

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

Homily Resources and Petitions for the

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B (11 November 2018)

Homily Helps

† Scripture passages to note:

1 Kings 17

The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the day when the LORD sends rain upon the earth.

Psalm 146

The LORD gives sight to the blind. The LORD raises up those who were bowed down; the LORD loves the just. The LORD protects strangers.

Hebrews 9

Christ... will appear a second time, not to take away sin but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await him.

Mark 12

Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury.

† Comment for the day:

The story in today's first reading juxtaposes two different worldviews: one of scarcity and one of abundance. There is a great tension between these two realities. The poor widow of Zarephath lives on a land devastated by drought. She is on the verge of starvation when prophet Elijah orders her to feed him. She is afraid and unsure what to do. The prophet, however, holds up for her God's vision of abundance and promises that she and her son will be provided for. The pagan widow then makes a bold leap of faith in favor of God of the abundance that Elijah had spoken to her about.

Let's relate the drama of that ancient story to our contemporary clash between the worldview of scarcity and the worldview of abundance. One is rooted in fear while the other in God's hope. The quote below from Pope Francis speaks to that.

In today's world of plenty, there is a scandalous disparity between those who possess extraordinary wealth and those who live in abject poverty. The world's richest 1% of population have accumulated 43% of the world's wealth, while the bottom 80% of the world's population has just 6% of the material wealth. Here is another disturbing fact to consider: the richest 300 people in the world own the same amount of wealth as the poorest 3 billion people, which is the combine population of China, India, Brazil and the United States. There is more than enough resources to satisfy a basic need of every person on our planet, but there is not enough to satisfy everyone's greed.

When reflecting on these shocking statistics, you may want to relate them to today's scriptures and to the current attitudes that some people and their governments display towards immigrants and refugees. Isn't it ironic that the present U.S. Administration and certain European countries that tout to be defenders of the Christian values appear to have embraced the worldview that is based in fear and scarcity? On the other hand, a predominantly Muslim and very poor country such as Bangladesh - just slightly bigger than the state of Virginia but with 160 million inhabitants - has taken in 800,000 Rohingya refugees. Can we hear here an echo of the story of the pagan widow of Zarapath whose faith and trust in God put to shame the people of Israel?

The enormous social inequality is arguably the greatest sins of our time. It is one of roots of evil in our society. It generates fear and desperation. Unless we tackle the problem of social inequality, it will likely lead to social unrest and massive migration especially as we face the full consequences of climate change. Psalm 146 challenges us to decide what side are we on; we know where God's stands.

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

The current global situation engenders a feeling of instability and uncertainty, which in turn becomes "a seedbed for collective selfishness". When people become self-centred and self-enclosed, their greed increases. The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume. It becomes almost impossible to accept the limits imposed by reality. In this horizon, a genuine sense of the common good also disappears. As these attitudes become more widespread, social norms are respected only to the extent that they do not clash with personal needs. So our concern cannot be limited merely to the threat of extreme weather events,

but must also extend to the catastrophic consequences of social unrest. Obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, above all when few people are capable of maintaining it, can only lead to violence and mutual destruction. (#204)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That the people of faith may not stand idly by when immigrants and refugees are being scapegoated while the threat of catastrophic, climate change and resulting social unrest are being ignored, we pray to the Lord.....

Option 2: For people of faith in the United States, that we may all realize that consumeristic lifestyle leads to violence and is incompatible with the Culture of Life, we pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

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