



*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 THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

FOR THEY SHALL BE SATISFIED

There is a key-term, so to say an entrance door, which we should go through, in order to understand the fourth Beatitude well: “righteousness” This word has a particular importance in the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus makes a fundamental difference which distinguishes the disciple from the Pharisees and it is a basic condition to enter the Kingdom: “ I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:20), and more “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given you besides” (Mt 6:33).

But which “righteousness” is He speaking about?

Instinctively we think of the legal aspect, of economic dealings, of social relations. Definitely, in a certain sense, Christ’s expression does not exclude these dimensions but goes further and deeper. The “righteousness” which he speaks about is the recognition, the acceptance, the realization of God’s project, of His will full of love and closeness towards people and their lives.

It is therefore not a detached, cold and enigmatic will, much less a hostile, punitive or aggressive one.

“Righteousness” welcomes, serves, promotes people’s and world events. It is that project which is full of love, longing and unlimited passion with which the Father loves each of His children and calls him to that fullness of happiness and joy and gives him to others, to the Church and to the world as a unique and precious brother.

“Righteousness” is that desire for the salvation of every wounded, lost and distressed man, for whom Jesus was driven to embrace the cross, so that we may not remain helpless and desperate on the crosses which life presents and which we sometimes bring about for one another.

Being hungry and thirsty for righteousness then means trying to find that “righteousness” of God with all our strength. It is longing for His love, His project for us, with that same enthusiasm and determination with which we guard our life, realizing that without this “righteousness” life itself remains dull, cold and crushed under “a sky of bronze”, more similar and near to death itself.

Being hungry and thirsty for righteousness means basing every effort and commitment for the promotion of human dignity on the solid and reliable foundation, that is on God’s will and project. You are “hungry and thirsty for righteousness when you know that God supports you in your struggles and fatigue and shares in your fervour so that each and every man may experience the joy of living and enjoy the dignity of having a name and of being significant and esteemed. The “righteousness” of God enkindles in you a passion for man, entrusts you with history and leaves every day in your hands.

It is up to you, together with your travelling companions, with your brethren, to start spelling out an answer to this, every moment of each day and in every detail of your life. May the Lord guide you to find this reply within you and to look to the future until one day He Himself brings it to completion by helping you reach the fullness of that Kingdom towards which, with Jesus, we have started journeying in this life.

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MEN OF THE EIGHT BEATITUDES

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati



I cannot fail to point out to you as a model a young man of your City Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, the 20th anniversary of whose Beatification falls this year. His life was completely enveloped by God's grace and love and was spent with serenity and joy in the enthusiastic service of Christ and of his brothers and sisters. Young like you, he experienced his Christian formation with deep commitment and gave his testimony of faith, simply and effectively.

A young man who was drawn by the beauty of the Gospel of the Beatitudes, who experienced to the full the joy of being a friend of Christ, of following him, of feeling that he himself was a living part of the Church.

Dear young people, have the courage to choose what is essential in life! "Living, and not just managing to get by!", Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati often used to say. Like him, you will discover that it is worth committing yourself to God and with God, to answer his call in your fundamental and your daily decisions, even at a cost!

The spiritual journey of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati reminds us that the journey of Christ's disciples demands the courage to come out of oneself, to follow the path of the Gospel. You live this demanding path of the spirit in your parishes and in other ecclesial realities. You also live it during the pilgrimage of the World Youth Days, an event that is always eagerly awaited.

MEETING WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE - POPE BENEDICT XVI - 2 MAY 2010



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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