



### Saint Francis of Assisi

#### Confessor, Friar, Deacon, Founder of the Friars Minor

Saint Francis of Assisi (c. 1181–1226) was one of the most devout and controversial religious leaders in Christian history. For centuries, his spiritual vision has captured the imaginations and hearts of millions of people; in our time, his magnificent love for nature and God speaks with a special and urgent meaning. The precarious condition of the earth and its people calls all of us to feel more deeply and to think more clearly about the spiritual meaning of ecology, justice, and love. The lives of Saint Francis and his spiritual friend and companion, Saint Clare, offer a remarkable testimony to the rich meaning which can be found in our own lives when we turn our hearts and minds to God’s infinite love—his love for us and for all Creation.

Like most people, Francis struggled for many years with questions about the meaning and purpose of his life. Born to a wealthy textile merchant, Francis was privileged and received some formal education, but his heart was continually preoccupied with thoughts of knighthood and worldly pleasures. To fulfill his youthful dreams, Francis enlisted in the military and fought in the Battle of Collestrada where he was taken as a prisoner of war. Shortly thereafter, he joined the Fourth Crusade of Pope Innocent III, and it was at this time that his celebrated conversion to spiritual life began.

Francis’ romantic ideals about nobility and knighthood, military conquest, and the pursuit of wealth were transformed at the foot of a crucifix hanging in the ruins of an ancient church in the town of San Damiano. There, Francis heard a divine voice telling him to ‘repair my house’. At first, Francis interpreted these words to mean literally the walls of the dilapidated church. Later, Francis met a poor leper and this event opened his heart to a greater purpose. Francis has been deeply afraid of filth and foul odours, but he spontaneously embraced the leper and they exchanged the kiss of peace. From that moment, Francis realized that the ‘house of God’ is the whole of Creation, and he dedicated his life to serving those who were poor and suffering, and to repairing humankind’s broken bond with nature.

Only twenty-eight writings can be attributed to Saint Francis with certainty. Some of these writings are letters, brief prayers, and statements about church teachings. Many of them, e.g. *The Admonitions*, *The Canticle of Brother Sun*, and several antiphons to the Holy Virgin Mary, represent the highest expressions of Christian spirituality. Simplicity, humility, spiritual poverty, joy, and the love of God and Creation are consistently evident in these writings, as well as the inconspicuous and unassuming ways of the Holy Spirit.

At the time of his death, Francis quietly recited words of his beautiful *Canticle*, which shows his solidarity with the whole of nature in communion with God. Francis’ own solidarity with all living beings was remarkable and well-known. When the townspeople of Gubbio had been tormented by a ravaging wolf, Francis befriended the creature and transformed their fear of the wolf into responsiveness and respect. Francis loved living beings as his own brothers and sisters. ‘My little sisters, the birds,’ he wrote, ‘many are the bonds that unite us to God.’ Francis was transfixed by joy in the presence of God, whose goodness is found everywhere, blessing the earth.

*by The Reverend Canon Jeffrey Golliber*

#### Announcements & Upcoming Events

- Next Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup> is Thanksgiving Sunday.
- The next meeting of Vestry will be October 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm in the Upper Hall.
- October 19<sup>th</sup> visioning with the Reverend Don McLeod. We will meet immediately after the 11 am service for our second visioning session.
- The next potluck lunch will be on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.

### WELCOME! A NOTE TO VISITORS

If you are visiting this Sunday, a very warm greeting to you!

We are delighted to welcome you and trust you will feel very much at home in this beautiful place. A large part of the ministry of St. George’s is to be a place of warm hospitality and worship for many visitors to this National Park from all over the world.

It has been the practice of St. George’s for some time to alternate the two Anglican rites, the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services, so that there is a celebration using each rite each Sunday.

One of the challenges we face is ministering to the very many young seasonal employees in the park, many of who are away from home for the first time. We have begun this by supporting and connecting with the Living Room, a programme of the Banff Service Industry Network reaching out to 18–30 year old workers in our service industry.

And we are following a dream to build a programme of Wilderness Spirituality, helping residents and visitors deepen their relationship with God in the context of the incredible beauty which surrounds us, and exploring the theological implications human care for the environment.

We invite you to check out our website: [www.stgeorgesinthepines.org](http://www.stgeorgesinthepines.org). We are a small congregation and struggle to provide the resource to keep our ministry vital and the church building cared for. You may feel called to share in this support. There are visitors’ envelopes on the back table, and your gift will be responsibly used and much appreciated. If you wish to help in a larger and more visionary way, please speak to the rector or wardens.

May God bless you in your visit to Banff and your return home.

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## Church of St. George-in-the-Pines

*Diocese of Calgary • Anglican Church of Canada*

### THE FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

*October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 • The Blessing of Animals at 11:00am*

**Prelude** Improvisation on Lasst Uns Erfreuen *Gerre Hancock*

**Introit for The Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi** *ALL STAND* *Plainsong*

*Cantor* God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. I cried unto the Lord with my voice: Yea even unto the Lord did I make my supplication. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader* And God said, ‘Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.’ So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 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. *Genesis 1.20–23*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reader* Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things. Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God. If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature— even a caterpillar— I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature. *by Meister Eckhart*

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader* And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.’ And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good. *Genesis 1.24–25*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reader* ‘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.’ *Job 12.7–10*

#### The Collect of the Day

*Officiant* Apprehend God in all things,  
*People* Every single creature is a book about God.

*Officiant* Let us pray. *PLEASE KNEEL OR BE SEATED*

O God, who by the merits of blessed Francis dost increase thy Church with a new offspring; grant, we beseech thee; that after his pattern we may learn to despise all material possessions, and ever to rejoice in the partaking of thy heavenly bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

*All* Amen.

