

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps and Petitions for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Cycle C (December 8, 2021)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Genesis 3: The man called his wife Eve because she became the mother of all the living.

Ephesians 1: In love God destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved.

Luke 1: Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

† Comments for the Day:

American poet Marie Howe writes extensively on spiritual themes and the nature of the soul. Her hauntingly beautiful poem, *Annunciation*, is a meditation spoken off the lips of Mary as she ponders her experience with a heavenly presence. So caught up in this mystical conversation, Mary recalls what she shall never forget, "Even if I don't see it again – nor ever feel it I know it is – and if once it hailed me it ever does ... Only able to endure it by being no one and so specifically myself I thought I'd die from being loved like that."

On this day we too recall how intensely loved we are by God who has visited us and clothed us with what St. Paul calls the spirit of adoption and the favor of God's will. As a result of the messiness and confusion heard in the Genesis experience, the first parents Adam and Eve lose their way; but all is not lost. A line of descendants will follow and they will choose life, a life that will lead to a land flowing with milk and honey. Ultimately, this is the line that will bring forth the Savior who will finally bring relief to those who have been banned from the gifts of the earth and who have crawled on their bellies, and who have had to eat dirt all their lives.

Mary's immaculate conception challenges us to reflect on the fact that living lives of deep grace and unsullied love is indeed possible. Such love will not only be limited to a chosen few but spills over to all beings and life everywhere. Mary was fully attentive to the messenger and the messenger to Mary. So love bids us to be fully present to all creation. Pope Francis speaks of the "universal fraternity," where care for nature, indeed care for all life, is part of a lifestyle. This calls for the passing on of immaculate love that sees and holds all things as sacred and cherished.

How must it feel to be loved like that?

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 are speaking of an attitude of the heart, one which approaches life with serene attentiveness, which is capable of being fully present to someone without thinking of what comes next, which accepts each moment as a gift from God to be lived to the full. (226)

Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion. ... Fraternal love can only be gratuitous; it can never be a means of repaying others for what they have done or will do for us. That is why it is possible for us to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we cannot control them. In this sense, we can speak of a “universal fraternity.” (228)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That Christians everywhere might be welcoming and attentive to the messengers who come into our lives with greetings and challenges to heal and restore a hurting world, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That the model of Mary, mother of all things living, may inspire us all to love without counting the cost or measuring the pain, let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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