

# The Year of St Francis

## A Celebration of the Word

Marking 800 years of a legacy of peace,  
simple living, and love for creation.

**Teacher Note:** Welcome the children.  
Explain that we are gathering to celebrate  
a very special year dedicated to a saint who  
saw the whole world as his family.





# A Call from Rome



**Pope Leo XIV** has announced the '**Year of St Francis**' to mark 800 years since the saint's death. He invites us to reflect on a message of care, peace, and dignity.

We also remember that Pope Francis chose his name to follow this example: caring for the poor, protecting creation, and living simply.

**Today, we ask: How can we care for people and creation just like them?**



# Symbols of a Saint

Look closely.  
What do these  
items have in  
common?

What story do  
they tell us about  
St Francis?

**Plant:** He loved creation and the Earth.

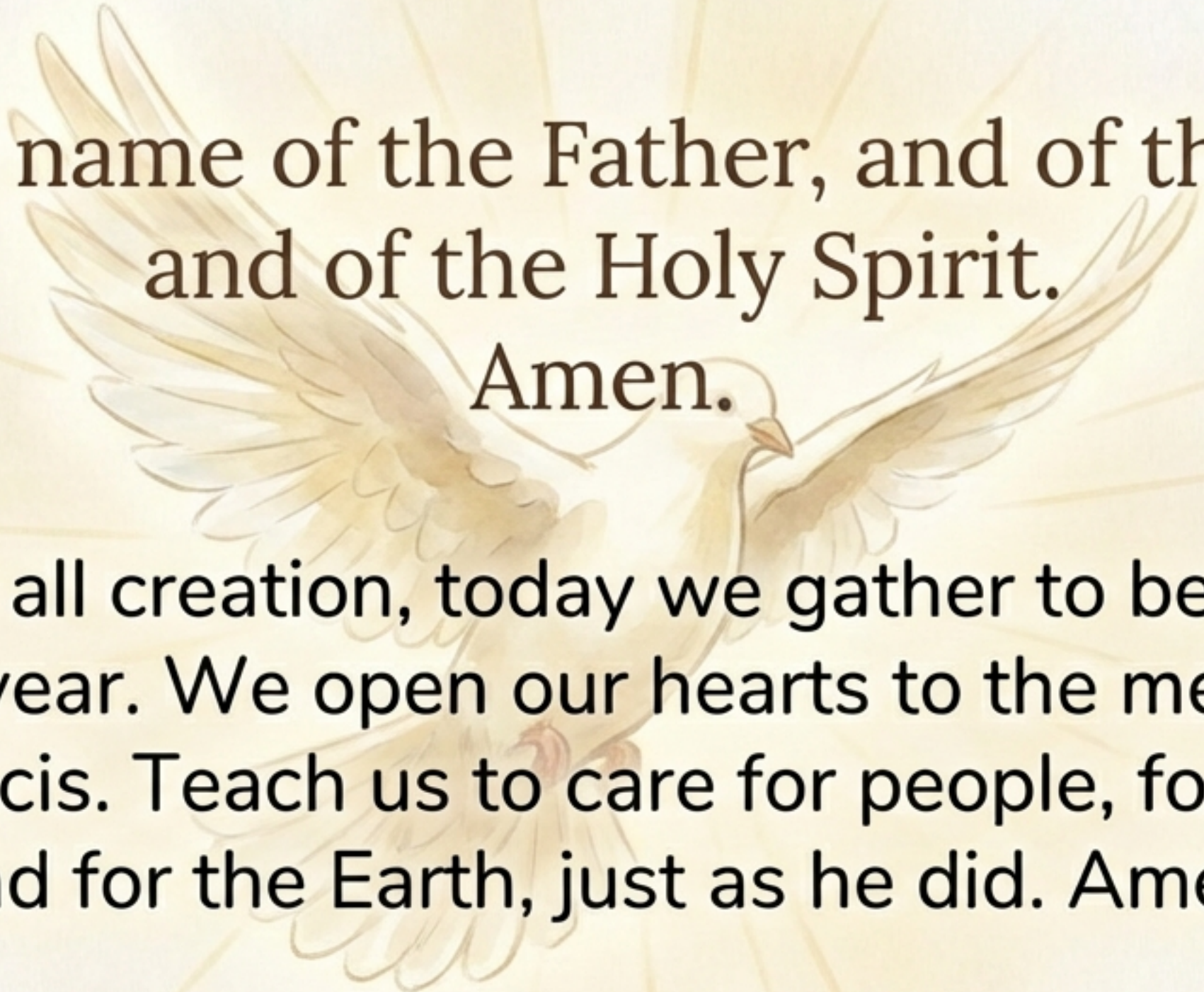
**Wolf:** He is the patron saint of animals.

