



Bishop's Committee on the Environment  
Task Force on Animals

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# Liturgy Resources for Including Animals

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## Introduction

*These prayers have been collected for use primarily at church services on the Feast of St. Francis, usually the first Sunday in October, when many churches include a Blessing of the Animals. They are, of course, also appropriate for any service in which the theme is creation, the environment, justice, and/or compassion. In each section, several prayers are offered from which to choose. More ideas are available at the websites listed in the last section. These links are only a few of many. We are in the process of compiling a more comprehensive list of sites offering resources for those whose connection to animals is part of their relationship with God. Your contributions (of prayers and websites), comments, and input is invited and appreciated.*

# Sample Service for St. Francis Day Animal Blessings

## Opening Prayer

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.

Oh God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things,  
our brothers the animals, to whom Thou gavest the earth as their home in common with us.  
We remember with shame that in the past we have exercised the high dominion of man with  
ruthless cruelty,  
So that the voice of the earth, which should have gone up to Thee in song, has been a groan  
of travail.

May we realize that they live not for us alone, but for themselves and for Thee,

And that they love the sweetness of life.

(St. Basil (A.D. 320-379), Bishop of Caesarea)

## Confession of Sin

Almighty God, we come together to thank you  
for the beauty and glory of your creation;  
to praise you for your holiness and grace;  
to acknowledge our responsibility to animals  
and for our use of the created world.

But, first of all, we pray for your forgiveness  
because of our part in sins of thoughtlessness  
and cruelty towards animal life.

Almighty God, you have given us  
temporary lordship of your beautiful creation.

But we have misused our power, turned away  
from responsibility and marred your image in us.

Forgive us, true Lord, especially for  
our callousness and cruelty to animals.

Help us to follow the way of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
who expressed power in humility  
and lordship in loving service.

Enable us, by your Spirit,  
to walk in newness of life,  
healing injury, avoiding wrong  
and making peace with all your creatures.

God of everlasting love, who is eternally forgiving;  
pardon and restore us, and make us one with you  
in your new creation.

**Amen.**

(Janet Riddle)

## Prayers of the People

O God, whose name is Love, you created this world and all that is in it. We ask you to look with compassion and mercy upon us all. Look upon your wild creatures, O God, which delight us by their variety and beauty. Be with them in their struggle for existence, and shelter them from the natural and human dangers which surround them.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Look upon the companion animals, O God, which share our homes and our lives, and which show us a love and loyalty few people can surpass. Bless them for the pleasure and companionship they give, and protect all those who suffer cruelty and neglect.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Look, especially, O God, upon all those your creatures who suffer at the hands of humans in laboratories, factory farms, slaughterhouses, traps, sport, and entertainment. Be with them in their fear, pain and suffering, and hold them in your loving hands.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Look upon men and women, O God, your creation with love and mercy. Forgive us our selfishness and cruelty and lead us gently back into your way of love. Transform our hearts until they truly reflect the way shown to us by your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, whose love was perfect and who loved to the end that he gave his own life for us.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Forgive us our bitterness against those who abuse your creation, for Christ taught us to forgive, even as he forgave. Yet change the hearts of all who use animals with cruelty so that they may be filled with your love and mercy. Inspire all governments, and those in authority, to change the direction of medical research and food production, and to bring an end by law to all animal abuse.

**Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Guide us all by your Holy Spirit into his transforming way of truth and love, and nurture in us a Christ-like spirit of compassion which is boundless and perfect.

O God, we await the coming of your Kingdom, in our hearts and in your world.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

(Eucharistic Prayer 2, adapted. From *Enriching Our Worship*, vol. 1, 1998)

## Sermon

(St. John's Cathedral, Newfoundland, 2002)

Friends, we are gathered here in this church today to ask our Creator to bless the animals that God has given us to be our friends and companions. By doing so, we are honoring them. We are acknowledging that they, too, are part of God's creation, and that they have just as much right to be here as we do.

When the Bible says that we humans have been given "dominion over the fish of the sea, and

over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth," it means that God has given us humans a very special task. It means that God has given us humans the task of being the STEWARDS of His creation. As the stewards of God's creation, it is our God-given responsibility to care for the other living creatures that God has made.

