

Integral Faith

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



Catholic Climate Covenant™
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

Homily Helps and Petitions for the 4th Sunday of Easter, Cycle B (April 21, 2024)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Acts 4: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus the Nazarene whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

1 John 3: Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed.

John 10: I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

† Comments for the Day:

Easter is the season to celebrate new life, life to the full, which involves being healed or made whole, complete, integrally sound. In order to be truly whole necessarily involves becoming holy, since we know ourselves to be more than what we can readily see as well as more than just me. As Pope Francis reminds us: "the human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures".

To be whole, to be truly saved or liberated, is to be incorporated into, to truly belong, to enter into communion with ... God, myself, others and our common home, our planet. This is the new abundant life to which Jesus has risen and invites us to embrace, with the help of his Spirit.

Pope Francis reminds us that everything is interconnected, that no one is saved alone. As the world faces another opportunity to embrace our planet as God's gift to us, on Earth Day, we recall our mission to stewardship. Celebrating Christ's victory over death and division, we are called to embrace the challenge of caring for this gift that God shares with us and which we are called to share with all, forever. As friends and disciples of the risen Christ, we are committed to heal and make whole what selfishness and greed have broken apart.

We are good shepherds when we use our knowledge, talents, and abilities to nurture the earth, our common home, as well as to contribute to the welfare and dignity of all humankind, doing our part to protect it from wolves trying to ravage and destroy it. Our charge is to never flee in times of danger, but to protect God's creation.

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.

May we become truly good shepherds in the manner of Christ himself and become part of this extraordinary process of healing and renewal. Earth Day reminds us that we are one family, enjoying the gifts God has shared so generously with us, imitating our Creator by sharing all God has given us with others as well.

We are saved by the awareness that we are not alone but part of a wide network, a wonderful community, formed by God to be a people gathered around the spirit of the gospel and in the power of Christ's resurrection. That is what we are now, but as John has written, what we shall later be is even more wonderful.

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

Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society. (#91)

Laborers and craftsmen thus “maintain the fabric of the world” (Sir. 38:34). Developing the created world in a prudent way is the best way of caring for it, as this means that we ourselves become the instrument used by God to bring out the potential which he himself inscribed in things: “The Lord created medicines out of the earth, and a sensible man will not despise them” (Sir. 38:4). (#124)

Concern for others, and the rejection of every form of self-centeredness and self-absorption, are essential if we truly wish to care for our brothers and sisters and for the natural environment. These attitudes also attune us to the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. (#208)

Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity . . . social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a “culture of care” which permeates all of society. (#231)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we may recognize healthcare and disaster relief workers as good shepherds who even lay down their lives for the ones for whom they are responsible. May we support them with our prayers and encouragement, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That Pope Francis, our holy shepherd, will experience good health and perseverance in his ministry as he continues to lead us, the people of God, to protect the vulnerable in our midst, let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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