

October 4

Obligatory Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi

The Order of Blessing Animals in a Household

From the *Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers*, Revised Edition, pp. 154-157
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How to use this resource:

Look over the order of blessing on the following pages

Plan ahead

- Select a leader from the family
- Say the **Black**; Do the **Red**. (Red text = rubrics, which means giving direction on how to conduct the prayer service with roles, gestures and responses.) Check for any options to consider, such as switching the Reading option from Genesis to Isaiah (cited after Genesis)
- Make copies of the order for family members for their responses (optional)
- Select and prepare a closing hymn or song – see suggestions (optional)

Roles

- Leader
- Someone to hold the order of prayer for the leader, who needs to be hands-free
- Family and Friends to hold pets and participate with the responses

Schedule the time and place, on or near October 4th each year

- Gather your family together, along with your pets
- Invite any friends or neighbors with pets too



MEMORIAL OF ST. FRANCIS

(OCTOBER 4)

On October 4, or another appropriate day, the household may join in the blessing of pets and other animals. The blessing takes place wherever the animals can be gathered.



Blessing of Animals

All make the sign of the cross.

[946]

The leader greets those present in the following words:

[948]

God has done all things wisely, let us praise his name, now and forever.

R/. Amen.

In the following or similar words, the leader prepares those present for the blessing.

[949]

The animals of God's creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have a part in human life. God, who confers his gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them symbolic reminders of the gifts of salvation. We therefore invoke the divine blessing on these animals through the intercession of St. Francis.

One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Listen to the words of the Book of Genesis: 1:1, 20-25

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, 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. Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.”

(continued)

God created man in his image;
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying: “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth.”

Or Isaiah 11:6-10—Animals will be tame and there shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

The leader says the prayer of blessing with hands joined.

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.

The leader concludes the rite by saying:

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 forever.
R/. Amen.

The blessing may conclude with a song.

—*From Book of Blessings*

About St. Francis

“Francis, d. 3 Oct 1226, was noted for his charismatic personality, deep compassion for all, and love for God’s creation; renounced wealth to follow ‘Lady Poverty’; deacon; founded the Franciscan Family which is made up today of the Friars Minor Capuchins (O.F.M. Cap.), numbering about 10,350 religious, the Conventuals (O.F.M. Conv.), c. 4,100 religious, and those of the Leonine Union (O.F.M.), c. 12,750 religious, Poor Clares, Third Order Religious, and Secular Franciscan Order; wrote *Canticle of the Sun*; received the stigmata 14 Sept 1224; canonized only two years after his death; patron of ecologists and of Italy.”

Pastoral Note

“Today, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, or on another appropriate day, the community or a household may join in the blessing of pets and other animals.”

From the *ORDO: Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist*

The Canticle of the Sun by St. Francis of Assisi

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessings.
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no man is worthy to mention Your name.
Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures;
especially Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
and bears a likeness to You, Most High One.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars;
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night;
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us and who produces
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.
Praised be You, my Lord,
through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.
Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.
Praised be You, my Lord,
through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no living man can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord,
and give Him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility.
Amen.

Source: <https://franciscanfriarscresson.org/the-canticle-of-the-sun/>

Song Suggestions for the closing of the Blessing (optional)

- All Creatures of Our God and King – text and music included
- How Great Thou Art – text and music included
- All Things Bright and Beautiful – text and music included
- Another appropriate song

ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING



1. All crea - tures of our God and King, Lift
2. Great rush - ing winds that are so strong, White
3. Swift flow - ing wa - ter, pure and clear, Make
4. Dear moth - er earth, who day by day Un -
5. All you that are of ten - der heart, For -
6. And you, most kind and gen - tle death, Wait -
7. Let all things their Cre - a - tor bless And



1. up your voice and let us sing; Al - le - lu - ia!
2. clouds a - bove that sail a - long, O _____ praise him!
3. mu - sic for your Lord to hear, Al - le - lu - ia!
4. folds rich bless - ings on our way, O _____ praise him!
5. giv - ing oth - ers, take your part. Sing his prais - es!
6. ing to hush our fi - nal breath, O _____ praise him!
7. wor - ship him in hum - ble - ness! O _____ praise him!



1. Al - le - lu - ia! Bright burn - ing sun with gold - en
2. Al - le - lu - ia! Fair ris - ing morn, in praise re -
3. Al - le - lu - ia! Fierce fire so mas - ter - ful and
4. Al - le - lu - ia! The flow'rs and fruits that in you
5. Al - le - lu - ia! All you that pain and sor - row
6. Al - le - lu - ia! You lead back home the child of
7. Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God the Fa - ther, praise the



1. beam, Pale sil - ver moon with soft - er gleam,
2. joy; O stars of eve - ning, find a voice!
3. bright, Pro - vid - ing us both warmth and light,
4. grow, Let them his glo - ry al - so show!
5. bear, Praise God, and on him cast your care!
6. God, Where Christ our Lord the way has trod:
7. Son, And praise the Spir - it, Three - in - One:



- 1-7. O praise him! O praise him! Al - le - lu - ia!



- 1-7. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: LM with additions; St. Francis of Assisi, 1102-1226; *Laudato sia Deo mio Signore*; tr. by William H. Draper, 1855-1933, alt.,
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Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN; *Auserlesene Catholische Kirchengesänge*, Cologne, 1623.

