

The Living Word

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1 February 2026

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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St Agatha has been honoured since ancient times, although very little is known about her other than legend. Early tradition describes her as a young, wealthy virgin who was devoted to Christ. During times when Christians were persecuted, she refused the advances of the consul Quintinian, who threatened to have her charged. Agatha held firm to her beliefs and was subsequently tortured and martyred. In the early church, St Agatha was invoked against fire, particularly the volcanic eruptions of Mt Etna. She is also a patron against breast cancer.



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.