

The Rev. Jay Lawlor Reflects on Saint Francis of Assisi, love of pets, and support for HELP the Animals in Richmond, IN

The Rev. Jay Lawlor reflects on St. Francis of Assisi, how the love of pets exemplifies unconditional love, and his connection to H.E.L.P. the Animals.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, US, February 13, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rev. Jay Lawlor](#) commented in his recent [sermon](#) on [Saint Francis of Assisi](#) that Francis was "A man who devoted his life in service to the poor, the care of animals, and for the earth. Francis lived simply, yet boldly proclaimed Jesus' Gospel." The Rev. Lawlor continued by stating "Our calling is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, like Francis did, in caring for the most vulnerable, in serving those on the margins of society, of proclaiming that Jesus came to lift burdens and transform injustices toward God's justice. And what does this take? It takes a simple desire to love with the heart of Jesus and serve as the hands of Jesus."



The Rev. Jay Lawlor and his dog Rocket (L. enjoying nature / R. Pet Blessing at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Richmond, IN

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Our calling is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, like Francis did [...]. Our relationship with our pets shows us something of the love of God for us – an unconditional love given to us.”

The Rev. Jay Lawlor

Loving as the heart and hands of Jesus is a central theme for the Rev. Jay Lawlor. It is one reason he admires Saint Francis so much. There is also the association of Saint Francis with the love of animals, particularly our pets.

The Rev. Jay Lawlor has always loved animals and had dogs and cats growing up. As an adult, the Rev. Lawlor has counted Simon (cat), Joy (dog), and Rocket (dog) among members of the Lawlor family. Simon and Joy are now deceased, and Rocket is the newest member of the family. "We adopted Rocket in July of 2017," said the Rev. Jay Lawlor. "He is a Beagle-Hound mix and just the sweetest dog," the Rev. Lawlor continued. The Lawlor family adopted

Rocket from the H.E.L.P the Animals rescue shelter in Richmond, Indiana.

"We were searching animal shelters online and immediately fell in love with Rocket from his profile. His big floppy ears and warm brown eyes captured our hearts," said the Rev. Jay Lawlor. The Lawlor's visited H.E.L.P. the Animals to meet Rocket in person. Upon meeting him it was evident just how loving and affectionate Rocket is. "He's a medium size dog, weighing 34 pounds, but thinks he is a lap

dog," said the Rev. Jay Lawlor. "He loves to sit on the couch and rest his head in your lap," added the Rev. Lawlor.

It is the love Rocket shows which the Rev. Jay Lawlor says exemplifies the unconditional love of God we all receive. In his sermon for the Saint Francis Pet Blessing service at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, IN, the Rev. Lawlor stated:

"Our beloved pets are companions on the way and show us unconditional love. Yet they are vulnerable and rely on us for their care. Saint Francis said: "God wants us to help animals, if they need help." Our relationship with our pets shows us something of the love of God for us – an unconditional love given to us. It is unearned, yet is given freely and abundantly. It is also an example of how we are to respond to others. The love and care we show our animals is an expression of our care for God's creation. It is love for creatures who are vulnerable and rely on us for their well-being."

Interestingly, there was a connection between St. Paul's and the H.E.L.P. the Animals shelter from where the Lawlor family had adopted Rocket. The Rev. Jay Lawlor was serving as a visiting priest at St. Paul's in Richmond, IN for the pet blessing service the October after adopting Rocket. For over 25 years St. Paul's has partnered with H.E.L.P. Animals for the pet blessing service. Naturally, Rocket attended the service with the Rev. Lawlor. They were joined by pets of St. Paul's and some of the animals available for adoption from H.E.L.P. the Animals.

"It was a wonderful day to celebrate Saint Francis, our pet family members, and support H.E.L.P. the Animals in the wonderful work they do in caring for animals and helping them find forever homes," said the Rev. Jay Lawlor.

The Rev. Jay Lawlor's sermon for the Saint Francis Pet Blessing service can be read at <https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/feast-st-francis-assisi-blessing-animals-sermon-rev-jay-lawlor-oct-1-2017/>

A reflection on Saint Francis of Assisi by the Rev. Jay Lawlor is available at <https://www.therevjaylawlor.com/reflections-saint-francis-assisi/>

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