What we might be asking ourselves today is, are we doing that? When we humans abuse the animals that God has given into our care, when we deliberately destroy the environment that gives them life, the natural habitat upon which they depend for life, we are NOT living up to the responsibility that God has given us, to be stewards of His creation.

So perhaps, in this service today, we should also be doing something else: perhaps we should be asking God for His forgiveness. Perhaps we should be asking God to forgive our human arrogance that makes us think that we are superior to the other animals He created.

And perhaps we should be asking God for His forgiveness for the way that we, and our fellow human beings, for the sake of our selfish, materialistic desires, are abusing and destroying this fragile earth, which He has given to be the home of ALL the living creatures that He has made.

And, as we ask our Creator for His forgiveness, let us determine that, in His strength, from now on, we will strive to do a better job of being His stewards than we have done thus far.

## A Hymn or Song

All Creatures of Our God and King (St. Francis of Assisi)

Canticle of the Sun (St. Francis of Assisi)

All Things Bright and Beautiful (Mrs. Cecil F. Alexander)

Let All Things Now Living (Katherine K. Davis)

O God, Your Creatures Fill the Earth (Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

All God's Creatures Got a Place in the Choir (Bill Staines)

## Blessing the Animals

N.(name of animal, i.e. "Smokey", not cat/dog)\_\_\_\_\_ 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 guardian)\_\_\_\_\_ enjoy life together and find joy with the God who created you.

(This prayer, although unattributed, appears frequently on Franciscan websites.)

## Closing Prayer

Almighty God, who has created man and woman in Thine own image and has set them  
in stewardship over the creatures of earth, sea, and sky;

Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil, and to make no peace with oppression;

And, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of  
justice among people and beasts,

To the glory of Thy holy Name;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

(Adapted from the Prayer for Social Justice that first appeared in the New American Prayer Book, 1928)

# Additional Options

## Short Prayers for Opening and Closing the Service

### I.

Heavenly Father, your Holy Spirit gives breath to all living things;  
renew us by this same Spirit, that we may learn to respect what you have given,  
and care for what you have made,  
Through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord.

(Rev. Dr. Andrew Linzey)

Almighty God, your Son, Jesus Christ, taught us to love even the least among us;  
give us the courage to care for all living creatures and the strength to defend  
even the weakest of all. (Anon. from Trinity Episcopal Church, New Haven, CT)

Hear our humble prayer, O God, for our friends the animals.  
Especially for animals who are suffering; for all that are overworked and underfed  
and cruelly treated,

For all wistful creatures in captivity that beat against their bars,  
For all that are in pain or dying,  
for all that may be put to death.

We entreat for them all Thy mercy and pity.  
Make us ourselves to be true friends to animals,  
and so to share the blessing of the merciful;  
For the sake of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Dr. Albert Schweitzer)

### II.

Almighty God, who has ordained that men and women should have dominion over the beasts  
of the field and every living thing,  
Grant us the help of Thy grace, that we may see in this a great responsibility;  
Grant to all who deal with Thy creatures a compassionate heart;  
Visit with Thy justice those who are cruel to them or hurt them needlessly;  
And make us ever thankful for the joy of their companionship.  
For the sake of Him who, at the last, will gather all things to Himself, and make all things  
new again, Jesus Christ our Lord. (Richard Tatlock)

O God, source of life and power, who feeds the birds of the heavens,  
Increase our tenderness towards all the creatures of Thy hand.  
Help us to refrain from petty acts of cruelty, or thoughtless deeds of harm to any living animal.  
May we care for them at all times, especially during hard weather,  
And protect them from injury so that they learn to trust us as friends.  
Let our sympathy grow with knowledge, so that the whole of creation may rejoice in Thy presence.  
(Marilyn Deutsch)

### III.

For birds with broken wings,  
For rabbits caught in springs,  
For poor bewildered foxes,  
And butterflies in boxes;  
Hear us, we beseech Thee.

For dogs without a home,  
For cats that walk alone,  
For horses worn and old,  
For sheep without a fold;  
Hear us, we beseech Thee.

For all those weak and lowly,  
Depending on us solely,  
By all we hold most holy,  
Hear us, we beseech Thee.

