

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps and Petitions for the Sixteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle C (July 20, 2025)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Genesis 18: When Abraham saw [the three men,] he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them; and bowing to the ground, he said: "Sir, if I may ask you this favor, please do not go on past your servant."

Colossians 1: In my own flesh I fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of his body, the church.

Luke 10: Martha, Martha, you are anxious and upset about many things; one thing only is required.

† Comments for the Day:

The scriptures are meant to be proclaimed in all times and places, but each actual proclamation must be localized in a specific time and place. Each local proclamation is meant to attend to the issues arising within that specific ecosystem with its unique climate, geography, economy, and human history. Today's reading from Genesis gives us an example of this.

The story tells us that Abraham and his family were camped at the terebinth of Mamre (a turpentine or oak tree in what is now the West Bank), and the day was hot. When Abraham sees three strangers arriving, he knows that on such a day in that ecosystem, the travelers' lives might be in danger if he does not offer them water, food, and shelter. He does his duty – but he also does much more. The amount of flour he tells Sarah to knead into bread would feed dozens of people, as would the choice steer that he has slaughtered and prepared. Abraham enfleshes his love of God with these very concrete and localized acts of abundant, over-the-top generosity.

The gospel is also a story about hospitality. Both Mary and Martha, like Abraham, are generous and abundant in their hospitality to the Lord; but they enflesh it differently. Mary chooses an unusual path for a woman, sitting at Jesus's feet and listening to him with her full attention. Martha follows the more traditional path of preparing a delicious feast for all who are in attendance. The problem is that in doing so, she has lost her focus and become frazzled. Jesus invites her to come back to the heart of her original intention, namely, her desire to express her love by offering the gift of food. The "one thing necessary" is love; the way it is be enfleshed can take many forms. In today's world, one of the chief ways that we are called to enflesh love is by caring for local ecosystems and for the people who depend on them for survival.

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.

† Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:

We are always capable of going out of ourselves towards the other. Unless we do this, other creatures will not be recognized for their true worth; we are unconcerned about caring for things for the sake of others; we fail to set limits on ourselves in order to avoid the suffering of others or the deterioration of our surroundings. Disinterested 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. (208)

We must not think that these efforts are not going to change the world. They benefit society, often unbeknown to us, for they call forth a goodness which, albeit unseen, inevitably tends to spread. Furthermore, such actions can restore our sense of self-esteem; they can enable us to live more fully and to feel that life on earth is worthwhile. (212)

Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world. Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity which affects not only relationships between individuals but also “macro-relationships, social, economic and political ones”. That is why the Church set before the world the ideal of a “civilization of love”. Social love is the key to authentic development: “In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, love in social life – political, economic and cultural – must be given renewed value, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity”. In this framework, along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a “culture of care” which permeates all of society. When we feel that God is calling us to intervene with others in these social dynamics, we should realize that this too is part of our spirituality, which is an exercise of charity and, as such, matures and sanctifies us. (231)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That churches throughout the world will find ways to contribute to the health of their local ecosystems, let us pray to the Lord ...

Option 2: That each of us will find our own unique way of abundantly enfleshing Christian hospitality, let us pray to the Lord ...

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

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

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