

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the Feast of Christ the King, Cycle A (26 November 2017)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

The feast of the Christ the King acts as a spiritual compass, pointing us towards the future when Christ's reign as all in all will be manifest. This feast underscores that Christ's life, death and resurrection have implications for all dimensions of human life, extending even to all God's creation. As a result, our Christian faith cannot be reduced to some merely private, spiritual sphere.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul invites us to ponder the unfolding mystery of Christ and the ultimate purpose of God's saving action. This core faith conviction should inform how we envision the future that God calls us to. That in turn should shape and energize our own activity in the world. Do we offer up our own lives so that Christ may be at work in our activity and God may ultimately be all in all?

Both the first reading and the Gospel emphasize our collective responsibility to care for the most vulnerable. The two passages present a broader vision of God's sphere of grace and judgment. Through the prophet Ezekiel, God rails against the shepherds of Israel who look only to their own interest, failing to defend the flock against ravenous wolves – the elite of Israelite society who used their privileged position to take advantage of others. What concrete examples of how this plays out today can you give that would be relevant to your congregation?

"The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal[.]" How do we align our own actions with the activity of God in the world? We are the Church, those gathered in Jesus name. How does our local Church community serve as a field hospital for those wounded by systemic injustice? How does it bring meaningful words of comfort to the oppressed and pointed words of challenge to the oppressor?

When approaching Matthew 25, we often reduce its message to an imperative to perform individual acts of charity. However, it is important to point out that it is "the nations" that are separated one from another and put on trial. The Gospel speaks first and foremost to our communal/corporate accountability.

As pastors we should not muffle the Gospel as it challenges our own nation and some of its priorities and policies. For example, welcoming the stranger is about our collective decisions vis-à-vis the plight of immigrants and refugees. It is about a collective commitment to understanding the root causes of why millions of people around the world are forced out of their countries – factors that include extreme hurricanes and droughts exacerbated by the human-induced climate change. Welcoming the stranger is about ensuring that our country's immigration policy is shaped not by xenophobia and callousness but by the Gospel values of compassion, justice, and the common good. Likewise, the biblical injunction to feed the hungry challenges us to more than charitable donations, important though those are. It also means that we support state and national budgets that would assist the struggling families and individuals. Another example: We have been told that the present administration pulled out of the Paris Accords to seek a

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.

Homily Helps (cont.)

better deal for the U.S. At the same time, our country also has to be willing to shoulder its fair share in order to prevent a full-blown climate catastrophe that would destroy harvests and give rise to famine for millions of desperately poor people.

† Scripture passages to note:

Ezekiel 34: I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord GOD. The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy, shepherding them rightly....As for you, my sheep...I will judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats.

1 Corinthians 15: ...so that God may be all in all.

Matthew 25: When the Son of Man comes in his glory...and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats....I was stranger, and you gave me no welcome.

† Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:

It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation....The Lord comes not from above, but from within, he comes that we might find him in this world of ours....Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love: The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation. The world which came forth from God's hands returns to him in blessed and undivided adoration: in the bread of the Eucharist, "creation is projected towards divinization, towards the holy wedding feast, towards unification with the Creator himself." Thus, the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation. (#236)

God of love... Enlighten those who possess power and money that they may avoid the sin of indifference, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live. The poor and the earth are crying out. O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty. (#246)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: For the political and economic leaders of our nation, that they would promote public policies to foster the common good and lend special care for the poor and vulnerable, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That mindful of the Gospel vision of the Last Judgment, our nation would point its moral compass to policies that address the root causes of social and environmental ills, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com

Webpage: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help

Visit our webpage to sign up to receive these resources delivered to your email inbox each month.