(St. Francis of Assisi)

Almighty and everlasting God, Creator of all things and giver of all life, let your blessing be upon all these animals. May our relationships with them mirror Your love, and our care for them be an example of Your bountiful mercy. Grant the animals health and peace. Strengthen us to love and care for them as we strive to imitate the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and God's servant Francis. **Amen.** (Taken from Web of Creation, Blessing of the Animals. Source Unknown)

### IV.

Lord of all creation, in Your infinite imagination you wrapped pieces of Your own Heart in fur, feather, fin, and hide, and placed them here to share with us this earthly home. In Your wisdom, You gave us responsibility for their well-being. You called them our brothers and sisters, and we give You thanks as we rejoice in the joy of those we call companion, helper, and friend. Help us to care for all those who look to human beings with trust and love, to listen to what they can teach us, and to treat them with love, kindness, and justice. **Amen.** (Sr. Jo Baim)

Lord of all compassion, You named all creatures, including the wild ones, our brothers and sisters. But we turned away from some of them, and instead we name them sport, entertainment, clothing, trophy, product. Forgive us Lord – we know this is not what You wanted. We chose to consider them less than us; help us to let them live in peace under Your care. We thank You for their grace and beauty, and we look forward to the renewal of all creation, when the bonds we destroyed will be restored. **Amen.** (Sr. Jo Baim)

Lord of all blessings, we thank You for these marvelous creatures. Help us to remember that they belong to You just as we do. Help us to live with all of them in peace and joy, so that together we may share in Your eternal kingdom. **Amen** (Sr. Jo Baim)

# Prayers of the People

We praise you for the creation of the world and all the living creatures in the earth, sky and sea.

**We are thankful, O God.**

For the gentle eyes of the deer, the friendship of dogs, the purr of cats, the strength of bears, the beauty of a hippo, the humor of chimps, the intelligence of gorillas, the grace of dolphins, the magnificence of whales. Help us to keep them safe.

**We are thankful, O God.**

For the bond between all living creatures created by the same author, and for the memory of our kinship to the animal world kindled each time a rainbow appears.

**We are thankful, O God.**

Give us a voice to speak in protest when any of your beloved creatures are treated cruelly. Help us to be advocates for those innocents who cannot speak for themselves.

**Give us speech, O God.**

Give us ears to hear the cries of those creatures tortured in the name of science, skinned in the name of fashion, and neglected in the name of economy.

**Let us hear their cries, O God.**

Give us eyes to see our responsibilities, not just to the human community, but to the community of all living creatures. Let us be mindful of the rabbinic injunction that, 'The way a person treats an animal is an index to his soul.'

**Help us to see, O God.**

In this world so full of violence and unkindness, let us act in a gentle way towards all your creatures. A simple stroke on a dog's head, a scratch on a cat's chin, food for birds in winter and hunting with cameras only.

**Help us to be gentle, O God.**

Help us to lessen the suffering of your creatures, O God. Hasten the coming of your kingdom when the sun will shine on all your creation living in peace and love.

**We pray all this, O Lord. Help us to be kind and gentle like our Lord Jesus. And may we remember St. Francis' love of animals whenever we see one of your creatures hurt, suffering, and in need of help.**

**Amen**

(The Rev. Helen Hall)

# Ideas for Sermons

A.

(George W. Cornell, Associated Press Writer)

"The first will be last, and the last first," Jesus said. He later pointed out that God's care extended to animals. Not a sparrow falls, he said, without God's will. "Not one of them will be forgotten before God."

While some people rarely consider it, animals have a special place in the Biblical account of creation, and are included in the vision of the ultimate future of peace and harmony. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them," wrote the prophet Isaiah.

Although some influential thinkers like Thomas Aquinas have disparaged animals as lacking rationality and immortal souls, others such as Methodist founder John Wesley have insisted animals will attain heaven. He maintained that in the "general deliverance" from the world's pervasive wrongs and cruelty animals would be given "vigor, strength and swiftness...to a far higher degree than they ever enjoyed."

St. Francis called them "brothers" and "sisters" and even preached to them. Albert Schweitzer said that "to the truly ethical man, all life is sacred," including life regarded as "less than ours."

