

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 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B (August 22, 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Joshua 24: But the people answered ... “[God] performed those great miracles before our very eyes and protected us along our entire journey and among the peoples through whom we passed. Therefore, we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.

Ephesians 5: Brothers and sisters: be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ.

John 6: Simon Peter answered him, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.”

† Comments for the Day:

According to NASA’s “Global Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet,” *Global climate change has already had observable effects on the environment... Effects that scientists had predicted in the past would result from global climate change are now occurring: loss of sea ice, accelerated sea level rise and longer, more intense heat waves. Scientists have high confidence that global temperatures will continue to rise for decades to come, largely due to greenhouse gases produced by human activity.*

This statement is hard; who can accept it? But we Christians, as part of the global community, have no other choice but to accept these hard facts and move ahead towards participating in the development of a solution that will heal our seriously debilitated planet. Earth, our mother who has been so lavishly generous, now cries for help. To whom shall we go? Clearly, there is nowhere to go if we lend a deaf ear to the cries of a planet desperate for survival!

Pope Francis is even clearer when he challenges believers to live out the faith they profess without contradicting it by their actions. The Judeo-Christian tradition does not mince words in its interpretation of the covenants agreed upon between God and the faithful. So much so that when a rupture occurred it caused a serious breach in the relationship. But God was always ready to heal that break.

In *Laudato Si'*, the pope passionately encourages believers to return to their sources of wisdom to truly rediscover the insight necessary to respond to the contemporary needs of the world. Those who choose to serve the Lord, then, can never ignore those needs or push them off to the side. For to love the Lord is to love all that manifests the presence of the Lord. Recalling that the

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.

original covenant called humanity to be in close relationship with God, neighbor, and creation, and remaining faithful to it is the first step towards reconciliation with all three.

Joshua affirmed, “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” St. Paul advised the Ephesians to “be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ.” And Simon Peter proclaimed, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life.” How can we utter these words ourselves if not believing that to serve, reverence, and believe in the goodness of God also carries the moral responsibility to care for, protect, and treasure all of God's good creation.

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

The creation accounts in the book of Genesis . . . suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin [and includes] attacks on nature. (66)

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)

[Ecological conversion] entails gratitude and gratuitousness, a recognition that the world is God's loving gift, and that we are called quietly to imitate his generosity in self-sacrifice and good works. . . . It also entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. (220)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we, the household of (*parish/community*), may make the conscious commitment to serve the Lord through love and compassion towards our God, our neighbors, and our Mother Earth, let us pray to the Lord...

Option 2: That we, as part of the human family, will recognize our dependence upon one another to restore the dignity of all persons and of our planet, let us pray to the Lord...

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

Webpage: <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.