

Homily 7th Sunday Year A 2023

One of the most significant passages in the Old Testament concerns the encounter of Moses with God at the burning bush. God says to Moses: *“Take off your shoes, you stand on holy ground!”* It suggests that any encounter with God makes all that happens around it holy. Since God is present in everything and everyone, we are all inherently holy. Being holy, however, has to do with the way in which we live our lives. As followers of Christ, holiness colours everything that we do, say, think or experience. Jesus wants us to see that, like love, the more we share our holiness with others the more we have to share. In our encounters, we bring the presence of God, who is holy, to those we meet while at the same time receiving the holiness of God’s presence from them, even if they do not know it.

Macrina Wiederkehr puts it like this:

My bare feet walk the earth reverently
for everything keeps crying,
Take off your shoes

The ground you stand on is holy.

The ground of your being is holy.

When the wind sings through the pines,
like a breath of God,
awakening you to the sacred present,
calling your soul to new insights.

Take off your shoes!

When the sun rises above your rooftop
colouring your world with dawn,
be receptive to this awesome beauty,
put on your garment of adoration.

Take off your shoes!

When the Red Maple drops its last leaf of summer
wearing its “burning bush” robes no longer
read between its barren branches, and

Take off your shoes!

When sorrow presses close to your heart
begging you to put your trust in God alone
filling you with a quiet knowing
that God’s hand is not too short to heal you

Take off your shoes!

When a new person comes into your life
like a mystery about to unfold
and you find yourself marvelling over
the frailty and splendour of every human being

Take off your shoes!

When, during the wee hours of the night
You drive slowly into the new day
And the morning’s fog, like angel wings
Hovers mysteriously above you

Take off your shoes!

Take off your shoes of distraction
Take off your shoes of ignorance and blindness
Take off your shoes of hurry and worry

Take off anything that prevents you
from being *a child of wonder*.

Take off your shoes;

The ground you stand on is holy.

The ground you are is holy.

This helps us understand why saving our planet is so, so important. Let us listen again to the prayer for the earth that Pope Francis gave us in his encyclical **Laudato Si!**

All-powerful God,

you are present in the whole universe

and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,

that we may protect life and beauty.

*Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.*

O God of the poor,

help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,

that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts

of those who look only for gain

at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,

to be filled with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united

with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle

for justice, love and peace. AMEN.

Why did Adam and Eve do maths every day? They were told to be fruitful and **multiply**.

When someone needed a boat made, what did the people in town say? "We Noah chap."

A pair of cows were talking in the field. One says, "Have you heard about the mad cow disease that's going around?" "Yes," the other cow says. "Makes me glad I'm a penguin."