

Bird said, “I have flown around a lot in this marvelous sky enjoying freedom and observing the wonders below from my heights above. However, in the evening I see the stars and every now and then, for some reason, letter “**H**” appears, I went through my alphabet and it finally centered on the word **HONESTY**. Yes, we birds of a feather gather in groups on fences, lines and other places of rest. I must admit we gossip a lot. Who can fly higher, faster, with great ease and agility? We become a pecking order. We are not sincere to ourselves or to others in our species. I am going to force that word **HONESTY** on the minds of all humans, that will help each to live in peace and freedom.”

Animal, Leo was last. “God made me strong and powerful and full of **DIGNITY**. I can do things that others are not able to do. However, I have been given the insight to see that all others likewise have a great **DIGNITY** of their own. That I have come to recognize. Each of us is gifted in specific ways and that is why we can share or learn to share with others our own God-given gifts. It seems I heard that saying before, something about learning to serve each other. I do not like that word **DIGNITY**. It is powerful and yet needs to become so humble. We, each of us are blessed with gifts and talents. None of them came from us but from a gracious and loving Creator. We must be thankful. We must **RESPECT** and be **HONEST** about our **DIGNITY**.

Once Leo, **animal**, had ended, there appeared joy and happiness around them. Leo with one mighty paw attempted to wipe the tears from his eyes. **Bird** circled the sky with great loops encircling around the other two friends. **Fish** spewed forth countless gulps from the water below and large bubbles were dancing around the top of the pool. CEO **Fish** called the other two companions together, “Let us sing! **Bird**, will you kindly give us note? Be careful that it is not too lofty! Let us sing!

*All creatures of our God and King,
lift up our voices and let us sing.
Alleluia, Alleluia*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

How have you been an example of Respect? Honesty? Dignity?

As an adult, how have you modeled these attitudes in your life for others to see? In your home? Family? Place of work? Playground? Church? Neighborhood?

ACTION:

Take some time out with your family to visit some place that is new to everyone. During your time there, talk about how **you, as a family**, might practice the lessons of **Respect, Honesty or Dignity** during your visit.

PRAYER:

Loving God, of peace and justice, be with us as we work and pray towards changing the hearts of all who use violence as a way of showing our love and concern for our siblings, Water, Air, Plants and Animals, in the created world.

AMEN

Justice, Peace & the
Integrity of Creation

All Creatures of Our God and King

By John F. dePaemelaere, OFM

A Children's Story for Adults About
Respect, Honesty and Dignity



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PROVINCE OF
SANTA BARBARA

All Creatures of Our God and King by John F. dePaemelaere, OFM

After a large Tsunami, three of God's species were left on a new, *a new place*. There were just three of them, **Animal, Bird and Fish**. Following introductions each began using these species as names. Plans were being made how they may survive in the land, on their own, away from their original dwelling places. From the very beginning fish seemed to be the C.E.O. "My friends, my companions, let us work together as a team and assist each other, shall we shake on that?" "I hand you a fin, no not that kind (five dollar bill), but my fin, okay?"

All in agreement. "My buddies, I am somewhat helpless and out of water. I need water and a pool." **Animal**, a modern marvel, no *God's* marvel, the mega Machine, commenced with those powerful paws to send earth in many directions after locating a place near a stream of water. **Bird** meanwhile, with intuitive behavior with the gift of making nests and other necessities of a bird's life, flew around in search of twigs, small branches. So when the pool was ready **Bird** would dam up a section of the stream and water would flow in for **Fish**. How delighted was **Fish** when submerged into its home, bubbles of joy came rising to the surface.

The next gathering centered upon nourishment for each. **Fish** would catch whatever landed on the water's surface. "I can feed each of you with fish eggs for breakfast." **Bird** said: "I can circle in the sky, looking down at earth and find trees with

fruit, bushes and vines with berries and those will add to our meals." **Animal**, the last to speak: "I don't want you to laugh or to make fun of me when I tell you: I am a vege ... vegetable... no, I am a *vegetarian*. I can dig and find vegetables of all kinds. You will be happy!" No one laughed about **Animal's** eating habits. They continued to enjoy each other's company and were so content with their daily meals, serving freely. And always at evening time, before the Sun made it's final setting each day, they gathered around the pool to discuss all of each day's happiness in their lives.

One evening the discussion became a bit serious. Again it was **Fish** who brought up the subject, in a joyful manner. "My companions we have had our Creator's assistance in our companionship together. Up to this time we have not seen nor heard of another species, the human person. Would it not be wonderful to pass on our joyful relationship to those who be all around us? Let's give that some thought. Rest for the night and when we gather the next evening, do have some ideas in mind." "God bless you!"

The following evenfall the three companions gathered around the pool. Ground rules were laid. Each to have a turn, limit three minutes or less. No interruptions. Short, concise and to the point. Each were overjoyed to have a turn. The three species had learned so much from their experiences together. Their sharing, their concern for one another, the countless joys that come into their lives. Someone needed to record their findings - their thoughts.

Bird said, "My handwriting is not the best. Somewhat scratchy and of course a bit flighty at times." **Fish** responded, "I would like to but I do not have any underwater materials for writing. **Animal** jumped in, "Some years back I happened to be in a place, I guess its called a human dwelling. A very young human was there and this species had some blocks with a different letter on each. I learned the alphabet and could put them together for words. I made mistakes in spelling and still do. But I am willing to be a scribe, the secretary for our group!"

"Thank you!" with great joy, exclaimed the C.E.O. **Fish**. "**Animal**, can we give you a name? What about 'Leo?'" Leo began beaming with wonderful enthusiasm. His beginning: A letter to all members of the **human** species wherever they are... **Fish** commenced first. "For days I have swum around my pool and the one word which bubbled up time and again is that of **RESPECT**. We, three definitely manifested that in our behavior toward one another. I, beginning somewhat helplessly, was greatly assisted by the two of you in making a pool for my survival.

You both **RESPECTED** me. And I truly **RESPECT** each of you. I wonder if the human species knows how to **RESPECT** each other? How happy they would be if this lesson was learned by each."