*Officiant* Out of the earth, sing for them.  
The birds of the air, sing for them.  
All creatures of earth, sing for them.  
Out of the earth, sing for them.

*from a Sioux Chant*  
*Common Praise 355*

**Saint Francis' Canticle** *ALL STAND*

**The Prayer of Saint Francis** *ALL REMAIN STANDING*

*Minister* O eternal God, make us instruments of thy peace  
*People* Where there is hatred, let us sow love;  
*Minister* Where there is injury, pardon;  
*People* Where there is discord, union;  
*Minister* Where there is doubt, faith;  
*People* Where there is despair, hope;  
*Minister* Where there is darkness, light;  
*People* Where there is sadness, joy.  
*Minister* May we seek not so much to be consoled as to console;  
*People* to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.  
*Minister* For it is in giving that we receive;  
*People* it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
*Minister* it is in dying that we are born to life eternal;  
*All* Through thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Readings** *PLEASE BE SEATED*

*1st Reader* If I were alone in the desert and feeling afraid,  
I would want a child to be with me.  
For then my fear would disappear  
and I would be made strong.  
This is what life in itself can do  
because it is so noble, so full of pleasure and so powerful.  
But if I could not have a child with me,  
I would like to have at least a living animal  
at my side to comfort me.  
Therefore, let those who bring about wonderful things  
in their big, dark books take an animal to help them.  
The life within the animal will give strength in turn.  
For equality gives strength in all things  
and at all times.

*by Meister Eckhart*

*2nd Reader* The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.  
They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.

*Isaiah 11.6–9*  
*Common Praise 414*

**Hymn** *ALL STAND*

**Readings** *PLEASE BE SEATED*

*1st Reader* When peace comes,  
all arms everywhere will open  
for the sake of harmony.  
When peace comes,

unity will defeat  
poverty and hunger.  
When peace comes,  
the wind will sing songs into children's ears...  
instead of gunshots.  
That is when children  
will have a dream,  
to replace the fear.

*by Ezra Koch*

*2nd Reader* Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*Matthew 5.3–10*

*The Rector*

**Homily** *PLEASE BE SEATED*

**The Prayers of the People** *PLEASE KNEEL OR REMAIN SEATED*

*Minister* Creator God: your word resonates throughout creation.  
*People* Even the stones proclaim the wonder of your works.  
*Minister* The whales and all that move in the waters, the birds of the air, the beasts of the wild call us to sacred community.  
*People* Give us a heart that can embrace life's holy communion.  
*Minister* Take away our indifference, greed and carelessness.  
*People* our blindness to the pain of the earth and her creatures.  
*Minister* Open the well springs of your love and fill all things with your lifegiving Spirit.  
*People* Come, Divine Spirit and renew the face of the earth.  
*Minister* We pray today: for all animals and creatures, their habitats and environment, for their health and well being.  
*People* Blessed source of life, hear our prayer.  
*Minister* For the care and respect of all animals, and for those who support and care for birds and animal sanctuaries.  
*People* Blessed source of life, hear our prayer.  
*Minister* For veterinarians, those involved in animal husbandry, and for all who care for domestic animals and pets.  
*People* Blessed source of life, hear our prayer.  
*Minister* Lord of all worlds, grant us a growing awareness of our own responsibility for the care and nurture of all life on this planet.  
*People* Blessed source of life, hear our prayer.  
*Minister* Eternal Spirit, earth-maker, pain-bearer, life-giver, source of all that is and that shall be, father and mother of us all, loving God, in whom is heaven:  
*People* The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!  
*Minister* The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the earth!  
*People* Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
*Minister* May your peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.  
*People* With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
*Minister* In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
*People* In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
*Minister* From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
*People* From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
*Minister* For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.  
*All* Amen.

*from the New Zealand/Maori Anglican liturgy*

**Offertory Hymn** *ALL STAND*

*Common Praise 497*

**Prayer for Blessing** *PLEASE KNEEL OR BE SEATED*

*Celebrant* Praise be to God, who has made every animal wise in the instinct given to it.  
Now, O Lord, we pray that you will bless all things that have breath, especially these creatures gathered with us today. Guard them from all evil and extinction.  
May they ever live in peace.

*Amen.* Amen.

**The Blessing of the Animals**

*THE ANIMALS AND THEIR COMPANIONS MOVE OUT FROM THEIR PLACES AND PROCESS DOWN THE AISLE FOR A BLESSING.*

**Prayer after the Blessing** *PLEASE KNEEL OR BE SEATED*

*All* O blessed source, eternal Lord of creation, sustainer of all worlds, you embrace the whole cosmos within yourself. Unite us in communion with you for ever: in the love that sustains all and transforms all into your divine radiance. Amen.

**Hymn** *ALL STAND*

*Common Praise 419*

**Final Prayer** *PLEASE REMAIN STANDING*

*Officiant* O Lord, who didst vouchsafe to illumine thy Church with the wondrous righteousness and ensample of thy blessed Confessor Saint Francis: grant, we beseech thee, that the bounty of thy heavenly grace may evermore increase and multiply the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

*All* Amen.

**Blessing**

*Officiant* May the road rise to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
the rains fall soft upon your gardens,  
and until we meet again—  
may God hold you in the palm of his hand.  
And may the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you, and remain with you always.

*All* Amen.

**Dismissal**

*Officiant* Go with the Spirit and renew the face of the earth.  
*All* Thanks be to God.

**Voluntary** Festival Voluntary

*Flor Peeters*

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY CHAMBER CHOIR**

**Concert Performance**

St. George's-in-the-Pines Church

Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008

2:00 PM

*Works by Bach, Brahms, Schubert, Josquin de Prez, Bernstein and others*