**Cross:** He followed Jesus' way of love and peace.

**Crib:** He created the first nativity to show Jesus' birth.







In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

God of all creation, today we gather to begin this special year. We open our hearts to the message of St Francis. Teach us to care for people, for peace, and for the Earth, just as he did. Amen.



# Laudato Si' — Praise Be to You

## Singing Our Praise

These words come from a prayer by St Francis praising God for creation.

They are also the name of Pope Francis' letter to the world, asking us to care for our "common home".

*Laudato Si, O Mi Signor  
Laudato Si, O Mi Signor  
Laudato Si, O Mi Signor  
Laudato Si, O Mi Signor*

**Discuss with your partner: What is one thing you would like to praise God for today?**



# Psalm 148



Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all shining stars...



Praise the Lord from the earth, sea creatures and all depths...



Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.



# One Family of Creation



St Francis was inspired by the Psalm. He believed everything God made was part of one family. He called the Sun his 'Brother' and the Earth his 'Sister'. He wrote the 'Canticle of Creation' to praise God for these gifts. Today, we are called to treat the world not just as "things," but as family.



# A Change of Heart



Francis lived many years ago. At first, he lived a comfortable, wealthy life. But when he met people who were poor and sick, his heart changed. He chose to live simply. He cared for those who were lonely or forgotten. He cared for animals, plants, and the Earth.



# The Wolf of Gubbio



In the town of Gubbio, a wolf frightened the people. They wanted to use force. But St Francis did not use anger. He spoke gently to the wolf and made a deal of peace.

Francis showed us that care and peace take courage. He proved that love can change hearts instead of fear.



# Watching St Francis in Action

We will watch a simple story about St Francis during this special year dedicated by Pope Leo XIV.



**As you watch, think about this question:  
How does St Francis show care for people and for creation?**



# Living Like Jesus

## Catholic Social Teaching



**Care for Creation** — God's world is precious and must be protected.



**Human Dignity** — Every person matters and is loved by God.



**Option for the Poor** — We care especially for those who need help most.



**Peace & Common Good** — We are all responsible for one another.



# Quiet Reflection

Who might need my care or kindness today?

How can I show care with my words or actions?


What is one thing I can thank God for right now?

How can I be a peacemaker today?






# The Canticle of Creation Prayer




**Child 1:** Praise be to you, God, for Brother Sun, who gives light and warmth.

**ALL:** Help us care for your world.




**Child 2:** Praise be to you, God, for Sister Moon and the stars.

**ALL:** Help us care for your world.



**Child 3:** Praise be to you, God, for Brother Wind, clouds, and rain.

**ALL:** Help us care for your world.



**Child 4/5:** Praise be to you for Sister Water and Sister Earth.

**ALL:** Help us care for your world.





# Your Mission Today

Choose one way to be a channel of peace:



Care for something living (a plant or pet).



Speak kindly and gently to others.



Forgive someone who has hurt you.



Protect a shared space (pick up litter, tidy up).



Reduce waste or reuse something.





# Closing Prayer

God of creation, teach us to live simply, to care deeply, and to walk gently with one another and with the Earth. Through the example of St Francis, help us be people of peace, care, and hope. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of  
Amen.

of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.



Closing Song: Make Me a Channel of Your Peace