

St. Mary's Garden Blessing 2023

Today, we come to bless this intersection of heaven and earth - this piece of creation that has been entrusted to us, and to good work that will be done here by the earth and its stewards. We come with conviction that God is the author and perfecter of our work, God has called us to this work, and God will accompany us and all who care for the land in this garden. So come, let us worship!

Let us pray.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, who in your self-emptying love gathered up and reconciled all creation to God. Innumerable galaxies of the heavens worship you. Creatures that grace the earth rejoice in you. All those in the deepest seas bow to you in adoration. As with them we give you praise, grant that we may cherish the earth, our home, and live in good harmony with this good creation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Blessing of Plants and Seeds

Friends, the journey this year begins with seeds, and these seedlings which have already sprouted. Through the planting of seeds, nurturing new plants, and thoughtful harvest, we become participants in God's abundant miracle, where God creates anew and provides for all He has made.

Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. You have given us every kind of seed-bearing plant for food, a sign of your abundant grace. Bless these seeds, pregnant with life, who show us the Easter mystery of new life coming from death and burial. May they burst forth soon with growth from earth, rain and sun. And may we never grow weary in doing good, for we are sure that we shall reap a great harvest if we do not give up.

Creator, in your boundless grace,

Hear our prayer.

Blessing of the Water

Friends, today we celebrate water, life's most necessary nutrition. As winter ice thaws into spring rains, we celebrate the living water that sustains all of creation. In our baptisms, we are participants of life that overcomes the sting of death.

Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. We give you thanks that as Christ entered the waters of baptism, he joined the chaos of the world all the way to the cross, and in rising from that water and death, shows us the way of eternal life. Grant that as we sprinkle this water across our garden, a place of life, may it, and us, be refreshed inwardly by the power of the Holy Spirit and continue to walk in the new life of Christ. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Creator, in your boundless grace,
Hear our prayer.

Blessing of the Soil

Friends, we honor and celebrate these garden beds. Though we often talk about them as "dirt," we remember that soil is itself a rich ecosystem of minerals, living creatures, organic and inorganic particles, all placed here by God's grand design. Let us honor this soil, our partner in this work of new life.

Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. We give you thanks for planting us in the rich soil of your divine Word, giving us life and health, support and strength. Bless this soil, that as we have been supported by the diversity of your wondrous creation, that these plants might be nurtured by good soil, and bring us a harvest worthy of your heavenly abundance. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Creator, in your boundless grace,
Hear our prayer.

Blessing of the People

Friends, today we give thanks for each other: for the congregation of St. Mary's who gathers in this place and around tables to commune with God and each other; for community partners who do the sacramental work of turning produce into food; and for the community of Westminster, who in the act of eating turns food into nutrition, into life, into service. We give thanks for each and every person who will be touched by this work, and we celebrate that in some small way, in this place, we truly see thy Kingdom coming, and thy will being done, on this earth as it is in heaven. May we never lose sight of those we serve, and may we commit ourselves to the service of our neighbors.

Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. In the creation of the world, you said that it is not good for us to be alone. Neither, O God, is it good for us to walk this path of faith by ourselves. You have sent to us neighbors – partners in this congregation, partners in our community, partners who receive our work with gladness – and in all of them we have seen your face. We give you thanks for the opportunity to contribute to our community, to make a more just and generous world. We ask your blessing on all who call us friends, and may we ever seek to be a greater blessing to all whom you love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Creator, in your boundless grace,

Hear our prayer.

Blessing of Farmers

Friends, it is right that we remember those who are called to vocational acts of service. Gifted with unique abilities, filled with passion and conviction, we celebrate the unique call of God in the lives of people. Today, it is right and good that we remember those who we call "farmer," those whose faith is carried out close to land, plant, and animal. We honor their work, we heed their call to care for all creation and our neighbor, we pray God's mercy on all that burdens them, and we ask God's abundant blessings on their vocation.

Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. You formed the human in your image to be partner with you. You have blessed farmers by calling them to work with the land and its creatures, providing nourishment and health for all. Let your word now take root in their hearts and lives, to produce a rich harvest of justice for all creation. Let all who work with the land be blessed with dignity, their homes blessed with health, and their labor blessed with safety. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Creator, in your boundless grace,

Hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

God of all Creation, we believe that we can come to know you in this place. With hope, we look for the land to show us your nearness and fidelity, our yields will show us your creativity and abundance, our work will show us our purpose and power, and these gifts will show us your compassion. So we commit this place to the work of Word and Sacrament, the work of gardening and ecology, and the work of compassion and liberation. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.