

Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, Cycle B (1 January 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture passages to note:

Numbers 6: The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you.

Psalms 67: May God bless us in his mercy!

Galatians 4: When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ... so that we might receive adoption as sons and daughters.

Luke 2: The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard were amazed.

† Comment for the day:

Imagine yourself sitting in a barn with a baby when a bunch of rough-looking guys arrive from a nearby field and want to see your newborn. What in the world provoked them? What to do?

One way to think about the scene is to remember that shepherds are people close to nature. They are ever attentive to the environment, looking out for their sheep, especially the lambs, watching for signs good and bad, of safety and danger. On the night when angels gave them lots of signs, they went to check out an unknown, unexpected, newborn baby near their field. Once the two parties met, both were happy – the parents and the shepherds. We can imagine the shepherds doing all they could to assure the baby's well-being. Then the shepherds made it a point to share the good news with others.

These days our planet is sending out all kinds of signs that our environment is in trouble, threatening people's health, well-being and lives. It's important that we like the shepherds pay attention to what is going on around us and then do what we can to keep everyone safe – sheep, babies, adults, the community, mother earth.

This New Year calls us to pay close attention to what is going on in the global environment of our common home – rising temperatures, rising waters, furious hurricanes, huge fires, atmospheric pollution, viral pandemics, famine, massive migrations. God calls us to see and do all we can to keep everyone around us safe and cared for, reducing as we can the threats to life on earth and enhancing the prospects of everyone's well-being.

Mary and Joseph allowed God to work through them and she delivered a Savior to shepherds and threatened people in the dark everywhere. This New Year's Day when we celebrate Mary gives each of us a chance to read the signs of our times as she and the shepherds did theirs. Each year we, like them, are called to allow God to do something similar through us, what's needed for life on earth in 2021.

This resource is provided by Catholic Climate Covenant in collaboration with the Integral Faith Team, a group of male and female religious, priests, and lay people dedicated to serving the Church.

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:**

All it takes is one good person to restore hope. (#71)

A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings. (#91)

One Person of the Trinity entered into the created cosmos, throwing in his lot with it, even to the cross. From the beginning of the world, but particularly through the incarnation, the mystery of Christ is at work in a hidden manner in the natural world as a whole, without thereby impinging on its autonomy. (#99)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That as this new year begins, we will count our blessings on planet earth and put ourselves at the service of others, allowing God to work through us for the blessing and well-being of other people, as Mary did, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That we look kindly on those whose lives have been shattered by COVID-19 and the disastrous impacts of climate-provoked hurricanes, fires, rising seas, and migrations, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com

Webpage: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help

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