

**CELEBRATING
THE FEASTS and SEASONS**

ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI

**October 4th is observed as the
Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi.**

One of the most beloved saints in our tradition, the simple poverty, modesty and love of all God's creation which characterized Francis' life make him a saint whose popularity transcends religious tradition, as persons of many different religious backgrounds revere and honor this holy man.

In artistic representations, such as the icon we have placed in our Shrine of All Saints, Francis is often depicted in the company of God's creatures. He recognized the "sacramentality" of all creation, that is, everything that God created- from the vast reaches of the heavens to the simplest creature, discloses the beauty and goodness of God. Each must be honored and respected and tended.

One of his biographers wrote:

Who could ever express the deep affection he bore for all things that belong to God?

Or who would be able to tell all the sweet tenderness he enjoyed while contemplating in creatures the wisdom, power and goodness of the Creator?

From this reflection he often overflowed with amazing, unspeakable joy, as he looked at the sun, gazed at the moon or observed the stars in the sky...

Even for worms he had a warm love...that is why he used to pick them up from the road and put them in a safe place – so that they would not be crushed by the footsteps of the passerby...

Fields and vineyards, rocks and woods, and all the beauties of the field, flowing with springs and blooming gardens, earth and fire, air and wind—all he called "brother" and "sister."

Francis' famous prayer about creation is the source of the text of our hymn "Canticle of the Sun."

A custom connected with the Feast Day of St. Francis is the blessing of animals. We will have a blessing on October 4th [Tuesday] at 5pm in the church parking lot on the Handsome Avenue side.

Here is a prayer for St. Francis day which you could use at home.



*Hear our humble prayer, O God,
for our friends the animals, your
creatures.*

*We pray especially for all that are
suffering in any way:*

*For the overworked and underfed,
The hunted, lost or hungry;
For all in captivity or ill-treated,
And for those that must be put down.*

*For those who deal with them
We ask a heart of compassion,
gentle hands and kindly words.*

*Make us all true friends to animals
and worthy followers of our merciful
Savior, Jesus Christ.*

*May God, who created the animals of this earth
Continue to protect and sustain us.
With the grace His blessing brings, now and
forever. Amen.*