



Commentary

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Dear friends in order to comment briefly on these two passages from the Gospel I keep as a point of reference Gaudete et Exultate in which Pope Francis recalls "the huge picture of holiness" that the Beatitudes and the Last Judgement propose to us.

"There can be any number of theories about what constitutes holiness, with various explanations and distinctions. Such reflection might be useful, but nothing is more enlightening than turning to Jesus' words and seeing his way of teaching the truth. Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy when he gave us the Beatitudes (cf. *Mt* 5:3-12; *Lk* 6:20-23). The Beatitudes are like a Christian's identity card. So if anyone asks: "What must one do to be a good Christian?", the answer is clear. (...) In the Beatitudes, we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives."(63)

95. "In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel (vv. 31-46), (...) If we seek the holiness pleasing to God's eyes, this text offers us one clear criterion on which we will be judged. "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me" (vv. 35-36).

And again in the apostolic exhortation ON THE CALL TO HOLINESS IN TODAY'S WORLD: there is a direct reference to our theme when it comments on Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God": "This beatitude makes us think of the many situations of war in our world. (...) We need to be artisans of peace, for building peace is a craft that demands serenity, creativity, sensitivity and skill. Sowing peace all around us: that is holiness."

88. Peacemakers truly "make" peace; they build peace and friendship in society. To those who sow peace Jesus makes this magnificent promise: "They will be called children of God" (*Mt* 5:9). He told his disciples that, wherever they went, they were to say: "Peace to this house!" (*Lk* 10:5). The word of God exhorts every believer to work for peace, "along with all who call upon the Lord with a pure heart" (cf. *2 Tim* 2:22), for "the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (*Jas* 3:18).

If the Beatitudes are our identity card, we wonder how we can walk towards holiness, become peacemakers in our daily lives, with all men and women of good will, hoping for peace even when the world seems to be going in the opposite direction.

The beatitudes are neither a morality nor a philosophy. They are simply the experience of Jesus lived in the everyday life of Nazareth during his hidden life. But above all, from that daily, monotonous life, is the bet on which every person agrees: to be happy, the fullness of personal fulfilment. But this cannot be achieved without sacrifice. Talking about happiness by looking only at the positive is useless. As St Ignatius asks, let reality touch us and let the spirit of God, confessing Jesus incarnate, take on our limitations and bewilder us, but make us be like him, not as we want to be. Opening ourselves to the spirit puts us on the right path.

Happiness and joy, the power of the beatitudes come to us from baptism, which makes us children of God and protagonists of fraternity and peace

We are strangers on earth, but we all feel and are children and brothers and sisters of the common house that we are called to build: let us discover the signs of God in the multiform reality of daily life and in the reality of the world, let us keep our eyes and hearts open especially towards that suffering humanity that experiences the tragic consequences of conflicts, injustice, inequalities. Let us become artisans of peace together.

Let us not be ashamed to walk against the tide, let us not be discouraged facing obstacles and difficulties, let us not forget our responsibility for a policy with a capital P. Let us not be robbed of the hope and grace that God has given us to transform the world into his kingdom of justice and peace

In this 21st century, there are already many men and women we can add to the many witnesses of holiness that the history of the Church shows us as examples of fidelity to the Lord and his Gospel, even through martyrdom.

Catholic Action has also contributed and contributes with the entire Christian community to form men and women who fully embrace their vocation, which is the call to holiness for everyone and for all.

The world needs witnesses of holiness, artisans of peace: men and women leaven of hope in the plurality of expressions of the lay vocation, in the plurality of contexts in which the Lord calls us to live, serving the common good, justice and peace.

May the simple and tender holiness of Mary, Queen of Peace, our mother, cover us with her mantle.