

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A (13 August 2017)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

There are two nature miracles on the sea in Matthew's gospel. The reading for this Sunday relates the second of these. Both draw on the common experience of those who fished on the Sea of Galilee in the first century. They knew that this lake can have sudden violent storms, storms which can just as quickly subside. However, in these stories Jesus is the one who has mastery over nature.

This story can also be seen as a lesson for the early Church. When Matthew's Gospel was written down, sixty years after Christ's death and resurrection, the faith of the community was being severely tested. The example of Peter, who according to Matthew had a prominent place in the early Church, was used to urge Christians to recognize the enduring presence of the Risen Lord in its midst.

These nature stories also remind us that in ancient times people often viewed nature as capricious and even cruel. Such visceral fears of nature are shared by many traditional indigenous peoples even in our own day. They know that ultimately humans cannot control nature. For this reason, ancient wisdom teaches that humans must live in conformity with nature. Biblical wisdom teaches that humans must obey God's covenant, lest the forces of moral disorder be unleashed.

† Scripture passages to note:

1 Kings 19: There was a tiny whispering sound. When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave.

Psalm 85: Kindness and truth shall meet. Justice and peace shall kiss.
The Lord himself will give his benefits. Our land shall yield its increase.

Romans 9: Blessed forever be God who is over all.

Matthew 14: Jesus hastened to reassure them. Get hold of yourselves. It is I. Do not be afraid.

† Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:

Modern anthropocentrism has paradoxically ended up prizing technical thought over reality, since the technical mind sees nature as an insensate order, as a cold body of facts, as a mere given, as an object of utility, as raw material to be hammered into useful shape; it views the cosmos similarly as a mere space into which objects can be thrown with complete indifference. (#115)

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 (cont.)

Modernity has been marked by an excessive anthropocentrism, which today under another guise continues to stand in the way of shared understanding and of any effort to strengthen social bonds. The time has come to pay renewed attention to reality and the limits it imposes....Often what was handed on was a Promethean vision of mastery over the world, which gave the impression that the protection of nature was something that only the faint-hearted cared about. Instead, our 'dominion' over the universe should be understood more properly in the sense of responsible stewardship. (#116)

Nor must the critique of a misguided anthropocentrism underestimate the importance of interpersonal relationships....We cannot presume to heal our relationship with nature and the environment without healing all fundamental human relationships. (#119)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we may have the wisdom to be ever-mindful of our true place in nature as members of a vast interdependent community that includes many species and overlapping ecosystems, all created by God to reflect God's purposes and God's glory, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That we may come to see the glory of God reflected in the gentlest of breezes and the humblest of creatures, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com

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

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