

Wednesday of the Twenty-third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 6:20-26): Raising his eyes toward his disciples Jesus said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for the Kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. But woe to you who are filled now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for their ancestors treated the false prophets in this way.”

“Blessed are you who are poor. Woe to you who are rich”

Fr. Joaquim MESEGUER García
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Today, Jesus points out where true happiness lies in our lives. In Luke's version, beatitudes are accompanied by painful wails for those who do not accept the message of salvation, but prefer to stick to a self-sufficient and selfish life. With the beatitudes and wails, Jesus applies the doctrine of the two paths: the path of life and the path of death. There is not a third and neutral possibility: he who does not follow the path of life is heading for the path of death; who does not follow the light, lives in darkness.

“Blessed are you who are poor, for the Kingdom of God is yours” (Lk 6:29). This

beatitude is the basis of all the others, because who is poor will be able to get the Kingdom of God as a gift. He who is poor will realize he must be hungry and thirsty: not of material things, but of the Word of God; not of power, but of love and justice. Who is poor will be able to cry over the world's sufferings. Who is poor, will know that God is all his wealth and, because of that, the world will not understand him and will harass him.

“But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation” (Lk 6:24). This wail is also the basis for all the others: because who is rich and self-sufficient, who does not know how to place his wealth at the service of others, he just confines himself to his own selfishness and works out his own misfortune. May God deliver us from the thirst of riches, from going after this world's promises and from placing our heart in material things; may God deliver us from taking any pleasure in human praise and adulation, for that would mean we have placed our heart in the world's glory rather than in the Glory of Jesus Christ. It will be profitable for us to remember what St. Basil said: **“The man who loves his neighbor as himself will have acquired no more than what his neighbor has.”**

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“For it is not evil report that you should fear, but that you should prove partners in dissimulation. For then, You will lose your savor, and be trodden under foot.” (Saint John Chrysostom)

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“The Beatitudes are promises resplendent with the new image of the world and of man inaugurated by Jesus, his ‘transformation of values.’ When man is a companion on Jesus’ way, then he lives by new standards.” (Benedict XVI)

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“The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching. They take up the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham. The Beatitudes fulfill the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 1716)