

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the The Nativity of the Lord, Cycle A, Mass during the Day (25 December 2016)

### Homily Helps

#### † Comment for the day:

Before the coming of the Christ, Israel experienced the Wisdom of God not only expressed in the Jewish Scriptures but also woven into the very fabric of creation. As a people, their story was one of open-ended hope. They did not yet know how God would bring the great drama of His creation to completion. The depth of God's Wisdom receded into mystery. However, in Jesus Christ the first disciples at last encountered the living Wisdom of God: the Word became flesh. "[I]n these last days, [God] has spoken to us through the Son."

Two thousand years later, the drama of salvation continues to unfold. Our world remains broken, and we do not gloss over the tragedy of the human suffering or the destruction of the natural systems that sustain our planet. These things can weigh down upon us. But we do not despair because we know that the Wisdom of God took up our lot and came among us in Jesus Christ. We have beheld the Wisdom of God, and we know that Wisdom to be Love.

Our world is different because Christ has entered into it. We know the basis for our hope, and it is a hope that cannot be quenched. May the joy of Christmas inspire us to grow in God's grace, to renew our communities, and to work for the healing of God's creation.

#### † Scripture passages to note:

**Isaiah 52:** How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings...  
Break out together in song, O ruins of Jerusalem!  
For the LORD comforts his people, he redeems Jerusalem.

**Psalms 98:** Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done wondrous deeds...  
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation by our God.  
Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands; break into song; sing praise.

**Hebrews 1:** [I]n these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe; who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word.

**John 1:** And the Word became flesh.

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.)

### † Passages from Laudato Si' to note:

In the Christian understanding of the world, the destiny of all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ, present from the beginning: "All things have been created through him and for him" (Col 1:16). The prologue of the Gospel of John (1:1-18) reveals Christ's creative work as the Divine Word (Logos). But then, unexpectedly, the prologue goes on to say that this same Word "became flesh" (Jn 1:14). One Person of the Trinity entered into the created cosmos, throwing in his lot with it, even to the cross. From the beginning of the world, but particularly through the incarnation, the mystery of Christ is at work in a hidden manner in the natural world as a whole, without thereby impinging on its autonomy. (#99)

The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God. The history of our friendship with God is always linked to particular places which take on an intensely personal meaning; we all remember places, and revisiting those memories does us much good. Anyone who has grown up in the hills or used to sit by the spring to drink, or played outdoors in the neighborhood square; going back to these places is a chance to recover something of their true selves. (#84)

It is no coincidence that, in the canticle in which Saint Francis praises God for his creatures, he goes on to say: "Praised be you my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love". Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society. (#91)

## Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That the joy of Christ's birth may sustain us with hope in the midst of all the very real challenges of life, let us pray to the Lord...

**Option 2:** That the light of the incarnation may illuminate our minds and hearts, so that we see come to see our neighbors and all creation caught up in the love of God, let us pray to the Lord...

## Further Resources

Feedback: [IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com](mailto:IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com)

Webpage: [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help)

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