

The Blessing of the Animals

Leader: Bless the Lord, all you his creatures.

All: And forget not all his benefits.

Leader: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you made the universe with all its marvelous order, its atoms, worlds, and galaxies, and the infinite complexity of living creatures: Grant that, as we celebrate the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, with your breath you gave life to all creatures, and declared them good. Keep us mindful of this first, most holy blessing as we gather here today to offer our own blessings upon these, our companion animals. Remind us always that we were created in your image—the image of a loving and compassionate God. And in this image we are called to care for your creation. Open our hearts and minds to the lessons we may learn from our companions; to live fully in the present, to love unconditionally, to face each day expecting joy. Help us always to do your will on earth, so that you may look upon our work and declare it good.

Amen.

(Lynn L. Caruso)

A Reading from the Book of Job.

But ask the animals, and they will teach you; The birds of the air, and they will tell you; Ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; And the fish of the sea will declare to you.

Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?

In his hand is the life of every living thing
And the breath of every human being.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 148

Alleluia!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

Praise him in the heights.

Praise him, all you angels of his;

Praise him, all his host.

Praise him, sun and moon;

Praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise him, heaven of heavens,

And you waters above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord;

For he commanded and they were created.

He made them stand fast for ever and ever,

He gave them a law which shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth,

You sea-monsters and all deeps;

Fire and hail, snow and fog,

Tempestuous wind, doing his will,

Mountains and all hills,

Fruit trees and all cedars;

Wild beast and all cattle,

Creeping things and winged birds;

Kings of the earth and all peoples,

Princes and all rulers of the world;
Young men and maidens,
Old and young together.
Let them praise the name of the Lord,
For his name only is exalted,
His splendor is over earth and heaven.
He has raised up strength for his people,
And praise for all his loyal servants,
The children of Israel, a people who are near him.
Alleluia!

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these...But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

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Please place your hand upon your companion as we read this blessing together.

Leader: Upon the Earth with gentle caregivers

All: With gentle caregivers this companion is blessed.

Leader: Upon the Earth with wanderings through green spaces **All:**
Through green spaces this companion is blessed.

Leader: Upon the Earth with long naps in a patch of sun **All :** In a
patch of sun this companion is blessed.

Leader: Upon the Earth with food for the body and a home for
comfort

All: With food and home this companion is blessed.

Leader: Upon the Earth with wild cousins—the wolf and lynx
and eagle

All: With wild cousins this companion is blessed.

Leader: Upon the Earth with gentle caregivers

All: With gentle caregivers this companion is blessed.

Blessing of Animals

*Live without fear. Your creator loves you, made you holy and has always
cared for you. Go in peace to follow the good road, and may God's
blessing be with you always. Amen.*
(Bishop Mark S. Sisk)

Litany of Thanksgiving

Leader: We thank you, God, for your goodness and loving-kindness
for all that you have so wonderfully made. For all your creatures who
swim in the oceans, lakes and rivers, for fish and whales, for starfish
and seals;

All: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For all your creatures who walk upon the land, for horses and cats, for bears and insects, for elephants and dogs;

All: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For all your creatures that fly about our heads, for the wonder of their flight and the joy of their song;

All: We thank you, Lord.

Leader: For every creature you have made to fill your creation with color, song, and beauty.

All: We thank you, Lord.

Benediction

Deep peace of the running wave to you.

Deep peace of the flowing air to you.

Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace of the infinite peace to you.

And the blessing of God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always. *(Traditional Celtic Blessing)*

Dismissal

Leader: Go in peace to love the Lord, and to enjoy and to care for God's creation. Alleluia, alleluia.

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Sources for this liturgy include Blessing the Animals: Prayers and Ceremonies to Celebrate God's Creatures, Wild and Tame, Edited and with Introductions by Lynn L. Caruso.

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