

Integral Faith

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



Catholic Climate Covenantsm
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

Homily Resources and Petitions for the 7th Sunday of Ordinary Time Cycle C (February 24, 2018)

Homily Helps

† Scripture passages to note:

1 Samuel 26:23 Today, though the Lord delivered you into my grasp, I would not harm the Lord's anointed.

Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us.

1 Corinthians 15:46 But the spiritual was not the first; rather the natural, then the spiritual.

Luke 6:27, 38 To you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you....For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.

† Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:

Ecological culture cannot be reduced to a series of urgent and partial responses to the immediate problems of pollution, environmental decay and the depletion of natural resources. 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)

Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes a capacity for living together and communion. Jesus reminded us that we have God as our common Father and that this makes us brothers and sisters. 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 to love our enemies. This same gratuitousness inspires us to love and accept the wind, the sun and the clouds, even though we can't control them. In this sense, we can speak of a "universal fraternity." (#228)

† Comment for the day:

In today's gospel Jesus continues to tell hard truths to his disciples. His words bring to mind great teachers of nonviolence like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King who embodied the teaching of Jesus and paid the ultimate price for it. In our contemporary world these teachings are bearing fruit in such places as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and in Restorative Justice programs in prisons and schools with high rates of violence. These programs bring offenders and victims together in circles which include other community members. The victim tells the offender the effect the violence has had in her/his life. Then victim, offender and community discuss "how did things go wrong and how

can we make it right?” In places where violence is handled this way incidents of retribution, vengeance between individuals drop markedly and community is strengthened.

What Jesus is teaching is *agape*, the highest/deepest form of love. *Agape* is wholehearted, unconditional desire for the wellbeing of another, even those we dislike intensely. It is love that is intentional, not based on feelings. *Agape* requires forgiveness, forgiveness that is not condescending or an ego-boost to the one who forgives. *Agape* is possible when we can look into the heart of someone who has hurt us and see them as having human dignity. This is not to deny the hurt they have caused. It is to gain freedom from grudges and resentments and the need to get even. It is to realize the truth of the saying, “Resentment is like swallowing rat poison and waiting for the rat to die.” Most of all it is placing our trust in God who, “In the act of forgiveness, gives us back our dignity and self-worth.” (Richard Rohr) All of this is hard, hard work. It’s not for cowards. Neither David nor Jesus was weak or cowardly. Jesus never backed down from a confrontation with hypocrisy or untruth. Yet he did not resist those who arrested and crucified him and he stopped Peter from defending him violently.

In his letter to the Corinthians St. Paul insists that Jesus who was flesh and blood not only saves our souls but also our bodies because he redeems us as complete human persons. As Christians we are part of Jesus’ spirit and Jesus’ body. Science has enabled us to understand that our bodies share the same atoms and molecules as the creatures who share the earth with us. We humans are a part of a community, the fragile, miraculous web of life and bear a special responsibility to care for it. Pope Francis urges us to stand against a corporate culture that distracts us with trivia from the destruction that is being done to the web of life.

† Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we find the courage to follow Jesus in recognizing the human dignity in those who have hurt us and forgiving them, we pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That we can resist the efforts of corporate culture to distract us from the need to care for our common home, we pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: Info@CatholicClimateCovenant.org

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

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