

# Integral Faith

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



## Homily Helps and Petitions for the Epiphany of the Lord, Cycle B (January 7, 2024)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Isaiah 60:** You shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow, for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you, the wealth of nations shall be brought to you.

**Psalms 72:** He shall rescue the poor when he cries out, and the afflicted when he has no one to help him. He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save.

**Ephesians 3:** You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit, namely, that the mystery was made known to me by revelation.

**Matthew 2:** (The Magi) prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

#### † Comments for the Day:

In their life journeys, both Saint Paul and the Magi were challenged to stretch not only their beliefs but also how they lived their life. Paul was a devout Jew, a Pharisee, who came to a belief in Jesus. That turned his world upside down. In his letter to the Ephesians, he speaks of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to him. In light of his encounter with Christ, he came to understand stewardship in a new and deeper way.

Led by a star, the Magi made a pilgrimage that took them from their own lands to a distant place. There they discovered "the newborn king of the Jews." Arriving at their destination, they did the child homage. The precious gifts that they offered were those in keeping with their status.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis speaks of a fidelity to our creator, the God who created the world for everyone. In this time of climate crisis, we are coming to understand in new ways the implications of this call to stewardship of our world. As God's stewards, we are to "till" and to "keep" the world in which we live.

Like both Paul and the Magi, each of us are called to stewardship of our world to help care for our sisters and brothers, particularly those most vulnerable to problems like climate change. We are invited to share our particular gifts, those commensurate with our own status and abilities. In our desire to be faithful to God, our gifts can be used to help heal the earth and its climate. By doing so, we also help protect the fundamental rights of the poor and underprivileged. As we

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.

contemplate this responsibility, we do well to keep before us the challenging example of the Magi, who “opened their treasures” to honor our Lord.

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

The biblical texts are to be read in their context, with an appropriate hermeneutic, recognizing that they tell us to “till and keep” the garden of the world. “Tilling” refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while “keeping” means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. (67)

When we can see God reflected in all that exists, our hearts are moved to praise the Lord for all his creatures and to worship him in union with them. This sentiment finds magnificent expression in the hymn of Saint Francis of Assisi. (87)

The earth is essentially a shared inheritance, whose fruits are meant to benefit everyone. For believers, this becomes a question of fidelity to the Creator, since God created the world for everyone. Hence every ecological approach needs to incorporate a social perspective which takes into account the fundamental rights of the poor and the underprivileged. (93)

An inadequate presentation of Christian anthropology gave rise to a wrong understanding of the relationship between human beings and the world. ... Our “dominion” over the universe should be understood more properly in the sense of responsible stewardship. (116)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That in recognizing the beauty of creation, we might be inspired to care for and protect our world along with all peoples who inhabit it, let us pray to the Lord....

**Option 2:** That, like the Magi, we might be willing to set aside our comfortable ways to work toward effective solutions to the global challenges of climate change, let us pray to the Lord....

### Further Resources

**Feedback:** [info@catholicclimatecovenant.org](mailto:info@catholicclimatecovenant.org)

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

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