

All Saints
November 1, 2020
“The Beatitudes”

Rev 7:2...14
1 Jn 3:1-3
Mt 5:1-12

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

Anyone with any sense of decency and morality must lament and deplore what our society and world have become. Most of the nations of the world are in some state of disarray. Our own country is polarized politically – with hatred in the hearts of many. The entertainment industry is so corrupt that now there is even an HBO film entitled “Unpregnant” which makes jokes about abortion – which can never be a joke!

The trillionaires are so powerful that they control a narrative that fosters their agenda of world domination. Part of that agenda is to corrupt as many souls as possible in every imaginable way. Certainly, this is not the way of God – but the way of the Prince of Darkness. Moreover, at times like these, we can feel helpless and powerless to do anything against these forces of evil!

Fortunately, the Gospel for today has much to teach us as we struggle living in such a corrupt world. The Beatitudes of Jesus remind us that we are called to another world altogether. They tell us that we can rise above all the evil in the world. By doing so, we will be blessed with a different life in the world to come. Moreover, we can be blessed in our hearts and souls, even now!

- Being poor in spirit means being detached from wealth and material things to the extent that we use them for the poor both here and throughout the world.
- We truly mourn if we mourn because of the evil in the world and for the suffering and pain in other people’s lives.
- We become meek when we are slow to anger and when we are always gentle with others – instead of being violent and abusive either physically or emotionally.
- We hunger and thirst for righteousness when we stand for justice, goodness, and truth against evil, injustice, and lies.
- Being merciful brings pardon and forgiveness even to our enemies. It means never being vengeful, no matter what others have done to us or to others.

- Having a pure heart applies to much more than lust. It means having the mind and heart of God. It means purging our own hearts of everything selfish and unworthy of us as children of God. It means fidelity to God's commands.
- Peacemaking means more than settling disputes. It also means bringing calm, quiet, and serenity to the hearts of those who are anxious, impatient, annoyed, or losing control.
- Finally, the eighth beatitude teaches us that if we try to practice and live the Beatitudes, we will suffer like Jesus. We will be disdained, ridiculed, laughed at, persecuted, and slandered. Nevertheless, our personal suffering will result in a great reward for us in the kingdom of heaven!

In the Book of Revelation, St. John also teaches us that living the Beatitudes is living the way that God intended for us. Like countless others who have gone before us, we are to become saints during our journey on earth. Thus, we must constantly work to rise above that human selfishness and self-service that is part of the Original Sin we, sadly, inherit. Pride, greed, anger, lust, gluttony, envy, and sloth continue to gnaw at our souls and spirits every day.

However, with God's grace and our commitment to the Beatitudes, they can be overcome. We must remain patient and steadfast in the struggle and never give up. For, if we persist, we will be clothed with the robe that Jesus made white for us – and we will be awarded the palm branch of victory!

St. John gives us even more encouragement in today's 2nd scripture passage. God has loved us into life and created us to be His children. We live as authentic children of the Father, when we disdain the values of the culture and of the world. Those immersed in the world and dedicated to it cannot, and never will, understand us because they don't know or understand God Himself.

However, if we are faithful, then, when we arrive at the kingdom, we will be more than God's children. We will have become truly divine, because being able to look at the face of God means that we are truly one with Him and share His divine life!

So, Brothers and Sisters, let us pray that we can stay the course here and rise above the culture and the darkness of the world. And may we bring our lives into conformity with the life of Jesus himself – the eternal Son of God and our brother!

Amen.

November 1, 2020

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