

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A (12 February 2017)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

The Book of Sirach reminds us that our choices matter and can have huge consequences, some of them unintended. Ben Sira calls us to make individual and collective choices that bring life instead of death. In making those choices, we should rely not so much on cultural norms or on what seems expedient, but rather on God's wisdom. What might this mean in today's context? Saint John Paul II, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis, for example, have all pointed out that in their commitment to Life, Christians should care for God's creation. All call us to recognize that the poor, the most vulnerable, and yet-to-be-born children stand to bear the brunt of environmental degradation. This call stands out in *Laudato Si'*, where Pope Francis urges us to choose Life: Not only must we stand up for the unborn, but we must also stand up for the clean air and water and healthy ecosystems upon which all life depends. In responding to this call to life, what are some of the local and national initiatives to which Christians are participating or might yet participate?

In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul contrasts the wisdom of the political rulers of his time with the mysterious, hidden wisdom of God. If St. Paul lived in contemporary America, how would he compare the wisdom of our political rulers with the wisdom of Christ? What would he have to say about their appeal to hyper-individualism and over-consumption, their emphasis on military power, and denigration of civil dialogue? What examples of God's wisdom as it is expressed nowadays in your communities can you provide for the congregation?

In our Gospel the scribes and Pharisees are determined to observe the letter of the hundreds of Jewish restrictions and regulations. Jesus, on the other hand, emphasizes the primacy of inward attitudes. He calls his audience to examine their attitudes, perceptions and desires—the inner workings of the heart. For Jesus, a person's character matters, and superficiality and hypocrisy are the enemies of passionate commitment. Both stand in the way of reconciliation and true worship. Indeed, reliance on rules and regulations can be the very means by which we avoid openness to others and to God. With this in mind, let us examine ourselves and our capacity to humanly respond to people of other classes, races, religious groups, and points of view. Most importantly, are we open to God when we hear God's summons?

† Scripture passages to note:

Sirach 15: Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him.

1 Corinthians 2: We speak a wisdom to those who are mature, not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory.

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 (cont.):

Matthew 5: Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

† Passages from Laudato Si' to note:

Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most... We believers cannot fail to ask God for a positive outcome to the present discussions, so that future generations will not have to suffer the effects of our ill-advised delays. (#169)

Water is a scarce and indispensable resource and a fundamental right which conditions the exercise of other human rights. (#185)

The environment is one of those goods that cannot be adequately safeguarded or promoted by market forces". Once more, we need to reject a magical conception of the market, which would suggest that problems can be solved simply by an increase in the profits of companies or individuals. Is it realistic to hope that those who are obsessed with maximizing profits will stop to reflect on the environmental damage which they will leave behind for future generations? Where profits alone count, there can be no thinking about the rhythms of nature, its phases of decay and regeneration, or the complexity of ecosystems, which may be gravely upset by human intervention. (#90)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: For our Church, that her words and actions may inspire people around the globe to choose life in the form of caring for the unborn, the poor, and the refugee and while at the same time safeguarding our common home, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: For ourselves, our family members and friends, that God may give us wisdom and courage to defend the dignity of every human life and stand up to racism, religious prejudice, and destruction of our common home, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com

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

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