abundance your blessing upon them and upon us,
granting to all your creatures life, health, peace, and the joy of fellowship,
in the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL Amen.

Heel

The Dismissal

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

*The clergy bless the animals individually.
Please ask if you wish the clergy to sign the certificate on the facing page.
God's creatures are asked to have their human companions clean up after them.*

19 The high hills are a refuge for the mountain goats, *
and the stony cliffs for the rock badgers.

20 You appointed the moon to mark the seasons, *
and the sun knows the time of its setting.

21 You make darkness that it may be night, *
in which all the beasts of the forest prowl.

22 The lions roar after their prey *
and seek their food from God.

23 The sun rises, and they slip away *
and lay themselves down in their dens.

24 Man goes forth to his work *
and to his labor until the evening.

**ALL Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him.**

Stay

First Reading

Genesis 1:20-25

Reader A reading from the book of Genesis.

God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.

And God saw that it was good. And 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 according to their kinds; cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so.

And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 104:25-32, 34, 37

Officiant You send forth your Spirit, and they are created
ALL and so you renew the face of the earth.

The psalm is read responsively by half-verse, the people responding with the text in bold face.

- 25 O LORD, how manifold are your works! *
in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
- 26 Yonder is the great and wide sea with its living things too many to number, *
creatures both small and great.
- 27 There move the ships, and there is that Leviathan, *
which you have made for the sport of it.
- 28 All of them look to you *
to give them their food in due season.
- 29 You give it to them; they gather it; *
you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.
- 30 You hide your face, and they are terrified; *
you take away their breath, and they die and return to their dust.
- 31 You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; *
and so you renew the face of the earth.
- 32 May the glory of the LORD endure for ever; *
may the LORD rejoice in all his works.
- 34 I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; *
I will praise my God while I have my being.
- 37 Bless the LORD, O my soul. *
Hallelujah!

**ALL Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**You send forth your Spirit, and they are created
and so you renew the face of the earth.**

Second Reading

Isaiah 11:6-9

Reader A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The suckling child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Stay

The Lord's Prayer

Officiant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Officiant Let us pray.

**ALL Our Father who art in heaven,,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Stay

Collect for the Feast of Saint Francis

Officiant 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,
through whom and for whom all things were made,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

People Amen.