

Church of the Divine Love
THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
FEBRUARY 1, 2026 10:15 A.M.
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

A Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You For allowing us to see a brand -new day.

For this, we give You Praise! Lord, we lift up our concerns, worries, and burdens before You, knowing that You are with us in every step of the way. Fill us with Your peace that surpasses all understanding, calming our hearts and reassuring us of Your unfailing presence.

Deliver us from the evil one and keep us safe from all harm, known and unknown.

In the precious name of Jesus. Amen

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect for 4 Epiphany page 215

First Lesson: **Micah 6:1-8** *(pages 805 in the Bible)*

Psalm 15 page 599

Second Lesson: **1 Corinthians 1:18-31** *(page 991)*

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **Matthew 5:1-12** *(page 837)*

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession page 393

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People - All baptized Christians, regardless
of age, are welcome to receive Communion.

Communion Hymn #

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace page 815

Prayer for the Parish page 817

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday February 1, 2026

Micah 6: 1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31; Matthew 5: 1-12.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, we are all blessed. Blessed. Jesus says that word nine times in today's gospel (Matthew 5:1-12). We often talk about ourselves or others as being blessed. I'm blessed. She's blessed. We're really blessed. You've said and heard those things, right? But

here's what I wonder: what do they mean?

What does it mean to be blessed? When you tell another that you are blessed what do you mean by that? And when you hear someone else say, I'm really blessed, how do you understand that? I ask those questions because I think what we mean when we talk about being blessed is often not what Jesus means when he talks about our being blessed. Take a moment and think of one thing that points to or indicates your blessedness. You got it, know what it is? What did you name? What's the mark or indicator of your blessedness? When I hear others talk about being blessed, they often describe things like good health, healing from a sickness, well-being, wealth, some good fortune, success, getting through a difficult time, family, love or friendship, receiving support from another, getting something they wanted, things going their way. That's often how I've thought about it too. They're certainly good things and I want them for you and myself but is that really what it means to be blessed? Maybe it's better than that.

How many of you, when I asked you to name something that points to or indicates your blessedness, named one of the beatitudes in today's gospel? Nobody? They're not at the top of my list either. I didn't ask that question as a test, criticism, or judgment but as a wondering that maybe we don't really get what it means to be blessed. I suspect most of us think of blessedness as some sort of reward or favoritism from God. We're lucky or fortunate in contrast to someone who is not. We've received a particular benefit. Maybe our prayer was answered like we wanted. Maybe we even think we did things right as opposed to someone who did them wrong, or times when we did things wrong. Maybe we think that to be blessed means we've been chosen, picked, favored, benefitted. What if that's not at all what it means to be blessed? What if blessedness is broader and bigger than that? What if we don't acquire or get blessedness? What if it's a given? What if it's not unique or particular to certain individuals? What if there are no prerequisites or qualifications to be blessed? What if blessedness isn't exclusive to some but inclusive of all?

Imagine that one day you come to my office and say, Father, I've been counting my blessings and I've got a lot. I'm really blessed. And I say, yeah? So what? Every single person regardless of who they are is blessed. Every single person regardless of what he or she believes or doesn't believe is blessed. Every single person regardless of what he or she has done and left undone, is blessed. You're not that special. We're all blessed. What would you think? How would you feel? Would that mess with your understanding of blessedness? Would you celebrate that all are blessed? Or would you feel as if I had taken something from you and that you're not as unique, important, or special as you thought you were or want to be? I think that's often how we see our blessedness. I am unique, important, special. I've benefited. God has seen me and done

something for me. But I wonder if we make blessedness too small, too individualistic, too circumstantial. Here's the thing. We're all already blessed. It's not something you get, earn, acquire, or receive. It's something you are. It's something you and I already are. We are already blessed. It was given us by the creator at our creation. And there's nothing you can do to be more blessed, and nothing you can do to lose your blessedness.

