

Burial Office for a Beloved Animal

The opening anthem may be sung or said.

Canticle 18 A Song to the Lamb *Dignus es*
from *Enriching Our Worship 1*, pages 28-29

Revelation 4:11; 5:9-10, 13

Splendor and honor and royal power *
are yours by right, O God most High,
For you created everything that is, *
and by your will they were created and have their being;

And yours by right, O Lamb that was slain, *
for with your blood you have redeemed for God,
From every family, language, people, and nation, *
a royal priesthood to serve our God.

And so, to the One who sits upon the throne, *
and to Christ the Lamb,
Be worship and praise, dominion and splendor, *
for ever and for evermore.

Officiant God be with you.
People And also with you.
Officiant Let us pray.

God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day *N.*'s beloved companion *A.* We thank you for giving *her* to *N.* and to us to be a friend, and an abundant source of love, affection, and joy on *N.*'s journey in this life. In your compassion, comfort us who grieve. Give us faith to commit this beloved creature to your care, and hear our hope that we all may one day be reunited with our animals in the heavenly places, where you live and reign for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Readings

One or more of the following passages may be read. Other suitable readings might include: Job 12:7-10; Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 148:7-14; Matthew 10:27-31; Mark 16:14-15; Romans 8:19-25; Revelation 4:1-2, 6b-7, 9-11, 5:5.

Psalm 104:24, 28b-30

O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
When you open your hand
they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

Tobit 5:21-6:2a

Canticle 12 A Song of Creation *Benedicite, omnia opera Domini*
from *Enriching Our Worship 1*, page 26

II. The Earth and Its Creatures

Let the earth glorify the Lord,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.
Glorify the Lord, O mountains
and hills, and all that grows upon the earth,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams,*
O whales and all that move in the waters.
All birds of the air, glorify the Lord,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild,*
and all you flocks and herds [and all you cats and dogs].
O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord,*
sing praise and give honor for ever.

The Prayers of the People

Creator of all, you gave us the rainbow as the sign of your everlasting covenant with every living creature: Help us to trust in your covenant of faithfulness to A., a part of your beloved creation; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

Loving God, you brought this beloved animal into the life of N. [and N.] to share kindness, joy, and faithful companionship: Receive our thanks and praise for the community between your animals and your people and all the ways we bless each other's lives; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

Gracious God, you have given us the responsibility and blessing of caring for animals during their earthly life: If in any way we have failed in that responsibility, we ask for your pardon and trust in your mercy; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

These biddings may be used when appropriate
God our wisdom, bring your peace to N., in whose hands the decision to end the suffering of A. was placed. Give N. and all of us hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

Holy God, we pray for N., for the companion *she* has lost, and for all pets, animal companions, and all the animals of the earth. We ask for the wisdom to preserve their dwelling places, to heal their diseases and relieve their suffering, and to respect their place in the world; in your goodness,
Blessed Creator, hear our prayer.

A period of silence is kept.

The Lord's Prayer may then be said

<i>Officiant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And also with you.
<i>Officiant</i>	Let us pray.

Officiant and People

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

If a burial is to take place, the remains are now placed in the grave and the mourners may cast earth over them, or fill in the grave completely. Cremated remains may be scattered or buried, after the Officiant offers this prayer

We return the remains of A. to the earth
and entrust *her* to your everlasting loving-kindness;
for you care for us and all that you have made,
and your mercy is over all your works,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Officiant continues

Lord of all Creation, you love everything that you have made.
We pray to you for A. and for all those animal companions
whom we love but see no longer.
Hold them in your wisdom and love.
Ease the grief of those who mourn.
Receive our thanks for the joyful memories of A.
Widen our hearts to receive those animals who will yet need our care,
and give us generous and kind hearts toward all your creatures;
through Jesus our Redeemer and Friend,
who said, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news
to the whole creation." *Amen.*

<i>Officiant</i>	Alleluia. Christ is risen.
<i>People</i>	The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.
<i>Officiant</i>	Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
<i>People</i>	Thanks be to God.

When appropriate, this confession may be said at the start of the Prayers of the People, followed by the absolution on page 353 of The Book of Common Prayer.

God of compassion, have mercy upon us;
bring healing to our relationship with all your creation.
Forgive us for our mistreatment and neglect
of the creatures with whom we share your earth,
for what we have done to harm them,
and for what we have not done to help them.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
We ask you to fill us with your Spirit,
that we may care for one another and for all your creatures,
according to your will and in the fullness of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers Suitable for Use in Church or for Other Gatherings, at the Adoption, Illness, Loss, or Death of Companion, Service, or Other Beloved Animals

At the adoption of an animal

God, whose nature and whose name is Love: We thank you for this new relationship between *N.* [*and N.*] and this animal *A.* Let their home be filled with kindness and care; let them be the delight of one another's hearts; and watch over and keep them from this day forward in safety and peace; for your Name's sake. *Amen.*

For a lost or missing animal

Good Shepherd, whose eye is upon each creature, and who never slumbers nor sleeps: Hear our prayers for *N.* and for *her* lost animal *A.* Calm their anxiety by the grace of your Holy Spirit, protect and keep them, and bring them to the time of reunion. *Amen.*

For an infirm animal

God, whose compassion and mercy are over all your works: Hear our prayers for *A.*, this creature of yours, in *her* infirmity. Free *her* from suffering and from fear; bring *her* healing and repose; and comfort the hearts of those burdened with anxiety [*especially N. and N.*]. We pray through your beloved Child Jesus and by the power of your Spirit. *Amen.*

For one whose beloved animal has died

God, the refuge and strength of those who mourn: Hear our prayers for *N.* [*and N.*], who grieves the death of *her* beloved *A.* Bring solace in loneliness, peace in distress, and comfort in remembering; and lift *her* heart in thanksgiving for the gift of companionship *she has* known. Be near to all who have mourned the loss of dear animals; this we pray in Jesus' name. *Amen.*

At the euthanizing of an infirm animal

God, whose wisdom is over all your works: Be with us as we act to end the suffering of *A.*, this creature of yours entrusted to our care. Our power to heal has reached its end, and so we put our trust in your mercy and love to gather into your sacred heart all that is lost and broken. We pray through the kindness of Christ and the grace of your Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

For the suffering of animals during warfare

Eternal God, the comfort and peace of all your creatures: Hear our prayers for all animals that suffer in times of war, especially for those that bear burdens, those that serve as food, those that detect mines, those that search for the missing and the dead, and for wild creatures in the path of war's destruction. May your divine assistance be with them according to their need; and may our swords be beaten into plowshares and our hearts be softened toward animals of every kind; for they are yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

At the burial of a farm animal

Most gracious, good Lord, we are the people of your pasture and the sheep of your hand: We thank you for placing us among the beasts of the field and allowing us to care for them, and to receive from them food and clothing to meet our necessities. We grieve this day the death of A., and we return to you a creature of your own making, one who served as an effective sign of the generosity of your love for us; through Jesus Christ our Good Shepherd, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

At the death of a wild animal

Almighty God, who makes the beasts of the wild move in beauty and show forth the glory of your Name: We grieve the death of this creature, in whose living and dying the power of your Spirit was made manifest. We reverence the loss of that which was never ours to claim but only to behold with wonder; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*