

"Bless the beasts"

www.graceinaction.org
October 2007

GRACE IN ACTION

LIVING CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

celebrate
October

- 1 St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus
- 2 Guardian Angels
- 4 St. Francis of Assisi
- 15 St. Teresa of Avila
- 17 St. Ignatius of Antioch
- 18 St. Luke

new parables

Love God, respect God's creation



A certain family went out to their yard one autumn evening to enjoy a barbecue, but the backyard was thick with mosquitoes. In their yard, the family applied a lot of poisons: one for mice and one for flying insects and one for crawling bugs. They had driven the bats and birds away with pesticides they sprayed liberally. This family always used Styrofoam cups and plates, plastic forks and spoons and knives. They drank bottled water, and did not bother with recycling. Each week, they hauled out huge bags of trash, never thinking twice about their impact on the environment.

A neighboring family also went into their backyard. This family had built a bat house, knowing that the bats devour a lot of insects. This family had a bubbling bird bath that attracted birds that also ate insects. The gentle glow from the citronella candles in this family's yard kept whatever mosquitoes were around at bay and at the same time released a pleasant fragrance.

This family composted their kitchen waste, recycled everything they could, used cloth napkins and avoided plastic bottles and place settings because they understood that their everyday actions impacted the environment. This family enjoyed walking and bicycling together and watching the hummingbirds that fed on their garden's red flowers in the fall during migration. The family venerated a backyard statue of St. Francis of Assisi and educated themselves on actions they could take to improve the well-being of all creatures in God's kingdom.



Noah's ark

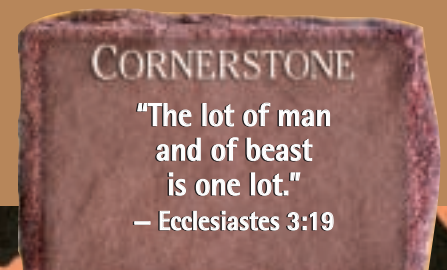
Crosiers

try this Gift wrap a goat

Your gift to Heifer International provides livestock such as chickens, cows, sheep and goats, even honeybees to people in need around the world. Families receive training in animal management and sustainable agriculture. \$60 can provide three flocks of chickens to a struggling family. \$120 can provide a goat, which can provide four quarts of milk a day; and the goats often give birth to twins or triplets. \$500 can provide a heifer to a hungry family, and the cow can produce up to four gallons of milk a day and a calf every year. \$1,000 can provide a heifer, two goats and a water buffalo for an entire village. A Heifer International gift honoring a person who has practically everything can change the lives of those who have next to nothing. Gifts are tax deductible. Visit www.Heifer.org.



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CORNERSTONE

"The lot of man
and of beast
is one lot."

— Ecclesiastes 3:19

Barbara Stock

kidscorner Wings and prayers



Recycle household trash and help the birds at the same time by making a bird braid. Collect dryer lint, pet fur, hair from your brush or comb, scraps of yarn and twine and other natural fibers. Stash the materials in a plastic bag or box until you have enough to twist everything together and tie into a clump. Then hang the bird braid from a tree outside so the birds can help themselves to materials to line their nests during winter. Whatever's left-over on the bird braid will be welcomed for nesting season come spring. You're helping nature, and reducing the trash in already overflowing landfills. That's good stewardship.

For a quote from St. Francis of Assisi on the spirit of prayer and how it relates to birds, visit www.graceinaction.org.

the way we pray A Prayer for Animals

By Albert Schweitzer

Hear our humble prayer, O God, for our friends the animals, especially for animals who are suffering; for any that are hunted or lost or deserted or frightened or hungry; for all that must be put to sleep. We entreat for them all Thy mercy and pity, and for those who deal with them we ask a heart of compassion and gentle hands and kindly words. Make us be true friends to animals and to share the blessings of the merciful.



Photo by James Baca



sowing seeds

A prescription for pets

"Subduing and exercising dominion does not mean abusing ..."

— Stewardship: A Disciple's Response
U.S. Catholic bishops' stewardship pastoral

Researchers keep turning up studies indicating that pets benefit humans. Evidence suggests that pets can decrease your blood pressure, cholesterol levels and triglyceride levels. Pets also decrease loneliness while increasing opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities, as well as socialization.

Caring for pets also teaches us mercy. St. Francis of Assisi warned, "If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellowmen."

And Venerable John Henry Newman, a cardinal, wrote, "There is something so very dreadful, so satanic in tormenting those who have never harmed us, and who cannot defend themselves, who are utterly in our power, who have weapons neither of offense nor defense, that none but very hardened persons can endure the thought of it."

Are you kind to animals? Do you take actions to help conserve habitat and wildlife in your area or elsewhere? If you have a pet(s), how might you enhance care for your animal(s)?



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defining moments Stewardship alphabet

Source: OSV's Catholic Dictionary. Visit www.graceinaction.org for stewardship alphabet's letters A-I.



Joy: One of the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit: the pleasure experienced by one who knows Christ as the ultimate happiness. Joy is a kind of completion to happiness when one becomes a disciple of Jesus; this pleasure will be most intense and perfect in heaven.

Judgment, Particular: The judgment rendered by God at one's death. The deceased will then go to heaven, purgatory or hell. When the General Judgment occurs, body and soul will be reunited.

Justification: The process by which a sinner is made "righteous" in the sight of God. This occurs when one accepts the free and unearned gift of faith and responds to it by

acts of charity — for example, good works performed out of love for God and neighbor.

Just War Theory: The parameters used to measure whether a war is ethically just. Catholic discussion of a just war derives from the natural law and contends that it is always morally evil to kill innocent human life. Hence a country may enter a war if it or its allies are unjustly attacked, provided the war is a last resort and undertaken to repel the attack. Just means, just intention and just end all have to be present; only those military means absolutely necessary can be employed, and the war must be declared by legitimate authority. No civilian populations can be targeted, nor can there be any side effects, so evil has to outweigh the benefit of engaging in war.

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