

What's wrong with you people! Coming to a Divine Service on a day like today. I ask myself in many situations. What's wrong with you?

Our world tends to judge things in a very easy, straightforward way. So, blessed is the man to whom nothing bad happens; who attains the desires of his heart, to whom life is good; Who does not struggle to make ends meet, and others want to be like. Not necessarily religious, but at least altruistic, nice, loving.

And the opposite. Woe to the man to whom bad happens, for whom life is a struggle. Who is burdened with sadness, looked upon with pity. Who no one wants to be like.

It's not just "the world" that thinks that way. We do it too. who is blessed, and for whom life is woe/cursed. We think we know.

Jesus reminds us: not so fast. Or how does the old saying go: don't judge a book by its cover! Blessings and woes may not be what you think. Like when those who we think are so richly blessed commit suicide or you hear scandal in their life. Or when a child is dying of cancer, smiling, speaking of joy; or people after fire or storm took everything they owned talk about the true treasures of their life.

Blessing and woe is more than skin deep; more than what we see; more than what we think. Think about the scene in Galilee, Jews and Greeks come to hear Jesus, be healed. Jesus lifts up His eyes, sees people in all kinds of conditions. He speaks of blessings and... woes. But who is blessed? Whom is woe/cursed? Careful... if you think you know! Were the poor, hungry, sad now blessed because they'd been healed? Or was Jesus now warning them of woes that often come to those who think they're blessed?

Don't judge a book by its cover; don't judge your life by its cover either. Jesus would've had the words of Jeremiah in mind when He spoke to the crowd in Galilee. He knew His Old Testament pretty well, He wrote it. Jeremiah, cries out 'what's wrong with you people.' You think you're blessed when you are really cursed, you determine what is right in your own mind, you think your sins aren't so bad.

Cursed is the man who trusts in man, makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord.

Don't miss this point. 'Blessed' is only a life in Christ, living repentant, living according to His truth. Blessed -whose faith lies not in what happens to them, but in what happened to Christ. For such faith is neither captivated nor distressed by the things of this world, but focused on the cross, what happened to our Savior there, receives His promises, forgiveness.

Like Jeremiah's tree planted by streams of water –when times of desert and want when each breath of life is a struggle – nevertheless well-watered, nourished by Christ. Deep roots, unseen, of faith connected to Christ, strengthening, sustaining you.

Don't judge your faith by how it feels, or what you think it is; don't trust what you can or cannot do; what you have or have not done. Blessed in the man whose trust is the Lord, in what He has done.

Blessed are you -a statement of faith, not of sight or feeling. A statement of the cross – a statement rooted, grounded not in anything of this world -but in the death and resurrection of Christ.

What's wrong with you people. You think your sins aren't so bad, minimize them, and so many sins of omission of how you've failed to be kind and generous and loving

What's wrong with you people. What's wrong with you, not to listen to the culture, not to live for yourself, not to follow your heart but to have a life in Him, blessed with His works.

Blessed are you, poor –nothing to hold onto but Christ! Yours the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you hungry, satisfied –filled with Christ's body and blood!
Blessed are you who weep –in repentance –for you have joy in His forgiveness forever.

Blessed are you when people hate you, exclude you, revile you on account of Him! For they see Christ in you. He is your life.

What's wrong with you, not relying on what you see, but trusting in His Word. His Word which says: blessed are you. so true. You are His. Blessed are you. His treasures are yours. You have all things.