

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 Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C (August 21, 2022)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Isaiah 66: I know their works and their thoughts, and I come to gather nations of every language...Some of these I will take as priests and Levites, says the LORD.

Luke 13: And people will come from the east and from the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.

Comments for the Day:

We learn from today's first reading and from the gospel passage that God accomplishes remarkable feats through individuals who do not belong to the group designated as "the people of God." Isaiah tells the Israelites that God not only gathers such people together, but appoints them as minister to the Israelites, even as priests or Levites.

The gospel adds a sobering tone to this announcement concerning divine choice. It warns that some who might consider themselves "insiders" could end up being "outsiders." False, sometimes arrogant assurance does not guarantee entrance into the house. What is needed is humility, integrity of mind and heart, and openness to God's invitation.

This has certainly been the case with regard to environmental sciences and caring for creation. Too many people have misinterpreted the first Genesis creation narrative as saying that human beings were told by God to "subdue" and "have dominion" over the rest of the created world in any way they saw fit. This misunderstanding has led some ecologists to blame biblical religions for environmental devastation. Many "outsiders" have been correct about such issues while, "insiders" have been wrong with erroneous understanding of sacred scripture.

Religious thinking and environmental science need not be opposed to each other. They are both seeking truth, but they are asking different questions in this search. It has been said that science asks "How?" and religion asks "Why?" Scientific findings may at first challenge some of our firmly held religious convictions, but they often expand or deepen religious thought. Usually environmental insights eventually prove themselves true or false based on collected data. It is quite different with matters of faith, which are not matters of proven facts.

Still, this is no reason to cling to worn ways of thinking. Believers should not disdain scientific findings simply because they are advanced by those who do not share their faith perspective, or may not espouse no faith perspective at all. God works through people "from the east and the

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west and from the north and the south." Some are believers and some are not, and some believe but very differently. However, all are seekers of truth. What is needed is humility, integrity of mind and heart, and openness to God's invitation.

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

These statements of the Popes echo the reflections of numerous scientists, philosophers, theologians and civic groups, all of which have enriched the Church's thinking on these questions. Outside the Catholic Church, other Churches and Christian communities – and other religions as well – have expressed deep concern and offered valuable reflections on issues which all of us find disturbing. (7)

We must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God's image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures...Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations. (67)

There are certain environmental issues where it is not easy to achieve a broad consensus. Here I would state once more that the Church does not presume to settle scientific questions or to replace politics. But I am concerned to encourage an honest and open debate so that particular interests or ideologies will not prejudice the common good. (188)

Political institutions and various other social groups are also entrusted in helping to raise people's awareness. (214)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we open ourselves to new and beneficial scientific approaches and insights, regardless of how they might challenge our points of view, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: The we might join with honest seekers of truth, regardless of who they might be, so that together we can "care for our common home," let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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