

TRANSITUS OF ST FRANCIS



IN HONOUR OF
THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE DECLARATION OF
ST FRANCIS AS PATRON OF ECOLOGY

Suitable music and songs may be added throughout this liturgy template

Entrance Hymn

Praises Before Each Hour

(The celebrant and the readers and ministers process in. A leader chants plainly the first part while all present respond)

V: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was and who is to come.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: Worthy art Thou, O Lord, our God, to receive praise, glory and honor, and benediction.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honor and benediction.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: Let us bless the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: All you works of the Lord, bless the Lord.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: Give praise to God all you His servants and you that fear Him, little and great.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: Let the heavens and the earth praise Him, the Glorious, and every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, in the seas and all that are in them.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

V: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

R: *Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.*

Introduction

Leader: Let us bless our Lord and God, living and true

All: To him we offer all praise, all glory, all honour, all blessing, and every good forever. Amen

Leader: Brothers and sisters, a very ancient tradition draws us together on the eve of this St Francis' Festival to celebrate his Transitus: the final stage of his journey home to God. While rejoicing in the saint's holy death and glorious entry into heaven, we give thanks to God the Father, that in his Son, and by his Spirit's power, we too can welcome death as our "sister", and trusting in his mercy, can live now in the sure hope of resurrection.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you

All: And with your spirit.

Leader: Let us pray ...

(moment of silence)

Leader: Lord God, on this night you gave to our holy father Francis, the Poverello of Assisi, the reward of perfect beatitude. In your love, lead us who celebrate his Transitus, to follow closely in his footsteps, and come, in our turn, to worship you face to face, in a joy that knows no ending. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Reading from the Life of St Francis

Reader 1:

Two years after he had received the stigmata – that is 20 years after the beginning of his religious life – Francis has to be brought to St. Mary of the Portiuncula, so that he might yield of his spirit where he had first received the spirit of grace. He had himself placed naked upon the naked ground. He waited without fear for his triumph, and said his brothers: “I have done what was mine to do may Christ teach you what you are to do.”

He spent a few days that remained before his death in praise, teaching his companions whom he loved so much and whom he called to his side to praise Christ with him. He himself, in so far as he was able, broke forth in this psalm: *I cry to the Lord with my voice; to the Lord I make loud supplication.*

He exhorted his brothers with fatherly affection to love God. He spoke a long time about practicing patience and poverty, setting the counsels of the holy Gospel ahead of all other prescriptions. Then he stretched out his arms over them in the form of a cross, because he loved that sign, and blessed all brothers, both present and absent, in the power and in the name of the Crucified.

He also invited all creatures to praise God, and exhorted them to love God. It's sort of death itself to give praise, and going joyfully to meet it, he invited to make its lodging with him. "Welcome," he said, "my sister death."

When he had finished his inspiring admonition, he told his brothers to bring the book of the Gospels and asked to have the Gospel according to St. John read to him from the place that begins: *Before the feast of Passover.* He was recalling that most holy supper which the Lord celebrated as his last supper with his disciples.

Reader 2:

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John (13: 1-17)

Before the feast of Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. And during supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded.

He came to Simon Peter; and Peter said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but he is clean all over; and you are clean, but not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "You are not all clean."

When he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you as example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Reader 1:

Then when many brothers had gathered about, whose father and leader he was, and while they were standing reverently at his side awaiting his blessed death and happy end, his most holy soul was freed from his body and received into the abyss of God's glory, and Francis fell asleep in God.

The whole city of Assisi rushed in a body and the whole region hastened to see the wonderful things of God which the Lord of Majesty had made manifest in his holy servant.

At the hour of the holy man's passing, when it was already twilight of the falling night, larks – birds that are friends of the light and dread the shadows of dusk – gathered in a great flock over the roof of the house and, circling around for a long time with unusual joy, they offered testimony, giving delight as well as confirmation, of the glory of the saint, who so often had invited them to divine praise.

Homily or Reflection



(Celebrant blesses the bread)

Canticle of the Creatures

(A cantor or leader chants the first part while all present respond. Likewise a musical version may be substituted. Meanwhile all present take candles and light them, leaving them on an altar or the floor near a picture or statue of St. Francis.)

V: Most High, all powerful, good Lord, yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessing. To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no man is worthy to mention Your name.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised be you, my Lord, with all your creatures, especially Brother Sun, who is the day and through whom you give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor, and bears a likeness of you Most High One.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised by you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven you formed them clear, precious, and beautiful.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised by you, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which you give sustenance to your creatures.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble, and precious, and chaste.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised be you, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you light the night and he is beautiful and playful, robust, and strong.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised be you, my Lord, through our Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised be you, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for you, Most High, they shall be crowned.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

V: Praised be you, my Lord, through Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin. Blessed are those whom death will find I your most holy will, for the second death will do them no harm.

R: *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

(After the candles have been lit and all have returned to their seats, the intercessions are read.)

Celebrant:

Through the gospel, the Lord Jesus calls us to share in his glory. Let us make our prayer with him to our heavenly Father.

R: *Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.*

Leader: We pray for all nations, that they may seek the way that leads to peace; that human rights and freedom may be everywhere respected, and that the world's resources may be generously shared.

R: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the Church, that her leaders may be faithful ministers of your word, that all her members may be strong in faith and hope and that you may be recognized in the love she bears to all.

R: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our families, and the community in which we live, that we may find you in them.

R: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for ourselves, that in the coming week we may serve others in our work, and find peace we rest.

R: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the sick, those ill at home or in hospital: for all those who have asked our prayers or who need them. Lord, give them your comfort and strength.

R: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the faithful departed: that through your mercy they may rest in peace.

R: Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Celebrant: Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us offer to the Father the prayer Christ Jesus has taught us.

All: Our Father ...

Final Prayer

Celebrant: Let us pray ...

God, you granted the reward of eternal life to our Blessed Father Francis. Grant that we who celebrate with tender devotion and filial affection the memory of his passing from death to new life, may ourselves one day have the joy of sharing with him the gifts of the heavenly Kingdom.

Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

The Blessing of St Francis

(A minister or reader calls upon everyone to bow their heads for the blessing. The celebrant leads the blessing with everyone responding "Amen.")

V: May the Lord Bless you and keep you.

R: Amen

V: May He turn his face to you, and have mercy on you.

R: Amen

V: May He turn His countenance to you and give you peace.

R: Amen

V: May Almighty God bless you the Father, + and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

R: Amen.

V: Let us bless the Lord.

R: And give God thanks.

Concluding Hymn

(A suitable hymn in honor of St. Francis or in honour of God's creation is sung after which all take the blessed bread and depart).

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