

# 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 Feast of the Holy Family, Cycle B (December 31, 2023)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Psalm 105:** Give thanks to the Lord, invoke his name; make known among the nations his deeds. Sing to him, sing his praise, proclaim all his wondrous deeds.

**Colossians 3:** And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Luke 2:** "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."

#### † Comments for the Day:

Family is rooted in the unconditional love of God made manifest in and through parents. What makes a family “holy” is not so much the amount of time we spend in prayer, although that is in itself of paramount importance. But it is also how we go out of ourselves, in order to enter into communion with others and with nature itself. The model for that selflessness is the Trinity itself, each generating and communicating new life. Life-giving love is the source, is in our very DNA, and is also our destiny.

While we may be tempted to idealize the simple, humble lifestyle of the Holy Family in Nazareth, depicted so often as other-worldly, few of us would likely be willing to choose to submit to those conditions. In fact, a large percentage of the people on our planet currently live in situations very similar to those of Nazareth two thousand years ago. This is in contrast to the minority who dwell in a manner that demands and promotes high levels of consumption, waste, and pollution.

It is in the family where we can learn to get along, to cooperate. The atmosphere of a loving home provides a safe space to enter into conversation, share thoughts and feelings, consult others, agree and disagree amicably, and search together for harmony, not uniformity. While fulfilling such a vision can often be a challenge, we can nevertheless strive to follow the Holy Family's example.

Too frequently, when faced with challenges, we squander the opportunity to foster changes in our lifestyles – not only in our own families, but also in our communities and our nation. We have grown accustomed to a growing individualism, with less integration or cooperation, favoring instead division and isolation. The call to be open to a new way of living, more fully

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.

alive and more life-giving, is placed before us with notable urgency by Pope Francis in his recent apostolic exhortation, *Laudate Deum* (“Praise God”).

We show our respect for the Creator by our care for the earth. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored, particularly when it comes to climate change.

Each of us is called to take concrete steps – from reducing consumption to working for political change – to better care for creation. We can become more aware of our connectedness through prayer and works of mercy. Care for one another and creation includes understanding that “everything is connected,” and that the economy, politics, community, and technology all affect the future of the planet and humankind.

Changes to lifestyle and consumption habits can make a big difference: getting a reusable water bottle, taking shorter showers, driving less, recycling, composting, and buying energy-efficient appliances. Each family, each community, is called to become a holy family, contributing to a healthy lifestyle – and a healthy planet – for all.

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

These ancient stories, full of symbolism, bear witness to a conviction which we today share, that everything is interconnected, and that genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others. (70)

Creation is of the order of love. God’s love is the fundamental moving force in all created things... Every creature is thus the object of the Father’s tenderness, who gives it its place in the world. (77)

The Spirit of God has filled the universe with possibilities and therefore, from the very heart of things, something new can always emerge. (80)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That we may continue to grow as a worldwide family, united in a common concern for the gift of creation, attentive to the cry of the poor and of the planet, let us pray to the Lord ...

**Option 2:** That the whole human family may learn to live in peace, striving to break down the barriers of prejudice and intolerance, building up a fellowship of love, 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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