

God and St Francis discuss lawns

By Kathy Gates

God to Saint Francis Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But, all I see are these green rectangles.

Saint Francis It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

God Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

Saint Francis Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

God The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

Saint Francis Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it-sometimes twice a week.

God They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

Saint Francis Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

God They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

Saint Francis No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

God Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

Saint Francis Yes, Sir.

God These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

Saint Francis You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

God What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn, they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life.

Saint Francis You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

God No!? What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter to keep the soil moist and loose?

Saint Francis After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

God And where do they get this mulch?

Saint Francis They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

God Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

Saint Francis 'Dumb and Dumber', Lord. It's a story about....

God Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.