

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps, Petitions, and Bulletin Notices for the 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A (16 July 2017)

### Homily Helps

#### † Comment for the day:

The scripture readings of this Sunday invite us to reflect on the deep connection between human beings and the rest of God's creation. Through his contemplation of the natural world around him, the prophet Isaiah was able to discern the revelation of God's Logos. Today's passage from Isaiah stands out as one of the many examples of how, in our Judeo-Christian tradition, God speaks to human beings through two books: the Book of Creation and the Book of Sacred Scriptures. The two are distinct but yet related and inseparable.

In speaking about God and God's Kingdom, Jesus often drew his parables from the Book of Creation. That is the case in our Gospel for this day, in which Jesus begins by invoking the image of a sower who went out to sow. Jesus then ends by praising those who have eyes that truly see and ears that truly hear.

Today the Christian community faces a significant spiritual challenge facing, namely recovering our ability to see and hear more deeply the voice of God speaking to us through the Book of Creation. What are some of the concrete steps that we can take as individuals, families and faith communities to give ourselves the time and space we need to be touched and transformed by the wonder and awe of God's creation? What can we do to open our eyes and ears to peace, gratitude and joy that come from a renewed sense of connection with God and God's creation? This is not something peripheral, reserved for a small group of people who love the outdoors. Growing into a deeper communion with God and God's creation is essential to our human survival as a species. It is also a profoundly religious and spiritual challenge.

In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul asserts that our ultimate destiny as Christians is profoundly intertwined with that of the rest of God's creation. Pope Francis echoes that ancient teaching by saying that, together with all Earth community of life, we are fellow pilgrims on a journey to a fuller life in Christ Jesus. It is a moral imperative that we ponder that truth as we make collective political and economic decisions that impact the poor and the future generations, the land and oceans, forests and countless species of fellow creatures.

#### † Scripture passages to note:

**Isaiah 55:** Just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats, so shall my word be...

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.)

### † Scripture passages to note (cont.):

**Romans 8:** Creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God...in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

**Matthew 13:** A sower went out to sow... blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

### † Passages from *Laudato Si'* to note:

The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God, which has already been attained by the risen Christ, the measure of the maturity of all things. Here we can add yet another argument for rejecting every tyrannical and irresponsible domination of human beings over other creatures. The ultimate purpose of other creatures is not to be found in us. Rather, all creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things. (#83)

“God has joined us so closely to the world around us that we can feel the desertification of the soil almost as a physical ailment, and the extinction of a species as a painful disfigurement.” (#89, citing *Evangelii Gaudium*)

“Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely interconnected themes, which cannot be separated and treated individually without once again falling into reductionism.” [Conference of Dominican Bishops, “Pastoral Letter Sobre la relación del hombre con la naturaleza” 1987] Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth. (#92)

## Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** For all parents in our parish that we may enable our children to spend time out in nature and experience a sense of wonder and awe, let us pray to the Lord....

**Option 2:** For all faith-based and secular organizations that are trying to safeguard God’s creation and preserve its ability to teach us about God, let us pray to the Lord....

## Further Resources

Feedback: [IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com](mailto:IntegralFaithForLife@gmail.com)

Webpage: [www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help)

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