

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps and Petitions for the The Nativity of the Lord, Cycle A, Mass during the Night (24 December 2019)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

As we gather together in the depths of the night our readings announce that a light will shine forth in the darkness. To be a Christian is to live immersed in this world, beset by very real problems, but not overwhelmed by them. We face illness, defeats along the way of life, broken relationships, the destruction of God's precious creation, and very real injustices. Yet in this imperfect world, we also encounter healing; we overcome obstacles; we mend our relationships; God's creation is resilient; and we witness genuine heroes who stand up for right. Joy and hope abide. Israel held out hope that God would visit God's people, and one still night Christ was born in the midst of this imperfect world. The light shines forth.

In the end the beauty of this life shines all the more brightly because of the love that sustains us. We support one another in the midst of it all. We rebuild our society in the midst of division, and we work to restore creation from the impact of overuse; in turn, society and creation sustain us. In Jesus, God enters all creation and our very humanity. Through it all God is at work.

Our Gospel reading calls our attention to the fact that God sustains us in Jesus, for the infant is sleeps peacefully in a manger, that is, in a feeding trough. Let us allow Jesus to feed us, and let us then sustain one another in Christ. Let the light of Christ shine brightly.

† Scripture passages to note:

Isaiah 9: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone...
For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests.
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.

Psalm 96: Tell his glory among the nations, among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.
Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound.
Let the plains be joyful and all that is in them! Then shall all the trees of the forest exult.

Titus 2: Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people as his own...

Luke 2: While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

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.

Homily Helps (cont.)

† Passages from Laudato Si' to note:

[The creation accounts in the book of Genesis] suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin. (#66)

Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations. "The earth is the Lord's" (Ps 24:1); to him belongs "the earth with all that is within it" (Dt 10:14). (#67)

The Catechism clearly and forcefully criticizes a distorted anthropocentrism: "Each creature possesses its own particular goodness and perfection... Each of the various creatures, willed in its own being, reflects in its own way a ray of God's infinite wisdom and goodness." (#69)

In the Bible, the God who liberates and saves is the same God who created the universe, and these two divine ways of acting are intimately and inseparably connected: "Ah Lord God! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you... You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders" (Jer 32:17, 21). (#73)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we may work to restore what is broken, and so let the light of Christ shine forth in our own lives, let us pray to the Lord...

Option 2: That leaders in our society may take seriously their responsibility to care for creation, which God participates in through the incarnation, let us pray to the Lord...

Further Resources

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