

OCTOBER 2017

Dear Friends,

October 4th is the feast day of St. Francis, one of my favorite saints. We will have our 3rd annual Blessing of the Animals on October 14th in honor of St. Francis. He is beloved and revered for his attitude toward nature and animals, believing that all of creation is good and beautiful, and that all of creation (humans, animals, rocks and hills) is called to praise God. The core of St. Francis' ministry goes deeper than just a reverence for creation. It dwells in the heart of service and love that God gives to each one of us. St. Francis was born into a wealthy merchant family but gave away all that he had and lived a joyful life in extreme poverty and serving the poor. He believed that we are each called "To follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and to walk in his footsteps". For over 800 years he has inspired men and women to find their wealth and happiness in the richness of the love of God and in the beauty of nature and of sharing that love and beauty with others.

It is fitting that we are greeting our visitors from Uganda—who themselves are dedicated to serving others—and kicking off our fundraising project to support the Kasese Community Health and Education Foundation in October near the feast of St. Francis. Feeding others and helping others to feed themselves is a way of sharing love and beauty that unifies us one with the other and keeps us all present in the beautiful and sustaining gift of creation.

*Praised be You my Lord through our Sister,
Mother Earth who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.
Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon
for love of You and bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
By You Most High, they will be crowned.*

From *Canticle of the Sun*, also known as *Laudes Creaturarum* (Praise of the Creatures),
written by St. Francis of Assisi.

Your sister in Christ,
Mother Bonnie+