

An Order for a Pets' Service

'One of the Family'

In times past people took their dogs to church and straw mixed with rosemary was often placed on the floor, and incense would have sweetened the air. For this service, if it is practical, such an atmosphere could be recreated. Humans, like animals, have senses and when all our senses are engaged in worship we are most truly ourselves before God.

A Service of the blessing of pets is a wonderful opportunity to thank God for the gift of animals, and for us to ask God's blessing on all that he has made. A blessing involves praise of God; the wish that spiritual good fortune will go with what is blessed and dedicates someone or something for a sacred purpose. A blessing also reminds us that all good gifts are gifts from God.

This service can be altered if a lay person leads the service.

Care must obviously be taken that certain animals are kept apart!

The congregation is welcomed

May God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who is wonderful in all his works, be with you all.

And also with you

The service is introduced and the first hymn is sung

God called us in the beginning to be stewards of His creation,
caring for and nurturing the world He made.
As we come to ask for God's blessing on our pets
we first ask for forgiveness for the times we have not
made the best use of His blessings and gifts.

When we have forgotten you
Lord Have Mercy
Lord Have Mercy

When we take for granted the gifts you give
Christ have mercy
Christ Have Mercy

When our love is selfish
Lord Have Mercy
Lord Have Mercy

May the God of Earth and Heaven

cleanse you of all sin and draw you
to His wonderful light.
Amen

O God, you have made us and all living things to form your family on earth. You are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these pets who bring us joy. As you take care of us, we also ask that we might take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all creation. We ask this in the name of Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

Readings

A Talk might be given by someone who works with animals or whose life has been touched by their companionship.

Hymn

Affirmation of Faith

We love because we are loved.
We believe because God made us.
We hope because God's promises are true.

So we rejoice that we are people of faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

The Peace

God gave our first parents the animals when creation lived in peace. We are called to be peacemakers – with each other and the whole of creation. In Christ's name we share his peace.

Hymn

THE BLESSING OF PETS

Creator God all things belong to you. We praise you for giving us the animals, birds and fish which fill your world. We thank you for our families and the happiness which our pets give us. We ask you, Lord, that we may always be good to them, so that they may be happy also. We pray that all your children may come into your even greater world of the kingdom of heaven where we shall see even more wonderful things and where we shall live and love for ever. This we ask to your eternal praise, and to our blessing. Amen.

Pets may be blessed individually by a priest and they may be sprinkled with blessed water. . Pets may be brought to the priest or the priest move amongst the congregation, whichever is most convenient. Music might be played during the blessings.

The following is said over the pet and its owner

"N.(*name of pet*) may you be blessed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May you and N. (*the name of the "owner"*) enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you."

Hymn

THE PRAYERS

Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts for the beauty of the earth and the wonder of His creation, in earth and sky and sea;

We thank you, Lord.

For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women;

We thank you, Lord.

For all creatures that breathe, and move, and have life;

We thank you, Lord.

For the trust you have shown in giving into our care these, our pets;

We thank you, Lord.

For the work of Guide dogs for the Blind and all organisations which protect animals (others might be named)

We thank you Lord

That each pet here may be treasured with care;

We pray to you, Lord.

That we may love and honour all your works, O God;

We pray to you, Lord.

That we may continue to grow in thankfulness

To the honour and glory of your name.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn

Blessing

May the God of all creation, who created the animals of this earth to support us, continue to protect and sustain us with the grace his blessing brings, and may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen

Go in the peace of Christ. Thanks be to God

Suggested Hymns

There are many hymns which praise and thank God for His creation, including:

All Creatures of our God and King

All Things Bright and Beautiful

For the Beauty of the Earth

Morning Has Broken

If I were a butterfly

Think of a world without any flowers

I The Lord of Sea and Sky

Let there be love shared among us

Make me a channel of your peace

On Eagles wings

Suggested readings

GENESIS 1:24-31

PSALM 104:10-25

ST. MATTHEW 6:25-33

In addition suitable stories, reflections and meditations may be read