

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A (19 November 2017)

### Homily Helps

#### † Comment for the day:

The first reading today paints a picture of a husband and wife who are attuned at the deepest level. Their love is not inward-looking or insular; instead, it spills over and reaches out into the world, especially to the poor and the needy. The passage invites us to reflect on our significant relationships. How have they empowered us to live a more authentic life? In what ways have those relationships challenged us to reach out from our comfort zones to those that live on the margins of society?

In the second reading, St. Paul expresses his affection for the nascent Christians community of Thessalonica. He reminds them who they are and summons them to be alert and sober. More, being prepared for the Lord's coming is not a call to passivity. Rather, being alert and sober compels one to use one's gifts and talents for the common good of the community. Pope Francis (see the quote below) says that cultivating a sober life involves developing a balanced lifestyle, caring for God's creation and working to promote the common good.

The Gospel parable describes a master who entrusted his possessions to his servants. Originally, this passage sought to address the problem among some members of the Christian communities that were waiting idly for the Second Coming. They refrained from getting involved in the daily service of charity and love. How does this parable story apply to our contemporary context? In the U.S and in many other developed countries of the world, we Christians have significant possessions, power and influence. How well do we invest our resources, gifts, and talents in advancing God's Kingdom of justice, love and peace? In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis reminds us that staying sober and alert means investing one's time, talent and treasure in defending the powerless, halting the environmental degradation, and promoting the common good. What specific examples of that happening in your parish, ministries or families could you give? Beyond the traditional works of charity, what percentage of your Church's income or your parish staff time is devoted to engaging in or supporting justice, peace and care for creation?

The Base Christian Communities existing in some of the materially poor areas of the world demonstrate the Gospel power of the lay men and women who refuse to bury their proverbial one talent in some field of their lives. Instead, they invest whatever talent they have in social, economic, political or environmental action in service to the common good.

Some in our Church downplay the biblical imperative of justice, as if it did not belong to our core mission. They warn about taking sides and making mistakes. They suggest that we focus on doctrine, liturgy, and personal conversions instead. While doctrine provides essential intellectual foundations to faith, it is hammered out in the abstract. The Christian must not remain in the safe realm of abstract truths. He or she must bring faith to bear in a complex and broken world. Discipleship involves risk, not sitting on the sidelines and waiting for one's personal salvation. What does Jesus' parable say to us?

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.)

### † Scripture passages to note:

**Proverbs 31:** She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy. Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

**1 Thessalonians 5:** But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of the light and children of the day....Therefore, let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober.

**Matthew 25:** 'Out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. Here it is back.'  
His master said to him in reply, 'You wicked, lazy servant! ... Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return?'  
'Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten.'

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

On the other hand, no one can cultivate a sober and satisfying life without being at peace with him or herself. An adequate understanding of spirituality consists in filling out what we mean by peace, which is much more than the absence of war. Inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good because, lived out authentically, it is reflected in a balanced lifestyle together with a capacity for wonder which takes us to a deeper understanding of life. (#225)

Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world. Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity which affects not only relationships between individuals but also "macro-relationships, social, economic and political ones". That is why the Church set before the world the ideal of a "civilization of love". Social love is the key to authentic development: "In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, love in social life – political, economic and cultural – must be given renewed value, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity". In this framework, along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society. (#231)

## Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** For our family members and friends who have empowered us to live a more authentic life and challenged us to reach out of our comfort zones so that we could grow in wisdom and Christian maturity, let us pray to the Lord....

**Option 2:** For the Christian Churches that they may not be afraid to invest their time, talent and treasure in the struggle to protect the human life, promote the common good and safeguard God's creation, 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)