



# Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2020

1. Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.
2. Read the passage again and spend understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
3. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself might pray the text over the next few days.
4. Over the next week, set aside times to come back more than once to the passage. You could read it all or part of it again, slowly. Perhaps there is a special word for you in this passage of Scripture? Keep this word or phrase in your thoughts and gently repeat it, bringing it to mind and allowing God to speak to you in your heart.
5. Finally, come back to the text to conclude: What is God in this scripture asking of you this week? What is the one challenge, one little change you are asked to make or the thing you have been asked to do? Then say a prayer of thanksgiving for the good news in the passage. End in quiet prayer.



### **THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL – Matt 5:1-12 *The Beatitudes***

*When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:*

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.*

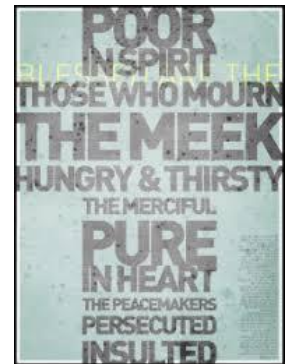
*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.*

*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*



### **A Short Thought**

Every year the Church recalls the example, witness, and prayer of the holy women and men who have been identified by the Church as Saints. These saints are more than just role models; they are family members with whom we continue to share relation, in a bond of prayer, called the Communion of Saints. On this feast of All Saints, sainthood can be easily dismissed as an impossible lifestyle far beyond our reach. After all, most of us do not wear sackcloth, pray 10 hours a day, start a religious congregation, or risk being fed to lions. So, we're off the hook, yes? No, for the Beatitudes give us a portrait of a saint that is more attainable than we might think. Saints can be poor by worldly standards, mostly because they share generously what they have with others. Saints can mourn without despairing. They deal with others gently rather than violently. Saints can withstand insult and injury. They forgive others their failings. They reach out with care and compassion to those most vulnerable and forgotten. They lift and don't put down.

Saints hunger for a better world. They are never completely satisfied. Rather, they live St. Augustine's words: "My soul is restless, O Lord, until it rests in thee.

The Beatitudes can be understood as a framework for Christian living. Because of this, it is natural that we proclaim this Gospel on the Feast of All Saints. Saints are people who lived the spirit of the Beatitudes as Jesus lived. On this day, we too are challenged to model our lives on the spirit and promises of the Beatitudes.

Does the above description remind you of anyone? And do you find any traces of yourself in the Beatitudes?

### **SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER**

1. A child was once asked for a definition of a saint. She said 'A stained glass window!' Asked why, she explained, 'The different colours let in the light and every saint is a different colour of God.' Every one of our unknown saints coloured God in a new way in his or her corner of the globe. What colour do you

bring?

2. What the world sees as tragic or empty, Jesus sees as blessed – What are the blessings in your life?
3. The Beatitudes offer a future promise but also a present reality. At first reading some Beatitudes may seem to describe circumstances that you would like to avoid at all costs. Read them slowly. Read them a few times. Stay with each one for a while. Let yourself get a sense of the paradox involved in each one. Perhaps you have had an experience of a deeper and more authentic life, a blessing, when...
  - You were poor - you knew your need of God
  - You mourned – could feel for others
  - You were meek – not emotionally out of control
  - You hungered and thirsted for some cause
  - You were merciful rather than vengeful
  - You were pure in heart – a person of integrity, whose actions and intentions correspond
  - You were a peacemaker
  - You were persecuted because you stood for something

## Prayer -

All-holy God, you call your people to holiness. As we keep the festival of your saints, give us their meekness and poverty of spirit, a thirst for righteousness, and purity of heart. May we share with them the richness of your kingdom and be clothed in the glory you bestow. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

**Amen**

### Prayer in these uncertain times

*We pray for all those in our country and throughout the world suffering from the Corona Virus. May its victims and their families be strengthened by the support of our community of faith and restored soon to full health. We also pray for our leaders and medical personnel who deal with the virus. May we keep calm and may we join together in solidarity with care and compassion to tackle this emergency. This we ask in confidence through Christ Our Lord. Amen*

