



LIVING THE GOSPEL



**All Saints Day
1st November, 2026**

Theme: "Rejoice and be glad"

Gathering Prayer

Facilitator: Almighty ever-living God, by whose gift we venerate in one celebration the merits of all the Saints, bestow on us, we pray, through the prayers of so many intercessors, an abundance of the reconciliation with you for which we earnestly long. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reign with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Exploring the Word

Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:1-12

¹ Seeing the crowds, he went onto the mountain. And when he was seated his disciples came to him. ² Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:
³ How blessed are the poor in spirit: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
⁴ Blessed are the gentle: they shall have the earth as inheritance.
⁵ Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted.
⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill.
⁷ Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.
⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God.
⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognised as children of God.
¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
¹¹ 'Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account.
¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven; this is how they persecuted the prophets before you.

Gospel Focus

Moses came down from Mount Sinai with God's Ten Commandments; Jesus teaches from the mountain by his own authority as Son of God. The eight Beatitudes begin the Sermon on the Mount, the largest segment of Jesus' teaching in Matthew's gospel, and they are at the heart of Jesus' ministry and preaching. Where the commandments are things to do (or not do), the Beatitudes are largely ways of being. To follow Jesus is about growing into the person that God desires us to be. Rooted in Christ's freedom, we can love others as we are called and created for. With this love at the center, even in mourning and in times of persecution, following Jesus is a source of joy. When we share the good news of Jesus with others, it should be our joy that bears witness to our faith.

that the kingdom of God is present here and now.

Gospel Reflection

In today's gospel, Jesus proclaims what we now call the teaching of the Beatitudes. In other translations, the word that we read as "blessed" is translated instead to mean "happy." When we look at the specific situations that Jesus proclaims as happy, or blessed, we may be confused. Where is happiness in the midst of great grief? In a time in which being known and recognized is the ideal, how are the meek proclaimed blessed? In the end, this passage can leave us asking questions, but it can also leave us with great hope. Our true joy is not dependent on what we possess, accomplish, or simply luck into. Instead, happiness is found in knowing Christ and living in a way that proclaims his love and mercy. The blessing of the Lord and the success of the world are not synonymous—instead, they are often found in opposition to one another. Still, it can be challenging to resist wallowing in the struggles of this world, even when we know it is in the midst of pain that Christ draws near to us. And so today we honor the lives of those saints who have lived the truth of the Beatitudes to find eternal blessedness in Christ, and we are reminded of our call to live in a way that reflects Jesus' own life.

We know of many great saints who endured immense suffering through illness, persecution, or unanswered longings. Saint Damien of Molokai knowingly put himself in a situation where he was likely to contract leprosy because he believed so fervently that those who were sick and contagious deserved the dignity of living in community and being ministered to by a priest.

According to tradition, eleven of the twelve apostles suffered violent deaths as result of their testimony that Jesus is the Son of God. Saint Therese of Lisieux knew the pain of losing her mother as a young girl. Saint Andre Bessette longed to join the Congregation of Holy Cross but was initially denied because of his poor health; instead, he took on the role as the doorkeeper for the Notre Dame College in Montreal. We can list the names of countless others who we lift up and name as the "cloud of witnesses" (Heb 12:1) who have experienced the joy and satisfaction of living in Christ, despite the pain and suffering that they encountered.

These saints did not live easy lives or lives devoid of suffering; instead, in the midst of their pain, they placed their trust and reliance in God. Even more so, many of them came to see their earthly pain as blessing that drew them closer to Christ in his own suffering. Christ seeks to redeem the pain of our lives and rejoice in the gentle workings of the Spirit that allow one to be meek, merciful, and cultivators of peace. The saints are not lifted high because they were supernatural in their ability to imitate Christ—they are recognized and venerated because in their ordinary human circumstances, they habitually drew closer to Christ and allowed Christ to work in and through them.