The distinction isn't between those who are blessed and those who are not blessed. The only distinction is between those who know they are blessed and those who have not yet recognized their blessedness. It's not a question of blessedness but a question of recognition. Take being poor in spirit, for example. Being poor in spirit is not the blessing and it's not the prerequisite to receive a blessing. It's a manifestation or expression of one who recognizes her or his blessedness. It's the way we live when we already know and trust that we are blessed. And so, it is with all the beatitudes. When we know that we are blessed we live in a particular way and when we don't know or trust our blessedness we live in a different way. When I trust and live from my blessedness, I'm able to respond to you in a different way, a better way, a deeper way, a more loving way. But when I forget, turn away from, deny, or don't recognize my blessedness, more often than not I betray myself and that usually means I will hurt you.

Are the beatitudes finding expression in your life today? I'm not asking that as a way telling you to go out and do those things. I'm really just asking if you see that you are already blessed. Because when we recognize and live from our blessedness the beatitudes follow naturally. We don't have to go out and do them. We can't help but do them. It's who we are at our best, at our deepest, and when we are most truly ourselves. And if you're not seeing the beatitudes in your life, why not? What's getting in the way? What's keeping you from seeing your blessedness? And if you aren't seeing it that doesn't mean you are not blessed. You are. It's the invitation to rediscover and reconnect with your blessedness. We've all been blessed. And some days we know it and trust it more than other days. What does it mean and look like for you today to reconnect to your blessedness?

When I know myself to be blessed, I'm more fully myself. I'm more aware of and connected to others. My world is larger. My life seems to flow and feel more natural. And I don't have to prove myself, live up to another's expectations, or gain somebody's approval. I don't have to compare myself to or compete with others. It's enough to just be Blessed beloved and to express that blessedness in the truest most authentic way you can in that moment.

In the trauma and setbacks of life we discover that we cannot do life by ourselves. As we admit our need of God we find purity of heart. The arrogance of self-sufficiency gives way to

meekness. We realize that all that we are and have been from God and we begin to know ourselves as poor in spirit. Our own misfortunes awaken and connect us to the pain of the world for which we cannot help but mourn. We think less about ourselves and become merciful to others. We have nowhere else to go and so we turn our gaze back to God. The longer we gaze at God the more we hunger and thirst for righteousness, for God's life, and we become peacemakers reconciling ourselves to God and our neighbor. This is the life for which Christ's disciples are willing to be persecuted, a life of righteousness, the life for which Christ died and rose again.

The beatitudes are not so much about what we do, our actions, but how we do, our being. They are less about actions and more about relationships. To live the beatitudes is to live a life of reckless, exuberant, self-abandonment to God and our neighbor. That's called love. The only reason we can do that is because we know and trust ourselves to have already been blessed by God. We live the beatitudes as a response to God blessing us. That is the way of Christ. That is not only the way forward through this life, it is the way to life. If we are to follow Christ it must become our way. **Amen.**

4 EPIPHANY

10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II

ANNUAL MEETING FOLLOWS

Vestry nomination - Erika Febres- 2nd term as Junior Warden

MONDAY

8:00 PM

AA MEETING

TUESDAY

6:00 PM

BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY

7:00 PM

AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY

10AM-2PM

THRIFT SHOP

SATURDAY

10AM-2PM

THRIFT SHOP

5 EPIPHANY

10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER, FEBRUARY 17th, 6:00PM

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Anthony Giordano	Jess Berbeck
Coffee Hour	Annual Meeting	Dave Treasure

SUPPORT THE FOOD BANK, DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Martin
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Joseph
Chris Dickson	John Rocco	Donny
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Scottie Credendino	Michael	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Jill
Anthony Paribello	Jonathan	Aika
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Jan
Timothy Treasure	Vincent & Barbara	Sandy
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jay
Gladys Hadija	Sophia	Aidan

Michael & Family

Donna A

Mo

Michelle & Family

Christopher

Annie

Moises Parra

Misael Varas

Cary

Warren

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.

Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to the prayer list during the week,

email Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