It was probably a burro that carried Mary on that hard trip with Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem where she gave birth in the only lodging they could find—a rock-hewn livestock stable. The presence of animals in that cavern provided the warmth that protected the newborn infant that night.

"The lamb of God" he was called, indicating that his subsequent sacrifice to absorb the ravages of sin was sufficient to end the sacrificing of animals to God. "It carried the idea that thereafter sacrifice of animals had less than a divine purpose," said philosopher Thomas Regan of North Carolina State University. "Since there is no need to sacrifice them for divine purposes, there is certainly no need to sacrifice them for less than divine purposes."

Regan is among a growing number of animal rights advocates in this country, many of them linking that cause to religious faith. They, maintaining that animals have divinely endowed worth and rights, work against all sorts of harshness towards animals—in food production, experiments, and sports.

"All religions in the world say wonderful things in their scriptures about animals, but people simply don't practice it," said Ginny Bee, founder of the international Network for Religion and Animals. "We're trying to bring religious principles to bear on humanity's treatment of our animal kin...Our neighbor-whom Jesus said to love as ourselves—includes both animals and nature. We must learn to treat them with respect and dignity. God gave us the beautiful gift of animals but we abuse them, harm them, kill them."

Yet the first living creatures, as recounted in Genesis, were animals of the sea, land and air, and God saw they were "good." From spreading corruption and flood on earth, he saved animals along with Noah's family in an ark. "Behold I establish my covenant with you," God told Noah, "and with every living creature that is with you." He set a rainbow in the sky, "a sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature." Little heeded by churches, animals are part of that divine compact, Scripture affirms.

In the coming of Jesus, animals not only shared the stable, but also camels likely brought the

Magi with their gifts. Shepherds with flocks in the fields heard the angelic proclamation of "good news of a great joy...For to you is born this day in the city of David: a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Later, that newcomer likened his love to that of a shepherd for his sheep, searching for a lost one, giving his life for them. He said Sabbath laws should be laid aside to take an animal to water or pull an ox from a pit. "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap...yet God feeds them, he said. And the Psalms say all nature proclaims God's glory, that "every beast of the forest" is his, "and the cattle on a thousand hills."

Are animals, too, destined for eternal redemption from wrongs of a disordered world? "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail until now," says St. Paul's letter to the Romans.

"Nowhere does the Bible say animals don't have souls," said David Barnes of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. "Certainly God's love is great enough to bring all he creates into afterlife without distracting one bit from his love for you and me or anyone else. We're not in competition with animals for God's love."

When that love became flesh on Earth, Mary took the child, wrapped him in swaddling, and laid him in a trough for animals--a manger.

## **B.**

(The Rev. Glenda Hope, 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. Presbyterian Church, San Francisco)

In the book of Genesis there are two Creation myths, giving theological beliefs about the Creator God, the Universe God created, the relationship of all living things within Creation, and the specific role of human beings in the whole scheme. The first Creation myth clearly sets forth the belief that God gives us plants, seeds, fruits for food, but not the flesh of other animals, a statement far beyond vegetarianism. Some humans arrogantly ask: if we are not to eat the flesh or wear the skins, or perhaps experiment on other animals, what is their purpose for being here? The second Creation myth speaks to that. Animals are formed by God as companions for humans. Indeed, try to imagine how lonely, how impoverished we would be if we did not share this planet with myriads of other animals. Our relationship with them is to be one of friends and stewards--using our particular abilities for the good of all creatures who have the breath of life, valuing their contributions to our common life, enjoying them as our friends and companions on this earth. This, say the Biblical writers, is the way it's supposed to be. Muzzle locks, restraining boards, rabbits blinded for tests of new cosmetics...Do these things fit into the design of the Creator God? Is this what it means for human beings to be stewards of the earth? I think not.

