

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI MASS OCTOBER 6TH/7TH.

Introduction:



Today we are celebrating the feast of St Francis of Assisi, Patron Saint of Ecology and friend of lepers.

Francis lived in Assisi, Italy in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Although born into a wealthy family, as he grew into a young man, he underwent a spiritual crisis during which he was quietly searching for something worthy of his complete devotion. A DEEP COMPASSION WAS GROWING WITHIN HIM. Riding one day in the plains below Assisi, he met a leper whose loathsome sores filled Francis with horror. Overcoming his revulsion, he leapt from his horse and pressed into the leper's hand all the money he had with him, and then kissed the hand. This was a turning point in his life. He then started visiting hospitals, especially the refuge for lepers, which most persons avoided.

The loving kindness and attitudes of service to each other which Francis and his followers displayed, was extended to all people and to all creation. They especially put themselves at the service of lepers and those who were helpless and suffering. Their aim was the full expression of universal kinship and, through it, the glorification of God.

St Francis is indeed a guide for our times. Francis offers a way of life that is very simple: love God, God's people, God's world- LOVE GOD'S WHOLE CREATION – from lepers to the natural world of which we are all part. He helps us see the connection in all that is created and reminds us to extend our love to all living things.

As foreshadowed last week, today we have the annual Appeal in support of the work of Father Fernando Azpiroz, SJ, and his colleagues in China ministering to people suffering from leprosy, people suffering from AIDS, those who are HIV positive, and their families. During Mass ----- will speak briefly about the Appeal.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray;

Lord, open our hearts and our eyes to the wonders of your presence among us. May we see the signs of your beauty within and about us and ever be in awe of the simple gifts of life.

Help us to reach beyond ourselves and to give thanks for all of your creation that shares this universe with us: the peoples of every nation, animals of every species, all forms of vegetation, the planets, stars and all elements.

We pray this in union with the incarnate Word of God in whose image all was created.

Amen

Prayers of Petition

O Lord, grant us the grace to respect and care for Your creation.

Lord hear us

Lord, hear our prayer.

O Lord, bless all of your creatures as a sign of Your wondrous love.

Lord hear us

Lord, hear our prayer.

O Lord, help us to limit our consumption to what we need, to end the suffering of the poor and bring healing to all of your creation.

Lord, hear us

Lord, hear our prayer

O Lord, help us to use our technological inventiveness to undo the damage we have done to Your creation and to sustain Your gift of nature.

Lord hear us

Lord, hear our prayer.

Communion Reflection:

Video and song "Holy Now" by Peter Mayer.