

# Rhythms of Grace • St. Francis Celebration

**Theme:** St. Francis, A man who took care of animals and our Earth in God's name.

**Scripture:** Holy Women, Holy Men pg.621

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Roles:

**Facilitator** \_\_\_\_\_

**Storyteller** \_\_\_\_\_

**Celebrant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Center Leader** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guide** \_\_\_\_\_

## Items Needed for This Session

**Gathering:** statue of St. Francis (if possible), variety of animals, fish, birds, plants (stuffed, small, large, plastic), blue material for water, potting soil in container, artificial grass/land, bush (used in Moses II lesson)

**Storytelling:** All the items from the gathering, felt world see year 1, p. 110, storytelling script

### Response Activities:

**Treasure Hunt:** shopping bags for each participant

**Bean Table:** variety of beans, small plastic animals

**Leaf Stamping:** leaves, washable paint, kraft paper, paint brushes, water, towels, covering for table and floor

**Dog Bones/Cat toys:** see instructions enclosed

**Regathering:** Hand Motion for Cantic: poster of hand motion prayer (see resources), elements for the Eucharistic table (see Eucharist- Book 1)

**Eucharist:** altar table and elements (pita bread/rice crackers, juice, chalice, paten, purificator, corporal, altar cloth), Eucharistic Prayer (see Book 1 p. 100), *Gather our Hearts* song lyrics (see Book 1 p. 99)

**Dismissal:** *Jesus Loves Me* with hand motions

## Session Plan • St. Francis • Year 2

**Gathering:** Animals and other items are gathered from around the room and brought to the felt world with the statue of St. Francis.

**Storytelling:** Using the gathering area and items tell the story of St. Francis using the storytelling.

### **Response Activities:**

**Treasure Hunt:** Participants will go outside to find “God’s Treasures” (leaves, acorns, twigs, etc.). Once back sort by types, i.e. twigs, rocks, leaves, etc.

**Bean Table:** Participants will search the beans to find plastic animals.

**Leaf Stamping:** Spread the kraft paper on the table. Have participants paint one side of the leaves available, turn over and press the leaf design onto the kraft paper.

**Dog Bones/Cat Toys:** Participants will make bones and or toys (see instructions and recipe in resources)

**Regathering:** Participants join in with Hand Motion for the St. Francis prayer (in resources) then singing *Jesu, Jesu*, leader gives participants an Eucharist element and participant brings it to the Celebrant then sits down in the circle around the Eucharistic table.

**Eucharist:** sing: *Gather our hearts, oh God*  
Gather our hearts, oh God.  
Gather our thoughts, oh God.  
Bring us together around you.

**Celebration of Eucharist**

**Dismissal:** All sing and sign *Jesus Loves Me*,  
Celebrant provides a blessing:  
Celebrant: *“Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord.”*  
Participant: *“Thanks be to God!”*

## **Storytelling • Saint Francis • Yr. 2**

*Place the Bible and Jesus doll by the Storyteller in the Gathering area with all the animals, St. Francis statue, dirt, water, and felt world.*

Our story today is about a man who studied our Bible (*show Bible*), our book that tells the stories of God and God's people, of Jesus (*show Jesus doll*), God's son, and of how much God loves us (*place hands over heart*).

There have been many special people who have listened to God and Jesus and have decided that they must live their lives as close as possible to the way God and Jesus want us to live. One of those people was St. Francis. Now St. Francis grew up as the son of a very wealthy man who gave Francis everything that he wanted. He had not a care in the world and could do pretty much anything he wanted to. He had wealth, power, and wasn't interested in working or going to school. But, as Francis grew older he came to understand that he was not happy. Nothing he had been given or had made him happy. They were just things. He began to understand that what he really wanted was a life that was simple and without all the "things" that money could buy.

He began to walk around the countryside and would pick up odd jobs as the churches and monasteries around the land. One day when he was walking a friend saw him, took him home and gave him a tunic, belt, and sandals to wear. Francis continued to travel around the country and preach about God's kingdom. He would speak to the people he met about how short life is and the importance of how we should live with love, peace, compassion for each other and the world around us. Francis loved all of God's creation; Brother sun, Sister Moon and Brother Wind along with all the creatures of creation. That's why when you see a figure of St. Francis he usually has animals or birds with him.

Let's look at the parts of creation that we brought together today. (*Talk about each item and how we, like St. Francis, could love God's creation and take care of it.*)

Amen.

*Continue by explaining the activities*