

Integral Faith

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



Catholic Climate CovenantSM
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

Homily Resources and Petitions for the 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B (17 June 2018)

Homily Helps

† Scripture passages to note:

Ezekiel 17:24: I, the LORD, bring low the high tree, lift high the lowly tree, wither up the green tree, and make the withered tree bloom.

Psalms 92:13-14: The just one shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow. They that are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

Mark 4:30-32: The kingdom of God... is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade."

† Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet... The impact of present imbalances is also seen in the premature death of many of the poor. (#48)

Human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. (66)

The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. ... What [everyone] needs is an "ecological conversion," whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around us. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience. (217)

In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. *Praise be to him!* (245)

† Comment for the day:

This resource is provided by the Integral Faith Team in collaboration with the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#), the [Global Catholic Climate Movement](#), the [Association of U.S. Catholic Priests](#), and the [Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center](#).

Today marks the third anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, the groundbreaking encyclical from Pope Francis, which calls on all people to care for God's creation and to care for the poor. The encyclical calls everyone toward a deeper ecological conversion, a change of heart and of habit, to live more closely in right relationship between with God, with our neighbors and with the Earth itself.

Laudato Si' has indeed been seen as groundbreaking, in the way in which Pope Francis weaves together the need to care for the poor of the world with the need to care for the world itself. His notion of "integral ecology" calls us to see the connections between all of life, the life of the planet, as well as the life and dignity of all people, especially the poor and vulnerable who are most powerfully affected by environmental degradation.

However, in many ways, the message of *Laudato Si'* is not new, but draws on a deep tradition within our faith. Today's readings from Scripture illustrate how our faith has always recognized the natural world as a revelation of God's power and justice. The passage from Ezekiel reminds us of God's power over nature, and of God's concern for all creatures. It is the Lord who makes the trees to bloom, providing a home for the birds of the sky. The psalmist looks to nature to speak of the justice of God: the just one will flourish like the palm tree, like the mighty cedars of Lebanon. And Jesus himself, in teaching about his vision of the Kingdom of God, often made reference to examples from nature. The parable of the seed growing secretly reminds us that it is God, not human action, which controls nature, and the parable of the mustard seed alerts us to look for the presence and power of God's word in unexpected places.

When we look around at the destruction we have caused in our world, there is much to be alarmed about, and much work is needed to correct the course that we are on. However, when we look at the beauty of God's creation, we also find reason to celebrate and praise as well. The title of the encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, comes from the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, "praise to you, my Lord" – praising God for the wonder and beauty of all creation. Pope Francis ends the encyclical by echoing that prayer and reminding us of God's ongoing care for us and for his creation: "In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. *Praise be to him!*" (245)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we may all find ways to be grateful for the gifts of God's creation, and commit ourselves to be good stewards of that gift, we pray to the Lord.....

Option 2: For all who suffer from environmental destruction, that they may know justice and healing, we pray to the Lord.....

Further Resources

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