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 Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord, Cycle C (April 20, 2025)

Homily Helps

† **Scripture Passages to Note:**

Acts 10: He went about doing good for God was with him. We are witnesses to all he did.

1 Cor 5: Let us celebrate the feast not with the old yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

John 20: "We don't know where they have put him." For they did not yet understand that he had to rise from the dead.

Comments for the Day:

"He went about doing good" is the fearless testimony given by the newly emboldened Peter of Jesus of Nazareth, recently condemned as a criminal and shamed on the cross to a brutal and dishonorable death. We can almost hear the background stirrings from the crowd recently vociferously crying out when questioned by Pontius Pilate: Crucify him, crucify him!

Now the whispers and murmurings of that same crowd could easily be: how could they do this to him, those savage and contemptible beasts; not content with stripping us of our dignity and self-worth, now they've gone and murdered our miracle worker. But no, that's not the script: we who are witnesses to the good he did and said now are called to give testimony to this new way of being together. Jesus did not come to flip the tortilla, to place those who were on the bottom on top now. Not at all! He came to serve, to take the last place, to invite – not to impose.

Mary of Magdala's consternation on seeing the empty tomb: "We don't know where they have put him" is now translated into statistics on the increased number of those incarcerated, disappeared, deported, denigrated and denied. The empty tomb is now the annual census of homeless, the rising number of malnourished children. He is not here, not in the statistics, not in the reporting, not in the indifference or impotence we feel in the face of this inhumanity. Christ is not there. For they did not yet understand that he had to rise from the dead.

The meaning of the empty tomb needs translation by Christian action! Christ has risen! He is alive in all who care and share; who reach out and raise up their voice and their spirit; in all who forgive and believe in the goodness of all of creation; who hold that evil does not reside only in others – who we can then desecrate and eliminate. Rather, He is *alive in* all of us, but *no one* of us *is God*! All are created in the *image and likeness of God* and all have some *good*, something of God in us. There is *no one* who has *nothing* to offer; and we *all need others*.

All of today's readings underscore Jesus' indescribable metamorphosis from dying to rising. The passage from Acts traces his path from being hung on a tree to rising to new life. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul employs the mysterious action of yeast fermentation, in order to demonstrate that decay often yields something new and fresh.

While we too are beneficiaries of this new life, we are *also* perpetrators of death, as suggested by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*. We are strangling the earth of its life with our garbage; choking the atmosphere with our pollution; poisoning water with our plastic. "All creation is groaning in labor pains even until now." (Rom 8:22)

The outcome of such a situation is in our own hands. We can decide to change our ways of consuming, of wasting, of polluting. We can commit ourselves to the birth of new life for earth, rather than disfigurement and death. The Easter message is a promise of life, not merely for human beings, but for all of creation. God has entrusted us with the fulfillment of part of that promise. How open are we to being midwives of new life?

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

The natural environment is a collective good, the patrimony of all humanity and the responsibility of everyone.…That is why the New Zealand bishops asked what the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" means when "twenty percent of the world's population consumes resources at a rate that robs the poor nations and future generations of what they need to survive." (95)

Thus, the creatures of this world no longer appear to us under merely natural guise because the risen one is mysteriously holding them to himself and directing them toward fullness as their end. The very flowers of the field and the birds which his human eyes contemplated and admired are now imbued with his radiant presence. (100)

Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start…No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. (205)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we have the insight to discover ways of bringing new life to our world, and the courage to follow those insights.

Option 2: That we open ourselves to the all-encompassing power of the resurrection that can transform us and our world.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org
Webpage: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help
Visit our webpage and sign up to receive these resources delivered to your email inbox each month.