

# The Living Word

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

29 January 2023

## First Reading Zep 2:3; 3:12-13

*In your midst I will leave a humble and a lowly people.*

Seek the Lord  
all you, the humble of the earth,  
who obey his commands.  
Seek integrity,  
seek humility:  
you may perhaps find shelter  
on the day of the anger of the Lord.  
In your midst I will leave  
a humble and lowly people,  
and those who are left in Israel will seek  
refuge in the name of the Lord.  
They will do no wrong,  
will tell no lies;  
and the perjured tongue will no longer  
be found in their mouths.  
But they will be able to graze and rest  
with no one to disturb them.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 145:7-10. R. Mt 5:3**

**(R.) Happy the poor in spirit;  
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!**  
or

**(R.) Alleluia!**

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith forever,  
who is just to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the  
blind,  
who raises up those who are bowed  
down,  
the Lord, who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan. (R.)
3. It is the Lord who loves the just  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

## Second Reading 1 Cor 1:26-31

*God has chosen what is weak by human reckoning.*

Take yourselves, brothers, at the time when  
you were called: how many of you were  
wise in the ordinary sense of the word,  
how many were influential people, or came  
from noble families? No, it was to shame  
the wise that God chose what is foolish  
by human reckoning, and to shame what  
is strong that he chose what is weak by  
human reckoning; those whom the world

thinks common and contemptible are the  
ones that God has chosen – those who  
are nothing at all to show up those who are  
everything. The human race has nothing to  
boast about to God, but you, God has made  
members of Christ Jesus and by God's  
doing he has become our wisdom, and our  
virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom.  
As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast,  
let him boast about the Lord.

## Gospel Acclamation Mt 5:12

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Rejoice and be glad;**

**Your reward will be great in heaven.**

**Alleluia!**

## Gospel Mt 5:1-12

*Happy are the poor in spirit.*

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill.  
There he sat down and was joined by his  
disciples. Then he began to speak. This is  
what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit:  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:  
they shall have the earth for their  
heritage.

Happy those who mourn:  
they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for  
what is right:

they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:  
they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:  
they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:  
they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the  
cause of right:  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you  
and persecute you and speak all kinds  
of calumny against you on my account.  
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be  
great in heaven.'



## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Jesus doesn't start in a fantasy  
dream world of perfection. Jesus  
looks at the world as it often is for  
many people, perhaps for most  
people around the world: 'the poor  
in spirit', 'those who mourn', 'those  
who are gentle', 'those who hunger  
and thirst for justice'.

Jesus astonishes the crowd by  
saying that such people are  
'Blessed'. How can this be? The  
answer lies in our Lord's emphasis  
on the new community he is  
establishing under the reign of  
God: what he calls 'the Kingdom of  
God'.

Those in such wretched  
circumstances *will* have things set  
right, but only if followers of Jesus  
do everything possible to lift the  
poor out of the poverty which  
crushes their spirit, do everything  
possible to comfort those who  
mourn, do everything possible to  
make sure the gentle share the  
earth's resources, do everything  
possible to satisfy the craving for  
justice.

We could pause for a moment to  
pray the 'Our Father' pledging  
ourselves to help construct this  
new society where the Beatitudes  
can come true:

'Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be  
done on *earth* as it is in heaven.'

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**S**t John Bosco was the youngest son of a peasant farmer in the town of Turin, Northern Italy. Soon after his ordination in 1841 he began his life's work of educating poor and orphaned children. He had an extraordinary gift for handling difficult youths without punishment, but with gentle and effective firmness. Inspired by St Francis de Sales, Don Bosco called his helpers "Salesians", who were formally recognised by the church in 1874.



# Wordsearch

Try to find these words:

- |           |         |          |        |
|-----------|---------|----------|--------|
| crowd     | earth   | hearts   | reward |
| disciples | excited | mountain | right  |
| drink     | happy   | pure     | sat    |

O V X C Z S R A E V L V I E R H Y  
 B H M D W O R C A B N X A W L E S  
 U J Y P X C C T R A A N F G A A R  
 B T K C Y W S O T S Q R K M J X N  
 X I V V D T M E H H R Q Y G M B J  
 W L F E R U P A E D R I N K L M K  
 C T J A L X X L X K Z Y S A T C J  
 B G E K S D E R C S W O L Y L F P  
 M H F O M Z N D I Y U Y W P M U W  
 P V W R G O O T T G Y N R C J E M  
 F F S N Y C U Q E N H C E G Q U C  
 L Y D R O Z I N D V S T W A V D H  
 H M Z G Q O G A T I M Y A Z R A C  
 G W H J B Y L F T A N C R J P I V  
 S E L P I C S I D I I J D P T G U  
 K G L D Q G W M U T W N Y N F Q H



Draw a line from the first half of each beatitude to its correct ending.

Blessed are those who grieve...

Blessed are the merciful...

Blessed are those who make peace...

Blessed are those with pure hearts...

...they will be treated with mercy.

...they will be called God's children.

...they will see God.

...they will find comfort.