Sin means "missing the mark" and God knows we are missing the mark in our relationship with our animal friends. Human sin continues to mar the Creator's design. None are more aware of this than the many Biblical authors, and yet the vision of returning to that original harmony, the Creator's plan for peace among all living creatures, runs as a constant thread through the Judeo-Christian scriptures. Isaiah speaks most eloquently of this:

The wolf shall live with the sheep, and the leopard lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion shall grow up together, and a little child shall lead them; the cow and the bear shall be friends, and their young shall lie down together. The lion shall eat straw like cattle; the infant shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the young child dance over the viper's nest. They shall never again hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for as the waters fill the sea, so shall the land be filled with the

knowledge of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:6-9)

The return to the harmony, dignity and mutual caring among all living creatures is a recurring theme with the Old Testament prophets and in many of the psalms.

Jesus reminds us that even though sparrows are counted for so little as to be sold five for two-pence in his time, none of them is overlooked by God. Those who inflict torture and cruelty on animals might reflect well on these words from Luke's gospel. Surely God does not overlook what is happening to those animals who have been formed by God as surely as the sparrows.

Paul's letter to the Church in Rome details effects of human malice, sin, and ignorance, and speaks eloquently of the liberty and splendor offered us through God's grace. Until the time we fully accept this liberty and splendor, the whole creation groans in all its parts waiting for the full revealing of the sons and daughters of God. Pondering Paul's words, "the whole creation groans," it is hard not to hear the groans of lab animals who are the victims of human malice, sin, and ignorance. Once humans see the design of God's creation in all its beauty, learning to cherish the living creatures and one another, accepting the freedom offered, then all creation will rejoice. It is not hard to see why.

Prominent in the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelations, are the four living creatures-one like a lion, another like an ox, another with a human face, and the fourth like an eagle in flight. They represent all the living creatures God has formed and are most often found singing praise and glory to the Creator, to the One who wishes to set free from fears, indifference, and our alienation from all forms of life and one another. The Book of Revelation is not about some future event or future life in some other time and some other space. It is about the coming into being of God's peaceable commonwealth here and now-on this earth. It is about the reign of God's love which is both already happening-manifested here today and wherever reverence and love for life are exhibited-and the reign of God's love which is not yet fully established. In Chapter 4 of Revelation a note is sounded which reverberates through the Book: "Then I heard every created thing in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, all that is in them crying: 'Praise and honor, glory and might, to God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever!'" And the four living creatures said: "Amen." We do not know God in isolation; that is impossible. We know God only in solidarity with all the creatures formed and loved by God even as human beings are. Many liberation concerns cry out for our action: the ending of discrimination based on race, sex, affectional preference or any other such thing, and an end to exploitation and cruelty to other animals. These things are one, many pieces of the efforts of many people to co-create with God that peaceable commonwealth in which every living thing joins in the song of praise to God who sets us free to love one another.

**C.**

(The Rev. Rebecca Deinsen, <http://all-creation.franciscan-anglican.com/atonement.htm>)

In ancient religious traditions, animal sacrifice was commonplace and a part of essentially every known culture to appease "the gods." Animal sacrifice still occurs in some parts of our world, particularly in tribal religions such as animism, but for most modern people living in the West, animal sacrifice seems far removed and difficult to understand. In ancient times, people believed that their sin could only be "atoned" for (that is, made "right" or "satisfied") by sacrificing innocent animals to their god(s). Animals were the "scapegoats" for the sins of the people and bore the brunt of the evil and fear of humankind.

I do not believe God ever intended this or was satisfied with such a system, but it was a widely spread cultural practice and God tends to work from within a culture rather than impose on it from outside. However, at times in Scripture the message from God is clear that this was not God's intention, "I desire mercy not sacrifice!" (Hosea 6:6) and Psalm 51:16-17 "For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise." The Judeo-Christian God, unlike the multitude of pagan gods, was not "bloodthirsty." "Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make thanksgiving your sacrifice to the Most High" (Psalm 50:13-14).

However, people continued doing what they were used to doing and killing animals in an attempt to atone for their sins. Then finally Jesus came along. Apparently Jesus did not approve of the sacrificial system of the Temple. In fact, he became very angry and drove everyone out of the Temple who had been selling animals due to be sacrificed for the Passover (John 2:13-22). The Scriptures also never record Jesus as participating in the animal sacrifice at the Temple, although the custom at the time required it. As the author of Hebrews writes:

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure (10:4-6).

