



CELEBRATING AT HOME
6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Blessings & Woes (Luke 6:17, 20-26)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

Preparing to hear the Word

You abide in hearts that are true and just.

Lord, have mercy.

You fashion us by your grace.

Christ, have mercy.

You make us into your dwelling.

Lord, have mercy.

Scripture Reading *(Luke 6:17, 20-26)*

Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon.

Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

‘How happy are you who are poor:

yours is the kingdom of God.

Happy you who are hungry now:

you shall be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.

Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

‘But alas for you who are rich:

you are having your consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now:

you shall go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now:

you shall mourn and weep.

‘Alas for you when the world speaks well of you!

This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.’

Reflection - *Blessings & Woes*

Over the next three Sundays we will listen to almost the whole of Luke’s Sermon on the Plain. Luke has used Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount but changed and shortened it significantly. It is important to realise that both Sermons are more than only the Beatitudes which begin them.

In Luke, Jesus’ words are addressed to the disciples, not to the gathered crowd, so we might think of the sermon as a teaching about discipleship.

The whole of the Sermon is quite confronting and challenging, especially those verses which form today’s Gospel reading. The Sermon begins with four blessings and four woes.

At first glance it is very odd to call people who are poor, hungry, weeping and hated blessed, fortunate or happy. But we have to hear the words of Jesus in the context of the religious teaching and general thinking which belonged to his time. Then, it was generally thought that those who suffered these things were experiencing the effects of either their own personal sinfulness or that of an ancestor. Similarly, those with wealth, plenty of food and high status were considered blessed and rewarded by God.

In the beatitudes Jesus reverses this way of thinking and effectively says that the opposite is true: God is, in fact, on the side of the poor and suffering. They experience suffering through no fault of their own (e.g., sin), it is simply the

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situation in which they find themselves. As the woes ('Alas for you...') make clear, the rich have a great deal to lose. The poor and suffering are fortunate in Jesus' view because they have a need which the overflowing generosity of God can fill. They are in situations which attract God's impulse to save. The Kingdom of God is already among them.

All things being equal, being wealthy, well-fed, happy and enjoying a good reputation are perfectly desirable. But in Jesus' view all things are not equal. Often the poor are poor precisely because the rich are rich. The powerless suffer at the hands of those who have power and influence. 'The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer' is a saying that endures even to this day.

Throughout his Gospel, Luke has Jesus insist repeatedly on the need for his followers to embrace poverty and to be under no illusions about the danger of wealth. Those who remain possessed by their possessions and the privileges they bring are unable to receive the gift of salvation, but even they can join the blessed through their care of the poor.

Prayers of Intercession

May your Church
be an instrument of justice, peace, compassion and forgiveness.

May we feed the hungry,
comfort those who weep,
and be good news for the poor.

We receive many gifts from the earth.
Teach us to treasure what you have given us and to care for it with gratitude and reverence.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Be with us always, great God of Peace,
so that we may be hopeful, joyful and peaceful
people. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

You have chosen us, O Lord, as your own people.
**Let your blessing be upon us, now and for ever
that we may be a blessing for the world and its
peoples.
Amen.**



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



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