

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps and Petitions for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent, Cycle A (February 26, 2023)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Genesis 2, 3:** The Lord planted a garden in Eden ... made various trees grow that were delightful to look at and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.... God said, "You shall not eat the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden or even touch it, lest you die." ... The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom.

**Psalm 51:** Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

**Romans 5:** For if, by the transgression of the one, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 4:** Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry.... [The devil] showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me."

#### † Comments for the Day:

Our faith story from Genesis on is long and consistent. Humankind – each of us personally, and all of us together in cultures and companies and nations – have been entrusted with an ability to make decisions that have enormous consequences. These decisions affect us as individuals and as a community, and also the planet on which we live. Lent reminds us of that capacity and calls us to ponder the consequences of our decisions.

*Laudato Si'* blows the whistle on us, as it were. It asks us to take a balanced view of both the benefits and the costs of the powerful technology that stamps our culture. This First Sunday of Lent suggests that we see ourselves as Adam and Eve standing before a wondrously beautiful and potentially enriching tree. It asks: Are we using the technocratic power we have developed over time as we should? What norms are we using? What responsibility are we accepting for the consequences?

Adam and Eve made decisions on the basis of what pleased them, but in doing so they inflicted deadly consequences upon humankind. Jesus was tempted to make decisions that would bring him comfort, prestige and power. However, he refused, and so became a source of life and salvation.

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.

Lent gives us an opportunity to reflect on our decisions and their consequences – in the past, the present, and the future. Let us take time over these next forty days to see how we can be more responsible to our sisters and brothers near and far, those born and yet to be, and to all of God’s creatures with whom we share our beautiful planet – "our common home."

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

A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry to the serious detriment of the world around us... I propose that we focus on the dominant technocratic paradigm and the place of human beings and of human action in the world. (101)

Humanity has entered a new era in which our technical prowess has brought us to a crossroads... Technology has remedied countless evils that used to harm and limit human beings. (102)

Technoscience, when well directed, can produce important means of improving the quality of human life. (103)

Yet it must be recognized that... many other abilities which we have acquired, have given us tremendous power... Never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used... In whose hands does all this power lie, or will it eventually end up? It is extremely risky for a small part of humanity to have it. (104)

The fact is that "contemporary man has not been trained to use power well", because our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience.... It is possible that we do not grasp the gravity of the challenges now before us.... We cannot claim to have a sound ethics, a culture and spirituality genuinely capable of setting limits and teaching clear-minded self-restraint. (105)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That at this first week of Lent, we rededicate ourselves to the protection of earth, our common home, let us pray to the Lord....

**Option 2:** That our leaders may realize that technology and science must be wielded with humility and justice, let us pray to the Lord....

### Further Resources

**Feedback:** [info@catholicclimatecovenant.org](mailto:info@catholicclimatecovenant.org)

**Webpage:** [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help)

*Visit our webpage and sign up to receive these resources delivered to your email inbox each month*