

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps and Petitions for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B (31 October 2021)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Deuteronomy 6:** Hear then, Israel, and be careful to observe [God's statutes and commandments], that you may grow and prosper the more.

**Psalms 18:** I love you, O LORD, my strength, O LORD, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer.

**Hebrews 7:** Jesus, because he remains forever, has a priesthood that does not pass away.

**Mark 12:** When Jesus saw that [one of the scribes] answered with understanding, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

#### † Comments for the Day:

In today's first reading, Moses summons the chosen people to hear and listen. He recognizes how difficult that is. The Israelites were expected to cultivate a listening disposition as individuals and as community. Having the inner ear attuned to God was central to their efforts to be obedient to Him and to being able to grow and prosper. In fact, the root of our English word for obedience comes from the Latin *obedire* – "listen, hear."

In the gospel, Jesus praises one of the scribes for his ability to listen, and to understand that at the core of the Hebrew law are found love of God and neighbor. Being able to hear at God's level, the deeper level, one must be humble and fearlessly open to the holy, silent mystery of God.

As Pope Francis tells us in *Laudato Si'*, to hear God also entails a willingness to listen to the signs of the times, to the cries of the poor, and to the groans of God's creation, that suffers under hyper-consumerism. These cries and groans should pierce our hearts with compassion, leading us to into the arms of the crucified Love. That encounter can then move us to examine our lifestyle in light of current environmental degradation, including climate change. We can thus express our love for God through a more gospel-informed civic and political engagement.

In the gospel, once Jesus' hearers truly understood what he was saying in his interaction with the scribe, they dared not ask another question. They were undoubtedly silenced by their own failings in regard to living out the statutes and commandments of the Lord. May we truly hear the message to care for God's creation, and live it fully without question or reserve.

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:

We have to realize that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*. (49)

These situations have caused sister earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course. Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years. (53)

A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power. [Boycotting certain products] proves successful in changing the way businesses operate, forcing them to consider their environmental footprint and patterns of production. . . . This shows us the need for a sense of social responsibility on the part of consumers. "Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act". Today, in a word, "the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle". (206)

We need to take up an ancient lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that "less is more". A constant flood of new consumer goods can baffle the heart and prevent us from cherishing each thing and each moment. . . . Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. (222)

Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world... Social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society. When we feel that God is calling us to intervene with others in these social dynamics, we should realize that this too is part of our spirituality, which is an exercise of charity and, as such, matures and sanctifies us. (231)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That people of faith realize that climate justice is a fundamental pro-life issue and that our choices, especially at the voting booth, will impact future generations, we pray to the Lord...

**Option 2:** That our daily choices be informed by concern for justice, the poor, and the moral imperative to protect our common home, we 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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