So instead, on the night of the Passover, when the Jewish people were celebrating the sacrificing of the paschal lamb, Jesus began to talk about his own body and blood being shed and given up for the sins of the world. "While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins'" (Matthew 26:26-28). Within hours Jesus was arrested, tried, and crucified.

Jesus' disciples quickly made sense of the crucifixion, this highly symbolic and transformative act: Jesus had died at Passover in place of the sacrificial lamb. Jesus became, literally, the Paschal Lamb, the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." The Greek word for "world" used in this Scripture is "cosmos," and it includes the entire world, all creatures great and small. Applying the belief that was held about atonement, it was understood that Jesus died, just as the sacrificial animals used to, on behalf of the world's sins.

Christians understand Isaiah 53:7-8 to refer to Jesus: "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?"

It is painful to imagine how much Jesus may have identified with the millions of animals who had been led to slaughter before him. Jesus was innocent, just as the sacrificial animals had been, because he was perfect, without sin, and the Son of God. But Jesus' action put an end to the system of animal sacrifice once and for all. Jesus' life and death revealed the flaws of the animal sacrificial system. God revealed to humanity that we need not kill innocent animals because "God himself would provide the sacrifice" in form of Jesus, God incarnate. (Genesis 22:8). This is good news for humanity! It is also good news for all creation and for God's innocent creatures, the animals. Like Jesus, they had been abused, exploited, and killed by humanity.

Animals have been victims of humanity's fears and sin since the beginning of time. Today we

engage in our own form of animal sacrifice. We continue to pin our fears and sins upon innocent animals in contexts such as our factory farms, sport hunting, slaughterhouses, and laboratories. We abuse, exploit, and kill animals every day for our selfish purposes. We justify our actions, saying eating meat will make us strong and healthy when we have evidence to the contrary. We hunt and kill for sport, believing this will prove our prowess and courage. Meat, fur, purebred animals, and leather are all signs of wealth and prosperity and cause us to feel “good” about ourselves by playing into worldly standards of success. We experiment on animals, driven by our fear of death and disease, because animals are helpless to resist. We dominate and exploit the created world in order to prove our power over it and to help us feel in control. Animals continue to bear the sins of humankind in all its tragic forms. Their suffering never seems to cease even though Jesus came to seek an end to suffering on earth.

Jesus died to bring us into a new reality. The cross is redemption for humanity and it is redemption for all God’s creatures. We must no longer sacrifice animals for our own purposes. We must no longer pin our fears and sin upon the innocent animals of God. We must live in the reality of the redemption that Christ won for us on the cross and live at peace with all God’s creation, praying for a complete restoration of God’s kingdom, where there is no violence, no killing, and where “the lion lies down with the lamb” (Isaiah 11:6).

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us.

## Blessing the Animals

- A.**  
Bless N. \_\_\_\_\_ & N. \_\_\_\_\_. Protect them from cruelty & keep them safe always.
- B.**  
N. \_\_\_\_\_ may you be blessed in the Name of God who created you, and may you and N. \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy life together with our God.
- C.**  
May you, N. \_\_\_\_\_ & you, N. \_\_\_\_\_ be blessed with a long & happy life together.
- D.**  
N. \_\_\_\_\_ may you be blessed in the name of the Holy One who created you, and may you and \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy life together and care for one another in peace.
- E.**  
God of the universe, be present with this your creature. Bless N. \_\_\_\_\_ and N. \_\_\_\_\_ who cares for him/her, now and always.

## Links to Websites

[www.all-creatures.org](http://www.all-creatures.org)

All Creatures.org

[www.all-creatures.org/cva](http://www.all-creatures.org/cva)

Christian Vegetarian Association

[www.beliefnet.com/Love-Family/Pets/Multifaith-Prayers-For-Animals.aspx](http://www.beliefnet.com/Love-Family/Pets/Multifaith-Prayers-For-Animals.aspx)

Beliefnet

[www.enaw.org](http://www.enaw.org)

Episcopal Network for Animal Welfare

[www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org)

Humane Society of the United States

[www.mercyforanimals.com](http://www.mercyforanimals.com)

Mercy for Animals

[www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org)

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

[www.svn.net/elle/prayer.html#prayer](http://www.svn.net/elle/prayer.html#prayer)

Prayers for Animals