

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 Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, Cycle C (December 25, 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Isaiah 52: Hark! Your sentinels raise a cry, together they shout for joy, for they see directly before their eyes, the Lord restoring Zion.

Psalms 98: All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

Hebrews 1: In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe.

John 1: And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. ... No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's right side, has revealed him.

† Comments for the Day:

It is the season of light. Everywhere we turn we see lights – on trees, on homes, on boats, on just about everything! Our Christmas scriptures today brim over with the idea of vision and glory and light.

Isaiah announces the vision of Zion's sentinels crying out that they see before their very eyes the healing of a tortured nation by the long-awaited Messiah. The author of Hebrews centers on the fact that the days when God spoke in partial and various ways through the prophets have given way to God's full revelation in his Son through whom the universe was created. What was once only imagined through prophetic words is now present before our very eyes in full disclosure and magnificent glory.

The prophets and sages spoke often about how the people of their place and time were in need of reform and renewal. These words give us a picture of how the poor were constantly minimized and oppressed, and how the mighty were made wealthier and more powerful at the expense of the "little ones." Today the tables are turned. In the gospel reading, John tells us that the Word, which had been spoken through the centuries, is now made flesh and can be seen. His glory has lit up a desert of desolation and from his fullness all, without distinction, are invited to receive. The "little ones" are held in the greatest esteem while the mighty are brought low.

Certainly, it would have been enough for the Christ, present in the beginning of time, to only have had all things created through him and then be done with it. But that the Word was made

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flesh is an astounding thing. All life is consecrated by this Incarnation, and all life is worthy of honor. Are we then not bound to respect all that lives, without distinction? Is not all life – humans, elements, and the cosmic beyond, deserving of our esteem? God, through the Incarnation says, “Yes!” We must therefore heed this charge to protect life, and indeed all of His creation that supports life.

There was a time when Moses would enter the presence of God alone under the canopy of a tent. Now the Word-made-flesh has pitched his tent among us all. Everything is holy, and through Christ it has come to light. We have seen it with our own eyes.

Merry Christmas.

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

Jesus lived in full harmony with creation, and others were amazed: “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him? (Mt 8:27). His appearance was not that of an ascetic set apart from the world, nor of an enemy to the pleasant things of life. (98)

The prologue of the Gospel of John (1:1-18) reveals Christ’s creative work as the Divine Word (*Logos*). But then, unexpectedly, the prologue goes on to say that this same Word “became flesh” (Jn 1:14). One Person of the Trinity entered into the created cosmos, throwing in his lot with it, even to the cross. (99)

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 all people everywhere might find hope and light in this day, when God has been revealed and His grace is given to every living creature, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That the Word-made-flesh will grace our world, our common home, with abundant healing and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

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