Saturday Morning Prayer

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven"

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12

Meditation: What is the good life, and the ultimate end or purpose of life? Is it not the complete good, the sum of all goods, leaving nothing more to be desired? Jesus addresses this question in his sermon on the mount. The word beatitude means "blessedness". What is the significance of Jesus' beatitudes, and why are they so central to his teaching? The beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness that God has placed in every heart. They teach us the final end to which God calls us, namely the coming of God's kingdom (Matt. 4:17), the vision of God (Matt. 5:8; 1 John 2:1), entering into the joy of the Lord (Matt. 25:21-23) and into his rest (Hebrews 4:7-11). Jesus' beatitudes also confront us with decisive choices concerning the life we pursue here on earth and the use we make of the goods he puts at our disposal. God alone satisfies. Do you seek the highest good, the total good, which is above all else?

The beatitudes which Jesus offers us are a sign of contradiction to the world's understanding of happiness and joy. How can one possibly find happiness in poverty, hunger, mourning, and persecution? Poverty of spirit finds ample room and joy in possessing God as the greatest treasure possible. Hunger of the spirit seeks nourishment and strength in God's word and Spirit. Sorrow and mourning over wasted life and sin leads to joyful freedom from the burden of guilt and spiritual oppression. God reveals to the humble of heart the true source of abundant life and happiness. Jesus promises his disciples that the joys of heaven will more than compensate for the troubles and hardships they can expect in this world. Thomas Aquinas said: No one can live without joy. That is why a person deprived of spiritual joy goes after carnal pleasures. Do you know the happiness of hungering and thirsting for God alone?

"Lord, increase my hunger for you and show me the way that leads to everlasting peace and happiness. May I desire you above all else and find perfect joy in doing your will".

“The Beatitudes: Finding Where Your Treasure Is”
Matthew 5:1-12. “attitudes for being”...what the Beatitudes are about...how they apply to his disciples and how they show the Way to active apostolic spirituality. Again, it is the small, simple way - every day- always in life giving ways.....ways to “be” or “attitudes” to develop. These attitudes are necessary not only for ‘acts of mercy’ but also for practicing a ‘consistent ethic of life’. Thank God for Jesus who is the Way.

The “Be-Attitudes”

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT:
- be before the Father as children - trust His will; know the kingdom is yours; know you are in good hands; know he has everything to give you.
- be alert to the needs of others - you are stewards of what belongs to God; do your part

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO MOURN:
- be compassionate - weep for the injustices at home, at work, at play, in the community, in the nation, in the global community

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK:
- be unassuming not lordly, tolerant not overbearing, gentle not haughty
- be firm with faith, peaceable without being compromising, slow to anger

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS:
- be hungry for the food of God - a right relationship; realize only God can satisfy you
- be hungry for Jesus and his patient, forgiving and generous love
- be full of the will of God; “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me” (John 4:34)

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL:
- be forgiving, compassionate
- be giving of the gift of God’s gift of forgiveness to you

BLESSED ARE THE CLEAN OF HEART:
- be pleasant, honest in speech, polite, respectful, charitable, optimistic
- be secure in God’s love
- be filled with God’s presence and be that presence to others

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS:
- be healthy of mind, heart and body
- be gentle in touch, kind in word
- be silent in sympathy
- be beautiful in reconciliation

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS:
- be devoted to Him (without being a ‘religious nut’)
- be upright for the ‘be-attitudes’ - justice, equality, values of Christ
- be always finding your treasure in God!