HOW GREAT THOU ART

Verses



1. O Lord my God! When I in awe-some won-der Con - si - der
2. When through the woods and for - est glades I wan - der, And hear the
3. And when I think that God, his Son not spar - ing, Sent him to
4. When Christ shall come with shout of ac - cla - ma - tion And take me



1. all the *worlds thy hands have made, I see the stars, I
2. birds sing sweet - ly in the trees; When I look down from
3. die, I scarce can take it in, That on the cross, my
4. home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in



1. hear the *roll - ing thun - der, Thy pow'r through - out the
2. lof - ty moun - tain gran - deur And hear the brook, and
3. bur - den glad - ly bear - ing, He bled and died to
4. hum - ble ad - o - ra - tion, And there pro - claim, my

Refrain



1. u - ni - verse dis - played; Then sings my soul, my Sav - ior God to
2. feel the gen - tle breeze;
3. take a - way my sin;
4. God, how great thou art!



thee; How great thou art, how great thou art! Then sings my soul, my



Sav - ior God to thee; How great thou art, how great thou art!

*Author's original words are "works" and "mighty."

Text: 11 10 11 10 with refrain; Carl Boberg, 1850-1940; tr. by Stuart K. Hine, 1899-1989.

Music: O STORE GUD; Swedish Folk Melody; adapt. by Stuart K. Hine.

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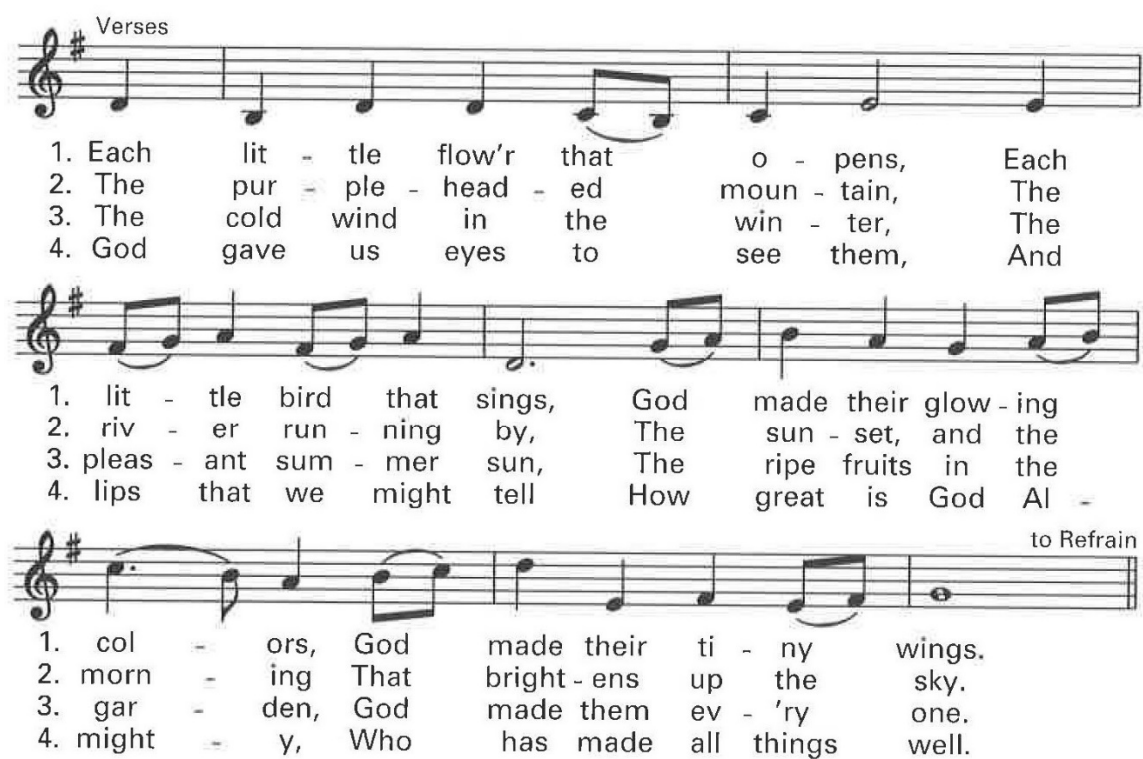
ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

Refrain



All things bright and beau - ti - ful, All crea-tures great and small,
All things wise and won - der - ful, The Lord God made them all.

Verses



1. Each lit - tle flow'r that o - pens, Each
2. The pur - ple - head - ed moun - tain, The
3. The cold wind in the win - ter, The
4. God gave us eyes to see them, And

1. lit - tle bird that sings, God made their glow - ing
2. riv - er run - ning by, The sun - set, and the
3. pleas - ant sum - mer sun, The ripe fruits in the
4. lips that we might tell How great is God Al -

to Refrain

1. col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings.
2. morn - ing That bright - ens up the sky.
3. gar - den, God made them ev - 'ry one.
4. might - y, Who has made all things well.

Text: 76 76 with refrain; Cecil Francis H. Alexander, 1818-1895, alt.

Music: ROYAL OAK; Trad. English Melody; adapt. by Martin Shaw, 1875-1958.