

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain,
and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him.

He began to teach them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you
and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me.

Rejoice and be glad,
for your reward will be great in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord. R./ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Commentary

On a wedding day, countless people will wish the newlyweds a “happy marriage” or some other expression of happiness. In this much beloved passage known as the Beatitudes, the word “blessed” can also be rendered as “happy,” or “fortunate.” This most recognizable of passages from Matthew’s gospel admits that real happiness is not some fantasy of perpetual glee, but rather it is found in life’s ordinary mix of bitter and sweet. All marriages experience good times and bad. As Christ’s followers, we are called to consider the spiritual dimensions or the blessedness of all life’s activity.

Further making this a worthy option for the marriage celebration is that this passage clearly states the basics for Christian living. It makes no reference to marriage, yet it is the first major discourse in all the Gospels where Jesus describes what life will be like for his followers. There is a parallel between Jesus beginning his teaching ministry and couples beginning their married lives. Similar to this passage, the nuptial blessing in the marriage rite concludes with the hope of eternal fulfillment by praying, “May you...come at last to the kingdom of heaven.” Both stress that marriage has a cosmic dimension, for its fulfillment is in heaven.