

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 27th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle C (October 2, 2022)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Habakkuk 1: Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and clamorous discord. Then the LORD answered me and said: Write down the vision clearly... For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint.

2 Timothy 1: I remind you, to stir into flame the gift of God that you have... For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control.

Luke 17: If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea," and it would obey you.... Put on your apron and wait on me.

† Comments for the Day:

The author of the book of Habakkuk expresses with brutal honesty the experience and emotions of his community. He doesn't gloss over destruction and violence but names them and gives voice to the feelings of anger, bitterness and despair experienced by his people.

As homilists, we are leaders in the church, called through baptism to be contemporary prophets in our world. Do we have the courage to follow the lead of Habakkuk? Many of us live in a rather sheltered environment where we do not experience the connection between malnutrition, political instability, violence, and severe droughts exacerbated by climate change. We are not grappling with the problem of environmental refugees.

Yet, we are a universal church, so it is appropriate to give expression in a homily to the voices from the peripheries. For too many sitting in the pews on Sunday, refugees are looked upon with fear and contempt, like lepers in the time of St. Francis of Assisi. Too often, the connections between extreme weather from climate change, the violence in different parts of the world, and the refugee problem remain elusive. It can help the homilist contextualize contemporary cries of despair in the midst of so much injustice and destruction.

At the same time, the first reading offers hope in a vision that, though delayed, still presses on to fulfillment. Living out of a sense of hope is an intrinsic part of being a Christian. Do we have hope *vis-à-vis* the daunting environmental crisis? Is it based in something more than just naive optimism that future technological developments will save us? In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis beautifully articulates the vision of restoration, healing and peace as being rooted in the Eucharist.

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.

Today's gospel begins with the disciples pleading for Jesus to increase their faith. It concludes, not with some great theological insight, but with a call to humble service. How could one interpret that passage in our own communities today? In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis stresses that green technology could help address our environmental problems, but only if combined with insight and a genuine concern for others, especially those in developing nations.

In his letter to Timothy, St. Paul tells us not to give into a spirit of cowardice. In his 2015 address to the World Meeting of Popular Movements, Pope Francis spoke of cowardice in defending earth as being a grave sin. Do we shy away from getting more seriously involved in the issues of environmental justice for fear of alienating some people? In such cases, voicing an open-ended question or telling a story about how an appreciation of God's creation has been "stirred into flame" can help people examine their assumptions. What set you on fire? A documentary, a sobering statistic about the state of our fragile planet, a personal encounter? Tell your story so that others may be inspired.

† Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:

"Contemporary man has not been trained to use power well," because our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience. (105)

The spiral of self-destruction engulfs us... I have attempted to take stock of our present situation pointing to the cracks in the planet that we inhabit as well as to the profoundly human causes of environmental degradation. (163)

For new models of progress to arise, there is a need to change "models of global development"... A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress. (194)

It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. The Lord comes not from above, but from within, he comes that we might find him in this world of ours. ...the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation. (236)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: For refugees around the world who flee extreme droughts, floods, hunger, political instability, and violence, may the Eucharist provide us with a vision of hope and empower us to care for the poor and the earth, let us pray to the Lord...

Option 2: That, in the face of the harm being done with impunity to earth, our common home, we not succumb to the grave sin of cowardice in defending creation, let us pray to the Lord...

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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