

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps and Petitions for the 4th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B (April 25, 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Acts 4: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus the Nazarene whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

1 John 3: Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

John 10: I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

† Comments for the Day:

There isn't always a big difference between a job and a ministry. We have all witnessed how many people work to make a living wage but also do their job with great care as a service to others. We have also, unfortunately, observed how some simply do their job only to finally reach clock-out time.

In today's gospel, Jesus compares himself with a person hired to care for the sheep but who is not a shepherd, who runs away from danger to protect only himself. It is when we see our work, no matter what it is, as a ministry that we contribute to the welfare and dignity of all humankind. We are good shepherds who use our knowledge, talents, and abilities to nurture the earth, our common home, as we do our part to protect it from wolves that wish to ravage and destroy it. Our charge is to never flee in times of danger, but to protect God's creation.

We are currently experiencing unprecedented dangers, including a global pandemic and climate change. Many people are rising up, however, and taking part in the healing of our sisters and brothers and our world. Good shepherds fill our medical centers, our educational institutions, and our places of worship. They are also found in the areas hit most hard by extreme weather, drought, and flooding that is exacerbated by climate change. These good shepherds hear the voices of those in need, and respond by giving of themselves in the manner of Jesus's example.

May we, too, become good shepherds in the manner of our sisters and brothers, and become part of this extraordinary process of healing and renewal. We are saved by the awareness that we are

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not alone but part of a wide network, a wonderful community formed by a people gathered around the spirit of the gospel and in the power of Christ's resurrection. That is what we are now, but as John has written, what we shall later be is even more wonderful.

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

Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society. (#91)

Laborers and craftsmen thus “maintain the fabric of the world” (Sir. 38:34). Developing the created world in a prudent way is the best way of caring for it, as this means that we ourselves become the instrument used by God to bring out the potential which he himself inscribed in things: “The Lord created medicines out of the earth, and a sensible man will not despise them” (Sir. 38:4). (#124)

Concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. (208)

Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity . . . social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a “culture of care” which permeates all of society. (231)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we may recognize healthcare and disaster relief workers as good shepherds who even lay down their lives for the ones for whom they are responsible. May we support them with our prayers and encouragement, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That Pope Francis, our holy shepherd, will experience good health and perseverance in his ministry as he continues to lead us, the people of God, to protect the vulnerable in our midst, let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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