

Gospel Reflection

What is Jesus offering us today? They are called the “Beatitudes”—but what do they mean? There are no easy answers. Some say they are unattainable ideals, put before us as challenges. Others say they are only for a spiritual elite: the saints. Others would “translate” them into political slogans. One popular television personality called them the “Be Attitudes,” subtly presenting them as optimistic, vaguely New-Age ideas.

Was Jesus a “wimp”? Is he asking us in the Beatitudes to be weak? Is this a program for so-called “losers”? We must admit that our conceptions of “meek” and “gentle” rarely serve as ideals toward which many of us care to strive.

Jesus does not burden his disciples with a system that counsels us to grit our teeth and endure. Instead, he places us in the midst of the real world and its conflicts, and he promises us a reward. Righteousness will be satisfied and merciful action will result in mercy extended toward us. As with Zephaniah, Jesus links justice and humility. We must be pure in order to direct ourselves and help others.

Most modern ideologies promise peace and justice and happiness. Many also require violence against the so-called “enemies” of justice and peace. They must use force and violence, of course, only in order to “make” people good.

Those are not the teachings of Jesus. This New Law is promulgated on a peaceful hillside in Galilee, not on the slopes of a pulsing volcano in the desert. How surprisingly God works, calling the weak to be heroic, calling us to acknowledge our shame in order to overcome our willfulness and pride. He asks us not to tame the universe, but to tame ourselves. History and our own experience have shown this to be a much more difficult task.

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KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

Matthew 5:1-12

Z V L T C T G M S G S P M
I O J R E U O C S R H E O
D N Q A S U J S E E X R D
J E C J N Y D K N W M S G
O H S T Z W A U S A I E N
C M A S O M G L U R Q C I
L I X R E B K K O D S U K
N O C C U L G R E J J T J
V W A D I G B O T E Q E A
H E A V E N I O H R M Q M
P B N R U O M P G M I G G
L A Y I D I S C I P L E S
F C N L U F I C R E M I H

Find these words from the Gospel passage.

BLESSED	CROWDS	DISCIPLES
HEAVEN	KINGDOM	MEEK
MERCIFUL	MOUNTAIN	MOURN
PEACEMAKERS	PERSECUTE	POOR
REWARD	RIGHTEOUSNESS	TEACH

Disciple's Reflection & Questions of the Week

*Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
2/3/08*

*Matthew 5:1-12
Faith-Sharing
Questions of the Week*



Our Lady of the Assumption

435 Berkeley Ave.
Claremont, CA
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Call to Prayer

We begin by calling upon God:

**In the Name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

The Word of God: *Matthew 5:1-12*

The Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up **the mountain**, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the **meek**, for they will inherit the land.

“Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for **righteousness**, for they will be satisfied.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

“Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are they who are **persecuted** for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord



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Gospel Glossary

the mountain: traditionally refers to Mount Eremos near Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee

meek: mild or quiet in nature

righteousness: quality of being morally upright or virtuous

persecuted: subjected to cruel or unfair treatment

Faith Sharing

Questions of the Week

- How might life be different if people lived according to the beatitudes?
- Following Jesus can bring both blessedness and persecution. What keeps me humble in the face of blessedness and faithful when persecuted?
- How do these beatitudes challenge me to change?

Closing Prayer

Father in heaven,

You have formed us as a people in the image of your Son. Bless us with the gift of your kingdom. May we serve you with our every desire and show love for one another even as you have loved us. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time