

Activities on Sunday morning:

- **Mindfulness** – Outside - Walking Meditation, and a game Courage Tag.
- **Reflection questions on the Meaning of Courage**
- **Story: St. Francis (Christian Saint day celebrated October 4th)**
adapted from St. Francis and the Friendly Beasts by Margaret Hodges.

At first, as a young boy of a rich silk merchant in Assisi, Italy who had all he needed, Francis didn't notice the many people who were struggling to make ends meet living all around him. His modus operandi was "Eat, Drink and Be Merry." But then he was taken ill, and had time to think, look outside the window, to see the poor, and something moved him. He decided he had to do something. When he was better, he took some silk and horse from his father's stables to another town (without mentioning it to his father) and sold them. He brought the proceeds of the sale to a church where the priest refused it (upon hearing the story of how the young man had gotten so much money). Francis left it anyway on a windowsill, but it wasn't long till his father had the money back and called his son.

Francis' father was livid! "I gave you all you could need and more! And you steal from me?" Francis was kicked out of his home. As his mother wept, he returned the fine silk clothes, sturdy shoes and left his home barefoot, wearing a simple brown robe with rope tied around his waist.

Francis stopped along the way worked for his food, or begged for it when there was no work, and helped people. As he walked he connected with the animals noting the birds were beautiful feathers given by the creator and they didn't have to sew or weave. Birds had food and water in field and streams. He took turns "singing a song" with a nightingale into a fine evening.

Soon a few other men joined him and followed the rule he gave them:

(^ By Sadao Watanabe)

"As you travel, take no food or money with you, and give whatever you have to anyone who asks for help." They called themselves "brothers" as they went, 2 by 2, preaching and helping the poor.



Another famous story about St. Francis and his connection to animals was in the town of Gubbio.

A wolf had been killing both sheep and people in town, and the town was terrified. St. Francis walked up near the snarling animal and said "Brother Wolf, you have done much harm here, killing animals and even people, but I know that you were hungry. If these people promise to feed you will you promise not to harm them or their animals?" It is said that the wolf came right up to Francis and offered a paw, and then followed Francis as he came toward the village.

From that time on, the people of the village fed that wolf everyday and he went about the town like a friendly dog. When he died of old age, the people of Gubbio missed him – as if he had always been a friend.

TAKE IT HOME

- How do you think St. Francis was courageous?
- [Feast of St Francis of Assisi](#) (Christian) - Oct. 4 – learn more about the Feast day.
- Can you think to yourself at first - of a time when you saw courage, or felt it in yourself? A time when you followed your heart, let go, stood up for what is right or faced suffering with dignity?