

LEADER: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Invite persons present to pause for a few moments of silent recollection and to offer any special intentions.)

We have heard Jesus' great Sermon on the Mount many times, but how often have we reflected on what they mean in our own lives?

The word "beatitude" means "happiness". In this pivotal teaching, Jesus is encouraging us to live as people who rely on the good news that God is our strength and our foundation. Properly understood, the beatitudes of Jesus define for us a lived faith, a life that brings the happiness of God's kingdom. As we listen to these powerful words of Jesus, let us accept the challenge to live a beatitude faith.

READER: Then he began to speak and taught them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

SIDE 1: Lord, help us grow in kindness by being polite, charitable and less critical. May we grow in gentleness and justice by accepting those who may be withdrawn or lonely, and by walking in solidarity with those whose dignity is destroyed by discrimination or prejudice.

SIDE 2: Fill us with your mercy, Lord, that we may hear the voices of the homeless, the hungry, the lost and the afraid especially as found in the students and parents we serve.

SIDE 1: Help us to grow in forgiveness of those who have hurt us, and help us humbly recognize our own offences and faults.

SIDE 2: Jesus, help us as we strive to be peacemakers who listen, reconcile and heal in the face of the world's brokenness and pain

ALL: Lord, as we live this beatitude faith more fully, may your peace and joy flow from us to gladden the hearts of all those we meet. Amen.