

Integral Faith

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



Catholic Climate Covenant™
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

Homily Helps and Petitions for the 20th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A (August 20, 2023)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Isaiah 56: Observe what is right, do what is just; for my salvation is about to come, my justice about to be revealed.... for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Romans 11: By virtue of the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

Matthew 15: "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish."

† Comments for the Day:

Consider for a moment how much worse you feel when you run a fever of 101.3, just 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit above normal. That fever is the equivalent of what our planet – our common home – is facing in the next decade.

The woman in today's gospel cries out for Jesus to heal her ailing daughter, much as many cry to Jesus to help us in fighting climate change. We seek healing, to be made whole. Consequences of the fever affecting our planet will be felt by all people and all things, but more deeply by the poor and vulnerable.

What does it mean to be materially poor? It is to be weak, indigent, at the mercy of others. The poor are truly impoverished, not the result of their own fate or laziness, but rather of greed and indifference. The poor are victims, vulnerable and dependent, the result of a breakdown of human solidarity and communion with God. Material poverty is a subhuman, scandalous condition, averse to human dignity, contrary to the will of God.

Jesus came to put that right, to heal us and make us whole. He came that all might have life, abundant life, flourishing life. God's plan is that all people and all creation might be healed, and become whole and holy. That plan does not mean eliminating the rich or forcing them to give away what they have. Rather, Christ fulfills God's plan by emptying himself, becoming one with the humblest among us, to liberate and accompany us on the path to greater solidarity, toward a fuller human life – for all.

Voluntary sharing as a way of life is the very foundation of all Christian communities. We all need to be more attentive to the cry of the poor, as well as to the cry of the planet. It's not something we can ask or demand that others do without us. It's not a matter of one or the other, because everything is interrelated, interdependent. We need one another and are better together.

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:

The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.... Frequently no measures are taken until after people's health has been irreversibly affected. (21)

The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. (23)

In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest. (158)

Yet all is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start . . . No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. (205)

We must not think that these efforts are not going to change the world. They benefit society, often unbeknown to us, for they call forth a goodness which, albeit unseen, inevitably tends to spread. (212)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That God may guide us in choosing leaders who carefully evaluate and discern in order to make decisions that promote true human development and the inclusion of all, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That all people may come to appreciate the universality of God's saving love, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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