

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
29 January 2023

Gospel — Matthew 5 : 1-12

When Jesus saw the crowd, he climbed the mountain. He sat down and his disciples came. Then, opening his mouth, he began to instruct them. He said: "Blessed are the poor in heart: the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs!" Blessed are the meek: they will obtain the promised land! Blessed are those who mourn: they will be comforted! Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: they will be satisfied! Blessed are the merciful: they will obtain mercy! Blessed are the pure in heart: they will see God! Blessed are the peacemakers: they will be called children of God!

Reflection:

One way to approach the Beatitudes is to think of them as being descriptions of identity rather than moral requirements. The Beatitudes embody a radically alternative vision of our Society. This is how the kingdom of heaven is at hand: that we appreciate that we are blessed within ourselves. Blessed are we who are in Christ. Indeed, God calls us to be blessed. (Living liturgy, p.54)

Vincentian Meditation:

"The Gospels frequently remind Christians to be gentle. They should seek to resolve conflicts peacefully, act kindly, speak courteously - in short, love their neighbors as they love themselves. Such gentleness comes when Christians realize that despite all their sins, God loves them. The balance between gentleness and strength is learned in the school of prayer and experience. Meekness is not passivity or apathy. Strength is not uncontrolled rage or stoic coldness. Determining when to be gentle and when to be forceful should be the subject of our prayerful discernment. We are called to be softly strong and strongly soft. (McKenna, Praying with Vincent, p.97-98)

Discussion: (Share your thoughts after a moment of silence)

In which of the simple things did you hear the refrain of Jesus: How have you been "softly strong and strongly soft"?

Closing Prayer:

For the grace to be poor in spirit,
- **God of mercy, hear us!**
For the grace to weep,
- **Merciful God, hear us!**
For the grace to be gentle,
- **Merciful God, hear us!**
For the grace to thirst for righteousness,
- **Merciful God, hear us!**
For the grace to be merciful,
- **Merciful God, hear us! Amen**

