

# 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 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, Cycle A (April 26, 2026)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Acts 2:** "What are we to do, my brothers?"

**1 Peter 2:** If you are patient when you suffer for doing what is good, this is a grace before God.

**John 10:** "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

#### † Comments for the Day:

Rugged individualism is in our DNA, the belief that, as individuals, we can pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps and get ahead. Faith in individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism, and the market are characteristics of our modern mindset. Those values stand in stark contrast with Peter's call to be patient in suffering for the sake of others, just as Jesus suffered for us. In John's Gospel, Jesus proclaims that he has come to bring life in abundance for all, in this life now, looking forward to the long-awaited realization of the reign of God.

Like those who heard the words of the apostles in the reading from Acts, we too must ask: "What are we to do?" What are the core elements around which we structure our lives? Are our lifestyles built upon individualism and consumerism? How can we restore our relationships with God, others, and God's creation? Pope Leo sates clearly his preference: *I am convinced that the preferential choice for the poor is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society, if we can only set ourselves free of our self-centeredness and open our ears to their cry.*

The poor, too, remind us how baseless is the attitude of aggressive arrogance with which we frequently confront life's difficulties. They remind us how uncertain and empty our seemingly safe and secure lives may be. For us Christians, the problem of the poor leads to the very heart of our faith. For Christians, the poor are not a sociological category, but the very "flesh" of Christ. By her very nature the Church is in solidarity with the poor, the excluded, the marginalized and all those considered the outcast of society. The poor are at the heart of the Church because "our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members."

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 *On Love for the Poor* to Note:

At times, Christian movements or groups have arisen which show little or no interest in the common good of society and, in particular, the protection and advancement of its most vulnerable and disadvantaged members. Yet we must never forget that religion, especially the Christian religion, cannot be limited to the private sphere, as if believers had no business making their voice heard with regard to problems affecting civil society and issues of concern to its members. (112)

Indeed, “any Church community, if it thinks it can comfortably go its own way without creative concern and effective cooperation in helping the poor to live with dignity and reaching out to everyone, will also risk breaking down, however much it may talk about social issues or criticize governments. It will easily drift into a spiritual worldliness camouflaged by religious practices, unproductive meetings and empty talk.” (113)

Nor is it a question merely of providing for welfare assistance and working to ensure social justice. Christians should also be aware of another form of inconsistency in the way they treat the poor. In reality, “the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care... Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into privileged and preferential religious care.” Yet, this spiritual attentiveness to the poor is called into question, even among Christians, by certain prejudices arising from the fact that we find it easier to turn a blind eye to the poor. There are those who say: “Our task is to pray and teach sound doctrine.” Separating this religious aspect from integral development, they even say that it is the government’s job to care for them, or that it would be better not to lift them out of their poverty but simply to teach them to work. At times, pseudo-scientific data are invoked to support the claim that a free market economy will automatically solve the problem of poverty. Or even that we should opt for pastoral work with the so-called elite, since, rather than wasting time on the poor, it would be better to care for the rich, the influential and professionals, so that with their help real solutions can be found and the Church can feel protected. It is easy to perceive the worldliness behind these positions, which would lead us to view reality through superficial lenses, lacking any light from above, and to cultivate relationships that bring us security and a position of privilege. (114)

### Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That we might work toward dignity for all, especially the marginalized and most vulnerable, let us pray to the Lord....

**Option 2:** That we might follow in the footsteps of Jesus, willing to suffer and sacrifice for our sisters and brothers, and for earth, our common home, 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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