Integral Faith

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

Homily Helps and Petitions for the 4th Sunday of Advent, Cycle B (December 20, 2026)

Homily Helps

† **Scripture Passages to Note:**

Psalm 89: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Romans 16: To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever.

Luke 1: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

† **Comments for the Day:**

This season invites us to celebrate God coming among us to make a home with us, to encourage us to see ourselves as one human family, without regard to race, ethnicity, social status, or creed. The heartfelt response of Mary, the humble handmaid, inspires us to listen to God's call: above the din of commerce, the empty promise of technology, and the blasting temptation from the media seeking to distort our values.

God is calling each of us personally, and all of us collectively, to be attentive to the state of our endangered environment. It is a gift that has been given to us in one another and in nature, to appreciate and care for our common home. We are invited to open our eyes and ears to see and hear what is happening to our planet and to ourselves. Doing so may allow better witness to our common destiny: one family enjoying one planet, and caring for it so others will also be able to enjoy God's bounty, now and in the future.

Precisely when God is leading us to simplicity and authenticity, we are confronted with the idols of consumerism, "fast fashion," and celebrity. We accept these worldly pleasures at the expense of the truly abundant life that Jesus lived, and which he so longs to share with us. The ways of the world are certainly not God's ways, and we are sorely tempted to put ourselves in the place of the god we have created, rather than become authentic creatures of our creator God.

Today we are reminded that we are not God, and that God has chosen to reach out to us to join in caring for our common home. At this time of year, a new sensitivity grows towards the more vulnerable and less powerful among us, including God himself incarnate and laid to rest in a manger. So, too, must the promotion of the human person and the defense of his or her dignity become a characteristic of the Christian celebration of Christmas.

We as a people need to grow beyond the "feel-good" stage of doing good for others. We must, in solidarity, assume the consequences of subsidiarity and learn to walk with, listen to, and learn from one another. Only in this way will we ultimately be able to "care for our common home."

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:**

Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We require a new and universal solidarity. ..... All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents. (14)

Nature as a whole not only manifests God but is also a locus of his presence. The Spirit of life dwells in every living creature and calls us to enter into relationship with him. Discovering this presence leads us to cultivate the "ecological virtues". (88)

A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings…. Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love of our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society. (91)

Whether believers or not, we are agreed today that the earth is essentially a shared inheritance, whose fruits are meant to benefit everyone. For believers, this becomes a question of fidelity to the Creator, since God created the world for everyone. (93)

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 filed and the birds which his human eyes contemplated and admired are now imbued with his radiant presence. (100)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That the pounding drum of consumerism might not drown out the voice of God which speaks to us in the cry of the poor and the planet, let us pray to the Lord …

Option 2: That at this time when we are more aware of God's love for us, that we might have the courage to make changes to our lifestyle to better foster and promote harmony and peace among all, let us pray to the Lord …

Further Resources

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