

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps and Petitions for the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B (August 29, 2021)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Deuteronomy 4:** Moses said to the people: "...In your observance of the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I enjoin upon you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it. Observe them carefully, for thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations, who will hear of all these statutes and say, 'This great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people.'"

**James 1:** Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction.

**Mark 7:** [Jesus responded to the Pharisees and scribes], "Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written: *This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me ... teaching as doctrines human precepts.* You disregard God's commandments but cling to human tradition."

#### † Comments for the Day:

Traditions are sacred. We are a people who value traditions. We look forward to, and enjoy annual celebrations of particularly significant events, and we create new traditions when the old ones wear out. The only problem is that we sometimes reach the point when we no longer remember the origin of a certain observance. Layers upon layers of traditions steeped upon that observance often become more about us than about the original event, obscuring its historical meaning.

Moses assured the Israelites that in order to be a people of honor they must not allow anything to detract from their genuine observance of the law. Adding or subtracting from it would certainly dilute the substance of its truth. They would then be known as a wise and intelligent people if they didn't allow their own interests to veil the power of the law given by God through Moses. Jesus, too, with a bit of impatience, scolds the Pharisees for doing what Moses had long before instructed them not to do: allow human tradition to stomp over the original spirit of God's commandments.

Two people who today remain steadfastly faithful to the original covenant and who honor the commandments of God in their genuine spirit are the recent recipients of the 2021 Goldman Environmental Prize: Liz Chicaje Churay of Amazonian region of Peru, and Sharon Lavigne of

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.

St. James Parish, Louisiana. Both women, led by a fierce commitment to honor the biblical mandate to care for neighbor and creation, are simply good people whose goal was to restore hope. Liz led the fight that successfully protected her region against the invasion of illegal loggers. Sharon led the struggle that successfully foiled the plans for new petrochemical plants to make their home in her parish. These are the ones whom Moses spoke of as wise and intelligent people because they have not allowed their own personal interests and traditions to add to or subtract from the original blessing.

Pure religion, then, says St. James, is a compassionate turn to the cares of the afflicted. In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis underscores this when he says, “by constantly returning to their sources, religions will be better equipped to respond to today’s needs” (200). These are the traditions that we, the people of God, must safeguard and hold most sacred.

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

This responsibility for God’s earth means that human beings, endowed with intelligence, must respect the laws of nature and the delicate equilibria existing between the creatures of this world . . . The laws found in the Bible dwell on relationships, not only among individuals but also with other living things. (68)

Disinterested concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. (208)

Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity . . . social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a “culture of care” which permeates all of society. (231)

## Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That as a people who bear upon our hearts the covenant of God, we will remain faithful, never allowing ourselves to serve God only with our lips but also with our whole being, let us pray to the Lord...

**Option 2:** That we may be known as "a wise and intelligent people" because of the way we honor God, our neighbor, and all of creation, let us pray to the Lord...

## Further Resources

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

**Webpage:** <http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help>

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