



# LIVING THE GOSPEL

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time  
February 16<sup>th</sup> 2025**

---

**Theme: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God."**

## **Gathering Prayer**

**All:** O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Exploring the Word**

### **Gospel Reading: Luke 6:17, 20-26**

<sup>17</sup> And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; ...

<sup>20</sup> And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. <sup>21</sup> "Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. "Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh. <sup>22</sup> "Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man! <sup>23</sup> Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets. <sup>24</sup> "But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. <sup>25</sup> "Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger. "Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup> "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets."

### **Gospel Focus**

With this famous sermon, Jesus makes clear that God does not measure success in the same way as we do. Things like wealth, satisfaction, good cheer, and a solid reputation may seem the signs of God's favor, but they are not the things that ultimately matter. God instead promises to be present in a special way to those who are poor, hungry, weeping and reviled. That is not to say that God does not love those who have more, but God seeks out those who are suffering and offers them particular love. God always stands on the side of those who are oppressed, and we are called to do the same.

### **Gospel Reflection**

About 1.4 billion people in the world live on \$1.25 or less per day. The majority of the poor people worldwide are women. Their opportunities for education are fewer, and their earnings still lag far behind those of their male counterparts. Care of home and

children go uncompensated. How can it be that Jesus would pronounce blessed those who struggle against such poverty?

Biblical scholars point out that the Greek word *makarios*, like the Hebrew *'ashre'*, meaning *'blessed,'* does not confer blessing but recognizes as existing state of happiness. This happiness is something inherent in God, and when humans experience blessedness, it flows from relationship with God. In biblical tradition, poverty is never an indicator of blessedness; it is always regarded as evil. What can Jesus mean when stating the opposite?

In the Gospel of Luke, references to the poor are very frequent. Scholars estimate that 25 percent of people in Roman Palestine were desperately poor. Two concrete individual characters put faces on the mass of struggling humanity: the ulcer ridden Lazarus, lying at the rich man's gate (16:19-31), and the widow who put "her whole livelihood," two small coins, into the temple treasury(21:1-4).

Whenever Jesus speaks about such people, however, he addresses his words to disciples who are not among the most destitute. They are the one who have the means to be agents of divine blessing to those who are needy. His invitation to disciples is to embrace some forms of being poor, but not destitution, as an essential aspect of their commitment to Jesus. Luke shows many options for how to respond to his call to embrace poverty. Some of the fishermen and a tax collector leave everything behind to follow Jesus (5:11, 28). Others, like Zacchaeus, give half their possessions to the poor (19:8). Many of the women put their monetary resource at the service of Jesus' mission (8:1-3). Some, like Mary, the mother of John Mark, opened their homes for the gatherings of the community (Acts 12:12). There was also the practice of pooling everyone's resources and the each taking according to their need (Acts 2:44, 4:32). The only thing that was not an option was to hoard for oneself, like the rich ruler (Luke 18: 18-30), or to lie to the community about one's possessions, as the tragic story of Ananias and Sapphira shows (Acts 5:1-11).

The blessedness that Jesus holds up is the happiness of those who are being liberated from their desperate poverty already in the here and now, a foretaste of the final elimination of all want in the fullness of the reign of God. It is not a wish for future reward for an abstract, unknown group of "the poor" who suffer in the present, but a concrete possibility when the needs of real people are known and the resources are shared in community.

This could be a good time to renew our efforts at becoming agents of blessedness through our prayer for those who are in need, fasting in solidarity with those who are hungry not by choice, and almsgiving to those who are destitute.

## **Old/New Testament and CCC links**

### **First Reading — Jeremiah 17:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart turns away from the LORD. <sup>6</sup> He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. <sup>7</sup> "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. <sup>8</sup> He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

### **Responsorial Reading — Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 7-8**

**R: "Blessed are they who hope in the Lord."**

Blessed the man who follows not the counsel of the wicked, nor walks in the way of sinners, nor sits in the company of the insolent, but delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night. **(R)**

He is like a tree planted near running water, that yields its fruit in due season, and whose leaves never fade. Whatever he does, prospers. **(R)**

Not so the wicked, not so; they are like chaff which the wind drives away. For the Lord watches over the way of the just, but the way of the wicked vanishes. **(R)**

### **Second Reading — 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20**

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ... <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. <sup>17</sup> If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied. <sup>20</sup> But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

### **Catechism of The Catholic Church**

**2444.** "The Church's love for the poor . . . is a part of her constant tradition." This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor.(CA 57; cf. Lk 6:20-22, Mt 8:20; Mk 12:41-44) Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to "be able to give to those in need."(Eph 4:28) It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty.(Cf. CA 57)

**2546.** "Blessed are the poor in spirit."(Mt 5:3) The Beatitudes reveal an order of happiness and grace, of beauty and peace. Jesus celebrates the joy of the poor, to whom the Kingdom already belongs(Cf. Lk 6:20)

The Word speaks of voluntary humility as "poverty in spirit"; the Apostle gives an example of God's poverty when he says: "For your sakes he became poor."(St. Gregory of Nyssa, De beatitudinibus 1: PG 44, 1200D; cf. 2 Cor 8:9)

**2547.** The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods.(Lk 6:24) "Let the proud seek and love earthly kingdoms, but blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven."(St. Augustine, De serm. Dom. in monte 1, 1, 3: PL 34, 1232) Abandonment to the providence of the Father in heaven frees us from anxiety about tomorrow.(Cf. Mt 6:25-34) Trust in God is a preparation for the blessedness of the poor. They shall see God.

### **Sharing and Discussion**

**1.** In what ways do you see God's kingdom working among the poor or marginalized in your community?

**2.** "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." How do you personally relate to this verse? Have you ever felt "poor" spiritually, emotionally, or financially?

**3.** What are some practical ways to live out the values of God's kingdom in a world that often measures success differently?

**Closing Prayer**

**All:** O God, blessed are they who hope in you. Increase our faith and allow us to grow in your wisdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

**All:** Amen.