

Integral Faith

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



Catholic Climate Covenant™
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

Homily Helps and Petitions for the Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C (August 14, 2022)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Jeremiah 38: "Jeremiah ought to be put to death; he is demoralizing...all the people, by speaking such things to them; he is not interested in the welfare of our people, but in their ruin."

Hebrews: Consider how [Jesus] endured such opposition from sinners, in order that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

Luke 12: "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!"

Comments for the Day:

Jesus' message of love and forgiveness was not always comforting. It made demands on people – sometimes exacting demands, and people had to decide: Yes! or No! The seriousness of that decision can be seen in the fact that it often tore a family apart.

His message to us today is no less demanding. We are faced with momentous matters. We might be asked: Will you work to restore a healthy environment: Yes! or No! ? There is no easy answer to that question, because circumstances in which it is asked are often so complex. For example, everyone wants clear air. But what if the actions we choose result in the collapse of several industries and the loss of millions of jobs, or in skyrocketing gasoline prices, or in cars priced beyond the means of the average laborer? How is one to decide?

As for those few brave people who take the life-changing step of radical commitment, what price is exacted of them? Might they be thrown into a pit, actually or figuratively? Are they set in opposition to members of their own household, or neighborhood, or church? And what of us? Have we no responsibility in this regard? Surely the urgency of the moment, particularly with climate change, demands a decision of us as well.

Jeremiah told the people of his day that their defeat by the Babylonians and the destruction of Jerusalem was imminent, so armed resistance on their part would be foolhardy. They should accept their plight as punishment for their infidelity. The leaders of his day considered this treasonous talk. After all, God was present on the temple, and surly God would protect them. It is very difficult to listen to the dissenting voice, especially when the point of view of the status quo appears to have some validity. Still the prophet spoke, and he paid a dear price for his dissenting insight.

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.

So it is today with many environmental issues. For example, cutting the trees for lumber needed for construction can appear to be of immediate importance, as do releasing the resources of fossil fuel because of the escalating cost of gasoline, or packaging goods in plastic for the sake of lower prices and convenience. But all these actions for near-term benefit create long-term consequences for the environment that sustains life. This includes climate change, which many "prophets" have warned will make earth unlivable unless we significantly reduce carbon emissions today.

Jesus came to show us a better way of living in this world, a way of reverence and harmony and love. He was on fire with this vision. He calls us to the same vision, to the same fire. What is our response: Yes! or No! ?

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:**

Change is something desirable, yet it becomes a source of anxiety when it causes harm to the world and to the quality of life of much of humanity. (18)

We have not yet managed to adopt a circular model of production capable of preserving resources for present and future generations, while limiting as much as possible the use of non-renewable resources, moderating their consumption, maximizing their efficient use, reusing and recycling them. (22)

We lack leadership capable of striking out on new paths and meeting the needs of the present with concern for all and without prejudice towards coming generations. (53)

The principle of the maximization of profits, frequently isolated from other considerations, reflects a misunderstanding of the very concept of the economy. As long as production is increased, little concern is given to whether it is at the cost of future resources or the health of the environment; as long as the clearing of a forest increases production, no one calculates the losses entailed in the desertification of the land, the harm done to biodiversity or the increased pollution. (195)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we take the necessary steps to address broader issues like climate change that impact life, rather than narrow partisan political matters, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That we be set on fire, as was Jesus, in caring for the earth, "our common home," us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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