

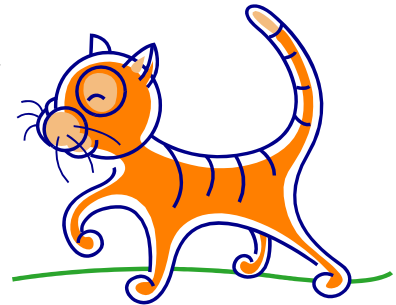
Blessing of Animals



Our Parish will celebrate the Blessing of Animals on **Saturday - October 1st** in front of Church. Bring your pets and perhaps some representative livestock to the front of Church. The blessing service will begin after the 9:00am Mass at around 9:30am and should only last about 15 minutes.

Why a blessing for animals and why now? The “why now” is because October 4th is the date that we celebrate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi - the patron saint of animals. The why is a little more involved. Perhaps the best way to explain why is to quote from the opening prayer of the order of the blessing:

The animals of God’s creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have a part in human life. God, who confers his gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them symbolic reminders of the gifts of salvation. Animals were saved from the flood and afterwards made part of the covenant with Noah. The paschal lamb brings to mind the Passover sacrifice and the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. ... And animals share in Christ’s redemption of all God’s creatures. We therefore invoke the divine blessing on these animals, through the intercession of Saint Francis. As we do so, let us praise the Creator and thank him for setting us over other creatures on earth. Let us also ask him that, remembering our human dignity, we may walk always in his law.



Animals have always had a part to play in human history, sometimes providing food and clothing, sometimes lending their strength to our labors or protecting us, and sometime simply providing companionship and pleasure. This blessing is a reminder that God has given to us humans dominion over nature and an enjoiner to practice careful stewardship of our world, respecting it as part of creation.

