

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps and Petitions for the 11th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle B (June 13, 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Ezekiel 17: I, the Lord, bring low the high tree, lift high the lowly tree, wither up the green tree, and make the withered tree bloom.

Psalms 92: The just one shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow. They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Mark 4: The kingdom of God...is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.

† Comments for the Day:

Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* summons all people to care for both God's creation and the poor. It calls everyone toward deep ecological conversion, to a change of heart and habit, and to live in right relationship with God, neighbor and the earth itself. The pope's notion of "integral ecology" points out the connection between all life: that of the planet and of all people, especially the poor and vulnerable who are most affected by environmental degradation and climate change.

In the last year this connection has been highlighted negatively by the advent of COVID. The pandemic has showed how we are part of the same family, vulnerable everywhere to problems that might spring up anywhere. It has also revealed how our individual actions can impact the common good, for better or worse.

In many ways, the message of *Laudato Si'* is not new, but draws on a deep tradition within our faith. Today's readings illustrate how our faith has always recognized the natural world as a revelation of God's power and justice. The passage from Ezekiel reminds us of God's power over nature, and of God's concern for all creatures: It is the Lord who makes the trees bloom and provides a home for the birds of the sky. The psalmist looks to nature to speak of God's justice: the just one will flourish like the palm tree, like the mighty cedars of Lebanon. In sharing his vision of the Kingdom of God, Jesus often uses examples from nature. The parable of the mustard seed alerts us to look for the presence and power of God's word in unexpected places.

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.

There is much to cause alarm when looking at the destruction inflicted on our world, and much work is needed to correct the damage. However, when we contemplate the beauty of God's creation, we also find reason to praise and celebrate. The title of the encyclical comes from the *Canticle of the Creatures*, a prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi that praises God for the wonder and beauty of creation. Pope Francis ends his letter with reference to that same prayer, reminding us of God's ongoing care for us and for creation: "In the heart of this world the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. *Praise be to him!*" (245)

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

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet... The impact of present imbalances is also seen in the premature death of many of the poor. (48)

Human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. (66)

The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion... What [everyone] needs is an "ecological conversion," whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around us. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience. (217)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That as grateful stewards of God's gift of creation, we commit ourselves to care for this magnificent gift, let us pray to the Lord ...

Option 2: For all who suffer environmental destruction or exploitation, that they may know justice and healing, let us pray to the Lord ...

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

Webpage: <https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resources?tid=14>

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