

Poor but rich in faith and trust

The Gospel reading for this weekend's Mass, invites us to reflect on the theme of "blessings and trust in God." The Gospel (Luke 6:17, 20-26) presents us with the "Sermon on the Plain," where Jesus contrasts the blessedness of those who trust in God with the woes of those who depend solely on worldly wealth and comforts. Jesus gives us four blessings ("Beatitudes") and four corresponding woes. For example: "Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours;" and "Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."

This can be challenging to understand. Does Jesus condemn wealth and success? Not exactly. Instead, He is teaching us to place our ultimate trust and hope in God rather than in material possessions or worldly achievements. True happiness comes from our relationship with God, not from the temporary comforts of this life.

The poor, hungry, and sorrowful are blessed not because suffering is good but because their need leads them to rely on God. On the other hand, the rich and self-satisfied are warned because they may fall into the trap of self-reliance and forget their need for God.

This teaching overturns the world's values. Society often measures success by wealth, power, and comfort, but Jesus reminds us that these things are fleeting. What truly matters is living in God's grace and aligning our lives with His will.

Here are some practical ways we can live out the message of this Gospel in our daily lives:

Trust in God over material wealth:

- Reflect on where your trust lies. Do you rely more on money, your job, or possessions than on God?
- Take time each day to pray and entrust your concerns to the Lord. Remember that everything we have is a gift from God.

Practice generosity and care for the less fortunate:

- Share your blessings with those in need. Donate to charities, volunteer at a soup kitchen, or help a struggling neighbor.
- Jesus calls us to care for the poor and vulnerable. By doing so, we store "treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20).

Find joy in simplicity:

- In a world obsessed with acquiring more, embrace simplicity. Focus on relationships, faith, and serving others rather than chasing material success.
- Spend time with your family, meditate on God's Word, and give thanks for the small blessings in life.

Examine your priorities:

- Take a moment this week to reflect on your choices. Are you pursuing things that bring you closer to God or things that distract you from Him?
- Consider setting spiritual goals, such as attending Mass more regularly, reading Scripture daily, or joining a faith group.

Offer hope to those who are suffering:

- If you know someone who is struggling, be a source of encouragement. Remind them that God's blessings often come through trials and that He is always with them.
- Simple acts of kindness, like listening to a friend or offering to pray for someone, can make a difference.

Jesus reminds us today that the values of His kingdom are not the same as the values of the world. Let us strive to live as blessed people—trusting in God, caring for others, and finding our joy in Him. By doing so, we will experience true happiness, not just in this life but in the eternal life to come.

May the Lord help us to live out these Beatitudes in our daily lives. Amen.

Fr. Bula