



*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.*

Matthew 5, 3-11

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE LAND

Who are the “meek”? The term refers us to *Psalm* 36(37) where the personality and the behaviour of a meek person are treated at length. Jesus nearly literally takes the third Beatitude from this *Psalm* (v.11).

In this same Gospel by Matthew, we come across the term “meek” only three times, and in the other two instances (11:29 and 21:5) it refers to Jesus himself: thus meekness characterizes Christ himself and his behaviour, He who is “meek and humble of heart”. The thoughts, sentiments, judgements and actions of every disciple, of every Christian originate from Him, are inspired by Him and fulfilled in Him. It is as if every believer in the Gospel is called to follow a way marked by meekness and laboriously but tenaciously keep going in that direction.

The meek person is the one who, like Jesus, reveals God’s face through His life: a good, serene, approachable face, which is not influenced or conditioned by our wickedness, our indifferences and betrayals. The meek person’s face translates God’s outstretched hand, His open heart, His open arms which do not withdraw when faced by refusal, offence or any other misdeed.

The meek are not “beautiful souls” which fly like doves above the flood of conflicts, violence and human bullying. The meek, disciple of the Gospel, is not spared but is “deeply involved” in history, he is immersed in life, just as he is, like everyone else.

But he is truly courageous because he can face suffering and violence without giving in or complying.

He is truly strong because he does not confront strength with strength but prefers to endure it rather than use it. He does not try to triumph over others but seeks the slow, disputed and defenceless victory of the good: he believes firmly in love, not as a poet but as a prophet, not as a dreamer but as a witness.

Because of this, the clothes of the meek are very often tinged with red!

And yet, it is their sufferings, their apparently human defeats and setbacks which help the Kingdom of God grow, just like the Cross. These help to spread the Gospel in the world because their journey in life is like an artery which conducts it into humanity's body.

Meekness is also a way of being part of the community, of living as a Church: it is the way of keeping united. It keeps us from breaking up in factions and siding with groups. It fosters communion among all brethren, and puts charity as the ultimate peak, the supreme value to work for and to serve. And this without renouncing the truth, prophecies, fraternal correction and frank and loyal relations.

This is definitely difficult but it is also amazingly possible if the heart of the disciple, of every Christian, is imbued and led by the meekness of Jesus, by His word and by His Spirit.

The promised gift is that the meek "will inherit the land". It is interesting that the verb does not indicate an achievement but a gift: that gift which the Father gives to His son when He has tried and wished to live as a brother. The "land" referred to here, originally, was (cfr. *Psalm 36(37)*), the land of Palestine, promised to the people of Israel; it later undergoes a transformation, it becomes a symbolic "land": it is the land of the Kingdom of God, that is a life shared with God and with our brethren, wherein we find our "land", "native land" for each other, because it becomes the cause of joy and peace, we become "heaven" for one another!

It is the tiresome "heaven" down here in expectation for the one above.

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Mons. Mansueto Bianchi
Ecclesiastic assistant of FIAC, biblicist



MEN OF THE EIGHT BEATITUDES

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati



Today's celebration invites all of us to receive the message which Pier Giorgio Frassati is sending to the men and women of our day, but especially to you young people, who want to make a concrete contribution to the spiritual renewal of our world, which sometimes seems to be falling apart and wasting away because of a lack of ideals.

By his example he proclaims that a life lived in Christ's Spirit, the Spirit of the Beatitudes, is "blessed", and that only the person who becomes a "man or woman of the Beatitudes" can succeed in communicating love and peace to others. He repeats that it is really worth giving up everything to serve the Lord. He testifies that holiness is possible for everyone, and that only the revolution of charity can enkindle the hope of a better future in the hearts of people.

Yes, "tremendous are the deeds of the Lord. Shout joyfully to God all you on earth" (Ps 66:1-3). The verse of the Psalm resound in this Sunday liturgy as a living echo of young Frassati's soul. Indeed, we all know how much he loved the world God created! "Come and see the works of God" (Ps 65/66:5): this is also an invitation which we receive from his young soul and which is particularly addressed to young people.

Come and see God's "tremendous deeds among men" (ibid.). Tremendous deeds among men and women! Human eyes -- young, sensitive eyes -- must be able to admire God's work in the external, visible world. The eyes of the spirit must be able to turn from this external, visible world to the inner, invisible one: thus they can reveal to others the realm of the spirit in which the light of the Word that enlightens every person is reflected (cf. Jn 1:9). In this light the Spirit of Truth acts.

POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II'S HOMILY FROM THE BEATIFICATION MASS OF BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI - ROME, MAY 20, 1990



I always like to link the Gospel Beatitudes with Matthew 25, where Jesus presents us with the works of mercy and tells us that we will be judged on them. I ask you, then, to rediscover the corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, assist the sick, visit the imprisoned and bury the dead. Nor should we overlook the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, teach the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the sorrowful, forgive offences, patiently bear with

troublesome people and pray to God for the living and the dead. As you can see, mercy does not just imply being a “good person” nor is it mere sentimentality. It is the measure of our authenticity as disciples of Jesus, and of our credibility as Christians in today’s world.

If you want me to be very specific, I would suggest that for the first seven months of 2016 you choose a corporal and a spiritual work of mercy to practice each month. Find inspiration in the prayer of Saint Faustina, a humble apostle of Divine Mercy in our times:

“Help me, O Lord,

...that my eyes may be merciful, so that I will never be suspicious or judge by appearances, but always look for what is beautiful in my neighbours’ souls and be of help to them;

... that my ears may be merciful, so that I will be attentive to my neighbours’ needs, and not indifferent to their pains and complaints;

... that my tongue may be merciful, so that I will never speak badly of others, but have a word of comfort and forgiveness for all;

... that my hands may be merciful and full of good deeds;

... that my feet may be merciful, so that I will hasten to help my neighbour, despite my own fatigue and weariness;

... that my heart may be merciful, so that I myself will share in all the sufferings of my neighbour” (Diary, 163).

Pope Francis for WYD Krakow 2016

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