

SUNDAY PLUS

May we all be one

Jesus, a life of beatitudes



By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

The best commentary on the beatitudes is Jesus' own life. To be authentic to his own calling, Jesus gives up power and prestige to follow the way of powerlessness. He is gentle with the kind of people whom others write off as hopeless cases. He mourns when he sees how so many fail to acknowledge the truth when God visits them. Jesus experiences hunger – not just the hunger that is satisfied by bread but the hunger that can be satisfied only by doing what is right.

Jesus has a habit of scandalising the religious authorities with the readiness of his mercy and forgiveness. His single-mindedness in pursuing his mission sees him through times of hurt and terror. He is driven to make peace between God and humanity. In the end he is abused and persecuted in the cause of right and handed over to death. He ends up on another mount dying for what he believed in. *But in all this Jesus is blessed: God raises him on the third day.*

Jesus experiences all this as an *outcome* of a life lived in the love and enthusiasm of God. All this happened to Jesus because he was personally

gripped by the reality of the kingdom. Some of us will know what it is like to be accounted as a nobody because of our fidelity to Jesus. But as Paul tells us, Christ is our wisdom and freedom. As Christians we are pledged to share the wisdom of one who was counted a nobody himself. In doing that we will continue "to shame the wise" by declaring the foolishness of God.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk

Jesus, I would love to be more gentle, peaceful, single-minded and all the beautiful things which you hold out to us in the Beatitudes, but it's a big ask! Stay with me as I try and keep on trying to become a better person. ☩ Amen.

Happy are the gentle

By Sr Mary Burke FMDM

Humility, lowliness and gentleness are probably not among the top ten most used words today. Neither was the concept of gentleness popular in Jesus' day! The lowly, meek and gentle didn't have a lot going for them in first-century Palestine. The gentle were always the poor and dispossessed. They were certainly not seen as happy or blessed. In contrast those who owned

the land were blessed by God and guaranteed a future full of hope. In offering the earth to the gentle, Jesus is turning centuries of Jewish tradition on its head.

We can mistake gentleness for softness or submissiveness. Nothing could be further from the truth. Gentleness unites and the truly gentle bring with them calmness, a light touch in their use of power and power in their gentleness. After all, they are following the example of Christ himself who says "Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart!"

Sr Mary Burke is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

Jesus asks us to follow him and to travel with him along the path of love, the path that alone leads to eternal life. It is not an easy journey... But if we open the door to Jesus and allow him to be part of our lives, if we share our joys and sorrows with him, then we will experience the peace and joy that only God, who is infinite love, can give.

Pope Francis

Feasts of the week
Thursday 2 February

The Presentation of the Lord

The Offering (A Song of Simeon)

Old Man, you've sown the years longing for the harvest, hoping for the green shoot to appear. Fragrant with perfection, he is here: wanting to be purified, waiting to be crucified.

And his mother, offering her Lamb, gives him to your open arms so you can finally die in peace knowing that the Promised One is born. In gratitude you will whisper that her heart will break.

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Today:
Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13
1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Matthew 5:1-12

Monday:
Hebrews 11:32-40
Mark 5:1-20

Tuesday:
Hebrews 12:1-4
Mark 5:21-43

Wednesday:
Hebrews 12:4-7, 11-15
Mark 6:1-6

Thursday:
Malachi 3:1-4
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Friday:
Hebrews 13:1-8
Mark 6:14-29

Saturday:
Hebrews 13:15-17, 20-21
Mark 6:30-34

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 58:7-10
1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Matthew 5:13-16