

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, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A (16 August, 2020)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

During the centuries before Christ, the prophets and leaders of Israel viewed foreign peoples from a number of perspectives. For example, in order to keep the Israelite nation a “holy race,” Ezra ordered all the Israelite men to divorce their foreign wives and marry only Jewish wives (see chapters nine and ten of the Book of Ezra). This raised the question of where other nations fit in God’s plan of salvation.

By contrast, in the passages that unfold in Isaiah chapters 56 to 66, the prophet envisions God’s call to all nations to come to God’s holy mountain to worship, and God is pleased with their offerings. These chapters stress the universality of God’s justice, that is to say, of the order that God intends for the world. While Israel has a special place in that order because it has been called to be a people guided by justice, that does not exclude other nations from God’s love and concern.

The early Church struggled with the place of Gentiles in the new order established by Christ. Did they have to accept circumcision and Jewish dietary laws, in effect becoming a sect within Judaism? Or could they come to Christ *as Gentiles*?

In the end, the early Church was guided by its appreciation of the universality of God’s call, a universality that embraced all nations. Its understanding of the universality of God’s call is rooted in the ministry of Jesus himself. Today’s gospel is one of several incidents in which Jesus recognized great faith in non-Jewish people, in this case a despised Canaanite woman.

In our own time, we are also reminded that all creation plays a role in God’s order of salvation. While human beings have a unique place in God’s plan, the universality of God embraces all creatures, and each gives glory to God in a way appropriate to it.

These scripture readings are pertinent to contemporary life. In a world roiled by a pandemic and racial and political strife they are strong reminders of God’s love and desire for justice for all people regardless of race or ethnicity and the need to care for the creation given us by God.

† Scripture passages to note:

Isaiah 56: Observe what is right, do what is just; for my salvation is about to come, my justice about to be revealed. For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples..

Psalms 67: May the nations be glad and exult
Because you rule the peoples in equity,
The nations on the earth you guide.

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.

Romans 11: I say this now to you Gentiles: God wished to show you mercy, that [the Jews] too may receive mercy.

Matthew 15: Woman you have great faith. Your wish will come to pass.

Homily Helps (cont.)

† Passages from Laudato Si' to note:

The basic problem goes even deeper: it is the way that humanity has taken up technology and its development according to an undifferentiated and one-dimensional paradigm.... This has made it easy to accept the idea of infinite or unlimited growth.... It is the false notion that an infinite quantity of energy and resources are available, that it is possible to renew them quickly, and that the negative effects of the exploitation of the natural order can be easily absorbed. (#106)

The technocratic paradigm also tends to dominate economic and political life. The economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit, without concern for its potentially negative impact on human beings.... Yet by itself the market cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion. (#109)

There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies, an educational program, a lifestyle and a spirituality, which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm. (#111)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: May God enlighten the leaders of nations so that they may carefully evaluate and discern the models of economic development. That they may make decisions that promote true human development and the inclusion of all strata of society, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That all Christians may come to appreciate the universality of God's salvation, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com

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

Visit our webpage to sign up to receive these resources delivered to your email inbox each month.