

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Sep 12th 2015

“From the dunghill he lifts up the poor.” (Psalm 113:7)

What do we call home? For some, we move out into the world to find our own way. Home is left behind or maybe lies in the future. For others, home travels with us. Like our heart, we cannot leave it behind. For better or worse, we are formed by those who first lift us into life and care for us.

Jesus says to build on rock so we are not pummeled by storms. A doughty home is not swept away. But a good home is not a fortress whose entrance is sealed. Its windows and doors open onto the world. Hospitality is practiced here. Home is where we learn compassion. The rooms are not always clean. The unexpected twists and turns of life take precedence over order.

In his recent encyclical, Pope Francis calls the earth our common home that we share with all creatures. The climate, water, soil, and air nurture all. Creation is given by God as a gift; it is not ultimately an object of commerce or exploitation. As the species endowed with reason, we must not allow our home to “loom more and more like an immense pile of filth.” It is not good enough to talk all night then sigh at dawn. After listening, we must act.

The tree is known by its fruit. But good fruit takes time to develop. Once known as the persecutor, Paul brought the Word to many communities. He organized them to live in a new way. Being a bad apple is not the final word on anyone. Delight at realizing how much this sinner is loved is the rock on which we build.

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