

Integral Faith

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



Homily Helps and Petitions for the 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A (August 23, 2026)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Romans 11: Or who has given the Lord anything that he may be repaid? For from him and through him and for him are all things.

Matthew 16: Simon Peter said..., "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."

† Comments for the Day:

Consider for a moment the concept of “partnership.” In that relationship, we discover the notion that we are in this together, we each have something to offer, and we need one another. The readings today remind us of our genuine partnership with God in His divine plan for restoring all things in Christ.

The very concept of victory, as understood and modeled by Christ, is hard to grasp in a world obsessed with conquering rather than comprehending. The Son of the living God won his victory over death and selfishness by emptying himself and willingly assuming our weakened condition. He entered into solidarity with us, respecting the dignity of all people. Rather than imposing the reign of God, he invites us to become partners in building it up – here and now, not in some dreamy, far-off promised land. Jesus offers life in abundance, for all.

Our task, as true disciples of Christ and members of God’s family, is to exercise “authority” as Jesus did, in both word and deed: not by *imposing* but by *proposing* an alternate path. He calls us to conversion, to change our lifestyle, and to live now as we hope to love forever: sharing in solidarity God’s good gifts generously, caring for one another, and caring for our common home.

We can take great comfort from the behavior of Simon Peter! Jesus saw the colossal potential in this unpredictable, emotional, and generally flawed human person. Jesus changed Simon’s name to Peter, meaning "Rock," giving him a new assignment: holding the keys of God's household, with the authority and responsibility of building up God's reign.

Like Peter, we are all being called to conversion, to change our lifestyle and assume genuine partnership in caring for our common home. We have been given a generous gift and are being invited to care for what God has given for the benefit of all. Each of us is called to rely on our

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personal relationship with Christ to build up the reign of God for and with those around us. We are not called to live this alone, but with others, in the community of disciples that is called to be an instrument of communion with and for all.

† **Passages from *Magnifica Humanitatis* to Note:**

We have reflected on the world we are building, and we asked ourselves what it means to safeguard the human person in the era of artificial intelligence. I would like to propose a sober yet demanding program of Christian life with which we can navigate this epochal change in the light of the Gospel. This avenue emerges through contemplating God's plan, living ecclesial unity by partaking of the Eucharist, building a world centered on the common good and praying in union with the Blessed Virgin Mary. (229)

At the heart of everything is the mystery of the Incarnation, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. The flesh of the Son, poor and vulnerable, evokes the flesh of so many brothers and sisters stripped of their dignity and reduced to silence. Through the Lord's closeness, the gift of peace enters into the world in a paradoxical way. It does so through the power to become children of God, and is awakened when we allow ourselves to be moved by the tears of the little ones, the fragility of the elderly, the silence of victims and the struggle of those who fight against the evil they do not wish to commit. In this wounded yet beloved flesh, the Father shows us the true humanity of a life fulfilled through openness and communion, which leads us to desire that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (231)

For this reason, as a believer among believers, I invite everyone to contemplate, in the face of the Son of God, the *grandeur of humanity* that shines a light also on the era of AI. In Christ, we are called to cooperate in the work of creation, rather than be disinterested observers of technological processes that limit our freedom and responsibility. (233)

The dignity inscribed in each of us by the Holy Spirit can also be seen in our capacity to reflect critically, choose and love freely, and form authentic relationships. No computational system, however sophisticated, can create a heart that gives itself, or a conscience that discerns good from evil. In this plan, nothing will be lost that is authentically human. 233.

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That every discovery and technical tool serve to help make life on this planet more dignified, more just and more humane, let us pray to the Lord ...

Option 2: That we might be blessed with the wisdom of diplomacy, the humility of dialogue, and the courage of meekness that we might become artisans of peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

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

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