

Ritual and Tradition: A Garden Blessing

Sing or Read *All Creatures of Worship* God Most High
or read Psalm 148

We give thanks for this garden:

For soil, filled with minerals and microbes,
For seeds and plants, that will nourish us,
For water and rain, that provide growth,
For the hands that will tend this garden,
For the mouths that it will feed,
For the joy that it gives.

We give you thanks o God.

We bless this garden:

May it grow and prosper
May it nourish those that it feeds
May it bless those who sit within it
May it call us all to a careful love of the world around us.

May this Garden be blessed and a blessing.

We pray for all

Who grow food,
Who tend and keep God's creation
Who cultivate beauty upon the earth
Whose soiled hands are offered in service and raised in praise.

May they all be blessed in their work.

We pray for the earth, God's great garden of creation,

For the seasons that bring renewal
For the wellbeing of waterways and rivers
For the health of forests and prairies
For the renew of wetlands and marshes
For the oceans and lakes
For its care and adoration

May our care of the earth be an offering of thanks to God.

*Individuals are invited to bless the garden with a gift of compost
or water that will nourish the soil and feed the plants.*

May we learn to love and care for our common home by caring
for this garden. May we grow closer to God and to one another as
we work in the garden together.

Amen



Milestones Garden Blessing

God provides all of nature and instructs us to tend and nurture it (Gen 1:28, 2:15). The blessing that God provides in Creation is a perpetual trust. By taking care of God's creation, we are not merely caring for the earth, but expressing our love for God and the world with which we are blessed; participating in a sacred covenant with God.

While there are many ways that we can take care of Creation, planing and tending a garden is one that invites us to become more aware of the beauty, abundance, and wonder of the world around us. A garden is both obligation and reward. We are charged to tend and till it so that it will provide produce and flowers. We nurture young plants, water seeds, remove weeds, all in an effort to help it grow. The garden rewards our efforts with flowers that delight the eye, vegetables that nourish our bodies, and fruit to sweeten our diet. A garden may be as small as a potted plant on a window sill or as large as a farm that produces food for many.

In addition a garden helps us become more aware of our obligation to care for all of creation. It invites us to reflect on how we might change our actions to help the Earth, God's great garden, be more heathy and thrive.

This Garden blessing is designed to help up reflect upon the gifts God provides us in nature. It comes in two parts. A milestone devotion and a liturgy for blessing your garden. You may choose to do them together or separate them in to two different events.

Items you will need for this devotion:

- Compost and/or water
- A "garden" - If you don't plant a garden outdoors, this may be a planter of flowers, an herb in a small pot, or any other growing thing that you tend.

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Milestone conversation: If you have a milestones blessing bowl, find the New Beginnings Milestone. Invite everyone to share a story about their experience with something new recently. Alternatively, if you have a garden blessing or seed starting stone from a previous year, select it out and invite participants to share memories of their experience growing something or your hope for your garden this year.

Caring Conversation: Discuss these thoughts and questions:

- My favorite part of God's creation is . . .
- My favorite thing to grow in a garden is . . ., because . . .

Devotions: Read the following:

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; the LORD God formed human from the dust of the ground, and breathed in the breath of life; and the human became a living being. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there put the human whom God had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The LORD God took and put the human in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. (Genesis 2:4-15)

- What are some of the ways that we “till and keep” the earth?
- How does a garden remind you of the blessing God gives us?
- What are some ways you feel like humanity has fallen short of their job to “till and keep” the earth?

Service:

Our thankfulness for all God has given to us, encourages us to be a blessing to others. As you bless your garden and look forward to its blessings this summer, consider how you might be a blessing to others:

- Make a plan to share some produce with a neighbor or a local food pantry
- Help plant a garden for someone else.
- Develop a plan to take care of God's gift of Creation by planting a tree, cleaning up a roadway, advocating for the environment, or another idea of your choosing.

All Creatures, Worship God Most High!



1 All crea-tures, wor-ship God most high! Sound ev-'ry voice in earth and
2 Sing, broth-er wind; with clouds and rain you grow the gifts of fruit and
3 Sing, broth-er fire, so mirth-ful, strong; drive far the shad-ows, join the
4 All who for love of God for-give, all who in pain or sor-row



sky: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Sing, broth-er sun, in splen-dor
grain: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Dear sis-ter wa-ter, use-ful,
throng: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Dear moth-er earth, so rich in
grieve: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Christ bears your bur-dens and your



bright; sing, sis-ter moon and stars of night:
clear, make mu-sic for your Lord to hear: Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-
care, praise God in col-ors bright and rare:
fears; still make your song a-mid the tears:



lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

5 And you, most gentle sister death,
waiting to hush our final breath:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
fair is the night that leads us home.
Alleluia.

6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
and worship God with humble heart:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
Alleluia.

Text: Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226; tr. composite
Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Köln, 1623
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