

# 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-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C (August 28, 2022)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Sirach 3:** Conduct your affairs with humility...Humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with God.

**Luke 14:** Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

#### Comments for the Day:

Perhaps the greatest lesson in humility that the human race has yet to learn is the fact that we are not the center of the universe. When we knew little or nothing about the cosmos it was understandable that we might be so mistaken. After all, even the myths recounting the adventures of the celestial bodies often cast humans as principal actors. One would think that the phenomenal discoveries of astronomers like Ptolemy, Galileo, and Newton, and recently the wonders we have discovered with contemporary telescopes, would throw doubt on such a claim.

Yet many people still believe that earth is our domain to be "subdued" and "dominated" as we see fit. Pope Francis calls such an arrogant attitude "tyrannical," "distorted," "excessive," and "misguided" anthropocentrism. This arrogance places the human (*anthropos*) at the center of everything. This kind of attitude has brought us to the point where the very health of earth, and the very existence of humanity, is in jeopardy from crises like climate change.

Humans are certainly magnificent creatures, but we have come forth and continue to exist as part of the web of life, not as its creator or master. As Pope Francis reminds us, we are interconnected with the other strands in this web, totally dependent on them for our very being, our health, and our survival. He also insists that the value of these other creatures rests not in their usefulness to us, as various forms of consumerism might suggest, but in their very existence. Each creature of earth has a unique and necessary role to play for the benefit of the whole. The health of the life of one creature is vital for the health of all.

In *The Phenomenon of Man*, Pierre Teilhard der Chardin maintains that: "Humankind is not the centre of the universe as once we thought in our simplicity, but something much more wonderful – the arrow pointing the way to the final unification of the world in terms of life." In other words, the arrogance of thinking that we're more than we really are is replaced by the humility of knowing that we actually are much more than we realize.

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.

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

If the simple fact of being human moves people to care for the environment of which they are a part, Christians in their turn realize that their responsibility within creation, and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith. (64)

All creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God...Human beings, endowed with intelligence and love, and drawn by the fullness of Christ, are called to lead all creatures back to their Creator. (83)

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...our "dominion" over the universe should be understood more properly in the sense of responsible stewardship. (116)

When human beings place themselves at the center, they give absolute priority to immediate convenience and all else becomes relative. Hence...the rise of a relativism which sees everything as irrelevant unless it serves one's own immediate interests. There is a logic in all this whereby different attitudes can feed on one another, leading to environmental degradation and social decay. (122)

We take [ecosystems] into account not only to determine how best to use them, but also because they have an intrinsic value independent of their usefulness. Each organism, as a creature of God, is good and admirable in itself; the same is true of the harmonious ensemble of organisms existing in a defined space and functioning as a system. Although we are often not aware of it, we depend on these larger systems for our own existence. (140)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That our eyes might be open to our interconnectedness with and interdependence upon other creatures of earth, "our common home," let us pray to the Lord.

**Option 2:** That we join with others in finding ways of correcting our arrogant attitudes toward the myriad glories of the created world, let us pray to the Lord.

### Further Resources

**Feedback:** [info@catholicclimatecovenant.org](mailto:info@catholicclimatecovenant.org)

**Webpage:** [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help)

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