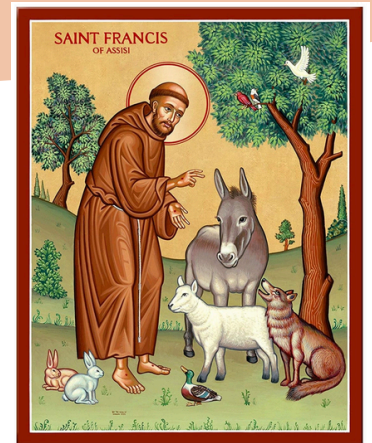


FAMILY ASSIGNMENT: DISCOVERING GOD'S CREATION

Saint Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of animals and the environment. He had a special love for all of God's creatures and saw them as gifts from our loving Creator. Saint Francis believed that every bird, animal, flower, and tree reflected God's goodness and reminded us of His great love.



His joyful spirit and gentle care for creation encourage us to treat animals with kindness, respect, and gratitude. As followers of Jesus, we are called to care for the world God has entrusted to us and to recognize that all of creation is part of God's wonderful plan. By following Saint Francis' example, families can grow in faith by appreciating the beauty of nature, caring for animals, and thanking God for the many blessings of His creation.

In remembrance of His love for all creatures, we have a Pet Blessing each year near the Feast Day of Saint Francis. A priest prays over our pets, asking God's protection and giving thanks for the joy and companionship animals bring. The blessing of animals is a perfect time to stop and count our blessings too. It's a time to remind us of the beauty of God's creation, and His constant care for creatures.



Canticle of the Sun
(also known as the Canticle of the Creatures)
Be praised, my Lord, through all Your creatures,
especially through my lord Brother Sun,
who brings the day; and You give light through him.
And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!
Of You, Most High, he bears the likeness.
Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars;
in the heavens You have made them bright, precious and beautiful.
Happy those who endure in peace,
for by You, Most High, they will be crowned.
written by Saint Francis of Assisi

Part I: Read Together:

Read the Shortened Version of the Canticle of the Sun aloud as a family.

As you read, listen for the parts of creation that Saint Francis praises:

 Brother Sun

 Sister Moon

 The Stars

Talk about why Saint Francis gave these parts of creation family names like "Brother" and "Sister." He wanted to remind us that everything God created is connected and is a gift to be loved and cared for.

Part II: Family Creation Hunt

Go outside together for 10–15 minutes, or look out a window if the weather doesn't allow.

Can you find or notice:

☐  The sun or its warm light

☐  Clouds in the sky

☐  Trees or plants ☐  Flowers

☐  Birds or other animals

☐  Leaves moving in the wind

☐  If it's evening, the moon or stars

Invite each family member to choose one part of creation that reminds them of God's love.

When everyone has chosen, take turns sharing:

"I praise God for _____ because _____."

PART III: REFLECTION

DISCUSS TOGETHER .

Notice

- What part of God's creation do you enjoy the most?
- Why do you think Saint Francis praised God for ordinary things we sometimes overlook?

Reflect

- How does spending time in nature help you feel closer to God?
- What does creation teach us about God's love and care for us?

Live Your Faith

- How can our family show gratitude for God's creation every day?
- What is one thing we can do this week to be better stewards of God's gifts?

After discussing the questions together, work as a family to answer the following:
What is one way your family will praise God for His creation and care for it this week?
Family Members Participating: _____

Answer on back of this paper

Date: _____

Describe one conversation your family had today that helped you appreciate God's creation in a new way. What action will you take because of that conversation? Write a paragraph summarizing your conversation on the back of this paper.

Part IV: Living the Eucharist

Choose one way your family will care for God's creation this week.

Ideas include:

- ☐  Plant flowers or herbs.
- ☐  Fill a bird feeder or birdbath.
- ☐  Pick up litter in your neighborhood or parish grounds.

- ☐  Save water by taking shorter showers or turning off the faucet while brushing your teeth.
- ☐  Recycle together.
- ☐  Spend time outdoors thanking God for the beauty of creation..

At the end of the week, gather together and share how caring for creation helped you notice God's presence in a new way.

Closing Family Prayer

Loving God,

Thank You for the beauty of Your creation. Thank You for the sun that gives us light, the moon and stars that brighten the night, and the earth that provides everything we need.

Help us to care for Your world with grateful hearts.

Teach us, like Saint Francis, to see Your love in all You have made and to be good stewards of Your gifts.

May our family always praise You through the way we live, love, and care for Your creation.

Amen.

Parent Verification

One thing our family learned: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____