Old/New Testament and CCC links

First Reading — Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

² Then I saw another angel rising where the sun rises, carrying the seal of the living God; he called in a powerful voice to the four angels whose duty was to devastate land and sea,
³ 'Wait before you do any damage on land or at sea or to the trees, until we have put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.' ⁴ And I heard how many had been sealed: a hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel. ⁹ After that I saw that there was a huge number, impossible for anyone to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted in a loud voice, ¹⁰ 'Salvation to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' ¹¹ And all the angels who were standing in a circle round the throne, surrounding the elders and the four living creatures, prostrated themselves before the throne, and touched the ground with their foreheads, worshipping God ¹² with these words: Amen. Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour and power and strength to our God for ever and ever.

Amen. ¹³ One of the elders then spoke and asked me, 'Who are these people, dressed in white robes, and where have they come from?' ¹⁴ I answered him, 'You can tell me, sir.' Then he said, 'These are the people who have been through the great trial; they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb.'

Responsorial Psalm — Psalms 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6

R: Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord. (R)

The Lord is the earth and its fullness, the world, and those who dwell in his holy place. It is he who set it on the seas; on the rivers he made it firm. **(R)**

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place?
The clean of hands and pure of heart, whose soul is not on vain things. **(R)**

Blessings from the Lord shall he receive, and right reward from the God who saves him. saving justice from the God of his salvation. Such are the people who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. **(R)**

Second Reading — 1 John 3:1-3

¹ You must see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children -- which is what we are! The reason why the world does not acknowledge us is that it did not acknowledge him. ² My dear friends, we are already God's children, but what we shall be in the future has not yet been revealed. We are well aware that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is.

³ Whoever treasures this hope of him purifies himself, to be as pure as he is.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

520. In all of his life Jesus presents himself as *our model*. He is "the perfect man",¹⁹¹ who invites us to become his disciples and follow him. In humbling himself, he has given us an example to imitate, through his prayer he draws us to pray, and by his poverty he calls us to accept freely the privation and persecutions that may come our way

544. The kingdom belongs *to the poor and lowly*, which means those who have accepted it with humble hearts. Jesus is sent to "preach good news to the poor";²⁵³ he declares them blessed, for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven."²⁵⁴ To them - the "little ones" the Father is pleased to reveal what remains hidden from the wise and the learned.²⁵⁵ Jesus shares the life of the poor, from the cradle to the cross; he experiences hunger, thirst and privation.²⁵⁶ Jesus identifies himself with the poor of every kind and makes active love toward them the condition for entering his kingdom.

581. The Jewish people and their spiritual leaders viewed Jesus as a rabbi. He often argued within the framework of rabbinical interpretation of the Law. Yet Jesus could not help but offend the teachers of the Law, for he was not content to propose his interpretation alongside theirs but taught the people "as one who had authority, and not as their scribes". In Jesus, the same Word of God that had resounded on Mount Sinai to give the written Law to Moses, made itself heard anew on the Mount of the Beatitudes. Jesus did not abolish the Law but fulfilled it by giving its ultimate interpretation in a divine way: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old. . . But I say to you. . ." With this same divine authority, he disavowed certain human traditions of the Pharisees that were "making void the word of God"

1721. God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to paradise. Beatitude makes us "partakers of the divine nature" and of eternal life. With beatitude, man enters into the glory of Christ and into the joy of the Trinitarian life.

Sharing and Discussion

1. When you hear the Beatitudes read, which single beatitude jumps out at you most immediately, and why do you think your heart is drawn to it at this time of your life?
2. Meekness is often mistaken for weakness, but in Catholic tradition, it means strength under control and gentleness of spirit. In a culture that can be polarized, loud, or reactive, how can we cultivate a spirit of meekness and a deep hunger for God's truth in our daily interactions (at work, online, or with family)?
3. Poverty of spirit and purity of heart both invite us to let go—surrendering our self-reliance and clearing away spiritual clutter. What practices help you strip away daily distractions and depend more fully on God?

Closing Prayer

Facilitator: Loving God, you call us to holiness, Guide our hearts, words, and actions as we respond to this call and embody the way of life espoused by the Beatitudes. Hear these` prayers and answer them not according to our will, but yours. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

Facilitator: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen