

**FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
JANUARY 30, 2011**

**PRAYER- Psalm 146,6-7, 8-9, 9-10**

**HAPPY THE POOR IN SPIRIT, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS THEIRS**

The Lord keeps faith forever  
Secures justice for the oppressed  
Gives food to the hungry  
The Lord sets captives free.

**HAPPY THE POOR IN SPIRIT, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS THEIRS**

The Lord gives sight to the blind  
The Lord raises up those that were bowed down  
The Lord loves the just  
The Lord protects the stranger

**HAPPY THE POOR IN SPIRIT, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS THEIRS**

The fatherless and the widow the Lord sustains  
But the way of the wicked he thwarts  
The Lord shall reign forever  
Your God, O Zion, through all generations. Alleluia

**HAPPY THE POOR IN SPIRIT, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS THEIRS**

*We listen to a song and dialogue in silence with the Lord meditating on the words of the psalms and of the song.*

**READINGS**

**FIRST READING – Prophet Zephaniah 2,3; 3,12-13**

- This prophet preached around 650 B.C. in the Kingdom of Judah in the South
- In that time there was in the country religious degradation and political intrigues .
- Zephaniah announces to his people the coming of the Day of Judgment, The Day of the Lord.
  - The Day of the Lord is a day of purification not a day of doom.
  - The judgment of God makes us just, takes away what is an obstacle for us to be what the Lord wants for us which is our well-being, our happiness and our salvation.
- In the readings for next Sunday the prophet promises peace and justice for the remnant of the land.
  - The remnant means the *ānāwîm* = the needy of Israel who prefer to serve God instead of looking for financial privileges.
  - Jesus in the Gospel will take again this concept and will call the *ānāwîm* happy, blessed, not because they are better than the rest, but because God takes care of them in their needs and in their poverty.
- These poor
  - Will take refuge in the name of the Lord, that is to say, they will trust in his name above anything or anybody else (the name in the Bible means the person )
  - They will not do any harm to anyone, and they will not lie. The lie is here a synonym of evil, of what is contrary to the truth and therefore harms very much the person.
  - They will live in peace, nobody will take away their peace.
  - We may conclude that they will enjoy peace, truth and protection because they have put themselves in the hands of the God of Israel who protects them.

- God is always ready to welcome us with tenderness and love. The problem is not in God, it is in the human person who needs to open him or herself completely to God but very often we close ourselves, and in so doing we are deprived of the benefit of experiencing the tenderness of God in our life.

### **GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 5,1-12**

- ★ In this fourth Sunday in ordinary time we begin to read the Sermon on the Mountain which is found on chapters 5,6 and 7 of Matthew's Gospel.
- ★ We begin today reading the **Beatitudes**
- ★ Jesus surprises us, as always. He calls blessed those whom society considers unfortunate, those who neither count nor are of interest to society because they do not yield any revenue and they make us uncomfortable.
- ★ The text says that Jesus saw the crowd, went up to the mountain-side, he sat down and his disciples sat around him, and he began to teach them:
  - The Lord sees the crowd that was there, but the Lord sees also the crowd of all the times who suffer, the poor, the afflicted those in need of so many things.
  - He goes up to... to go up or climb requires an effort; to live the beatitudes will require an effort on our part.
  - He seats down, as a teacher to teach his disciples who come to seat around him and are anxious to hear his words:
    - Blessed, Happy!!! Who? And why?
    - The Catechism of the Catholic Church says in n. 1716: "The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching. They take up the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham. the Beatitudes fulfill the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven
    - Blessed, happy: the poor, the meek, those who mourn, those who weep, those who hunger and thirst for justice, the merciful, the pure of Heart the peacemakers, the persecuted, when you are insulted and persecuted.
    - why? BECAUSE THEIR RECOMPENSE IS GREAT IN HEAVEN
  - The Catechism in number 1717 "The Beatitudes"
    - The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and portray his charity
    - They express the vocation of the faithful associated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection(baptism)
    - they shed light on the actions and attitudes proper of the Christian life;
    - they are the paradoxical promises that comfort us in our suffering
    - they proclaim the blessings and rewards already secured, however dimly, for Christ's disciples;
    - they have begun in the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints.
  - The Catechism continues in
  - 1719 the beatitudes
    - Reveal the goal of human existence; the ultimate end of human acts
    - God calls us to his own beatitude
    - This vocation is addressed to each individual personally, but also to the Church as a whole,
- 1720

- In the New Testament the authors use different expressions to characterize the beatitudes:
  - the coming of the Kingdom of God;
  - the vision of God: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"
  - entering into the joy of the Lord;
  - entering into God's rest:
- There we shall rest and see, we shall see and love, we shall love and praise. Behold what will be at the end without end. For what other end do we have, if not to reach the kingdom which has no end?

**SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 1,26-31**

- ✚ We continue the reading of this letter
- ✚ Paul says to the community of Corinth to look at themselves
  - They have been called but few of them are influential in society
  - Few are from a noble origin
  - Because God chooses what the world considers ignorant to shame the “wise”
  - He chooses those who are nothing to reduce to nothing those who are something.
  - Thus the human beings cannot boast before God
  - God is he who has given us life in Christ Jesus
  - Whom he has made our wisdom. Our justice, our sanctification and our redemption.
  - Whoever wants to glory let him or her glory in the Lord.
- ✚ Paul reminds us of a great truth, whatever is good in us has been put there by God, by ourselves we do not have anything. Why then are we so proud, so vain about ourselves? Our glory is in the Lord who continually creates us and recreates us through his Paschal Mystery.

*Let us have some minutes of silence to dialogue with the Lord, to thank Him for his love and for everything that is in us*