

# 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 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A (February 12, 2023)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Sirach 15:** Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him.

**1 Corinthians 2:** We speak a wisdom to those who are mature, not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory.

**Matthew 5:** Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

#### † Comments for the Day:

The Book of Sirach reminds us that our choices matter and can have huge consequences, some of them unintended. Ben Sira calls us to make individual and collective choices that bring life instead of death. In making such choices, we should rely not so much on cultural norms or on what seems expedient, but rather on God's wisdom. What might this mean in today's context?

Saint John Paul II, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis have all pointed out that in their commitment to life, Christians should care for God's creation. They call us to recognize that the poor, the most vulnerable, and the yet-to-be-born stand to bear the brunt of environmental degradation, including climate change. This call resonates in *Laudato Si'*, where Pope Francis urges us to choose life. We must stand up not only for the unborn, but also for that which sustains all life: clean air and water, and the healthy ecosystems of "our common home." How are we responding to this call to life? In what local or national initiatives can we participate to make a positive difference?

In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul contrasts the wisdom of the political rulers of his time with the mysterious, hidden wisdom of God. If he lived in contemporary America, how would he compare the wisdom of our political rulers with the wisdom of Christ? What would he have to say about their appeal to hyper-individualism and over-consumption, their emphasis on military power, and denigration of civil dialogue? What examples of God's wisdom, as it is expressed nowadays in our communities, can we provide some insight about?

In the gospel, the scribes and Pharisees are determined to observe the letter of the hundreds of Jewish restrictions and regulations. Jesus, on the other hand, emphasizes the primacy of inward attitudes. He calls his audience to examine their attitudes, perceptions and desires – the inner

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workings of the heart. For Jesus, a person's character matters, and superficiality and hypocrisy are the enemies of passionate commitment. Both stand in the way of reconciliation and true worship. Indeed, reliance on rules and regulations can be the very means by which we avoid openness to others and to God. With this in mind, let us examine ourselves and how well we respond to people of other classes, races, religious groups and points of view. Are we open to God when we hear His summons?

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

Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most.... We believers cannot fail to ask God for a positive outcome to the present discussions, so that future generations will not have to suffer the effects of our ill-advised delays. (169)

Water is a scarce and indispensable resource and a fundamental right which conditions the exercise of other human rights. (185)

"The environment is one of those goods that cannot be adequately safeguarded or promoted by market forces". Once more, we need to reject a magical conception of the market, which would suggest that problems can be solved simply by an increase in the profits of companies or individuals. Is it realistic to hope that those who are obsessed with maximizing profits will stop to reflect on the environmental damage which they will leave behind for future generations? Where profits alone count, there can be no thinking about the rhythms of nature, its phases of decay and regeneration, or the complexity of ecosystems, which may be gravely upset by human intervention. (190)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** For the Church, that her words and actions may inspire people around the globe to choose life by caring for the unborn, the poor, and refugees, while also safeguarding God's creation that sustains all life, let us pray to the Lord....

**Option 2:** For ourselves, our families and friends, that God may give us the wisdom and courage to defend the dignity of every human life and stand up to racism, prejudice, and destruction of earth, our common home, 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)

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