



Homily Helps and Petitions for the Memorial of Saint Francis of Assisi (October 4, 2022)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Galatians 1: I was unknown personally to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; they only kept hearing that “the one who once was persecuting us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.” So they glorified God because of me.

Psalms 139: Guide me Lord, along the everlasting way.

Luke 10: There is need of only one thing.

† Comments for the Day:

Early in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis notes that we need to turn to the figure of Francis of Assisi for help, the same saint whom he took as guide and inspiration when he was elected Bishop of Rome. The passages from the encyclical noted below give some indication of how we might use St. Francis as a guide in our work to protect the earth, along with all the other people who make this planet their home. The "one thing" we are all called to do is to love one another, which requires working together to support each other and the sacred world around us.

Another way to help us understand this compelling man of God might be to see him as the saint of the “three P’s.” Writings about Francis of Assisi portray him as a person who was polite, practical, and persistent. These three qualities can help us in our own approach to working for the planet and for its people.

First, Francis was polite. He reached out to all: young and old, rich and poor, noble and commoner. He listened to them attentively and inviting everyone to love and care for one another, especially those most marginalized. In a world full of vitriol, prejudice, and closed-mindedness, Francis became a model to his followers and to all those enchanted by his spirit. He compelled everyone to reach out politely to all to promote the creation-loving dialogue that is a consistent refrain in *Laudato Si'*.

Next, Francis was eminently practical. When he heard a voice from the crucifix asking him to “rebuild my church,” he did not sit around and think about what he might do. Rather, he immediately begged for stone and mortar, and set about repairing the church in which he found himself. When he counseled the friars to be men of peace, he first showed them how to do so in their own community: he worked to repair the broken relationship between the bishop and mayor of Assisi. He then set out to Egypt to seek audience with the sultan – in the midst of the Crusades! He and other friars also went out to patch up social unrest in various cities of Italy.

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.

Finally, Francis was persistent. Like the images from the Gospel of the man asking for bread from his neighbor to feed a late-arriving friend, or the woman who pleaded with the judge, Francis kept at the tasks to which he felt God was calling him.

Likewise, we need to be proactive in our approach to the task of caring for our earth and its inhabitants – our own brothers and sisters. We may not always hit the target on our first attempt, but doing something and not giving up will move us beyond talk and invite others to become involved in addressing the grave issues that face all of humanity.

In his encyclical, Pope Francis reminds us that we must be at our task of protecting the world and its children for the long haul. Let us commit to this calling for our entire lives, dedicating ourselves to that which must be done, and challenging others to become part of the solution.

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

[Saint Francis of Assisi] shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace. (10)

His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bond of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists. (11)

International negotiations cannot make significant progress due to positions taken by countries which place their national interests above the global common good. (169)

In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change. (218)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi might permeate our lives and encourage us to care for God's creation in love for our sisters and brothers throughout the world, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That we might politely invite all to share in the task of building God's kingdom, and of protecting all of His children, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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