

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 145)

ANTIPHON: Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

RESPONSE: Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Or

Alleluia.

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Rejoice and be glad; Your reward will be great in heaven. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you

Or

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

TODAY'S READINGS ZEP 2:3; 3: 12-13; 1 Cor 1: 26-31; Matt 5: 1-12

NEXT WEEK (5th Sunday Year A) Isaiah 58:7-10; Psalm 111; 1 Cor 2:1-5; Matthew 5:13-16

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Jesus shows us the way to care



February 1 2026 4th Sunday Year A

In this liturgical year, Year A, we focus on readings from Matthew's Gospel. Matthew writes towards the end of the first century AD, for a Christian community comprised of Jewish converts. In his gospel, he strives to demonstrate for them how Jesus is the fulfilment of the faith, hopes and promises of their Jewish faith, the fulfilment of all that is in "the law and the prophets" (Mt 5:17).

The reading from Matthew's Gospel is arguably the most famous and oft-quoted of all passages in the New Testament. It is known as The Sermon on the Mount or The Beatitudes (Blessed are they ...). It is Matthew's masterful summary of Jesus' teachings.

The passage follows not long after Matthew's account of Jesus' early public life and the call of the first disciples. Matthew gives a brief description of Jesus' activity: "He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people" (Mt 4:23).

In this one verse, Matthew effectively summarises the ministry of Jesus: teaching and healing. Jesus teaches with extraordinary authority, interpreting the Torah for his Jewish followers, and he heals the sick and afflicted, lifting the burden of suffering. These two dimensions of his ministry – teaching and healing – are inextricably linked and intertwined. His teaching offers healing and his healing expresses his teaching.

Matthew tells us that, on this occasion, Jesus

goes up the mountain, draws his disciples to him, and sits down (as Rabbis do) and teaches them. His going up the mountain reminds us of Moses who went up the mountain of Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. This teaching is as important as that!

"Blessed (i.e., happy, fortunate) are they who ...". Jesus repeats nine times, each time noting the God-given blessing that is the corresponding reward for those who act in that way. With these Beatitudes, Jesus effectively instructs his disciples on the nature of true holiness and the promise of true happiness. The Beatitudes reflect the merciful and compassionate character of God as revealed by Jesus (and as expressed in the Psalm). And they articulate the attitudes, values and spirit of the way of life we are to live and the way we are to act as Jesus' disciples in our care and concern for each other, our fellow human beings, and indeed all creation.

The list of Beatitudes is not like the list of the Ten Commandments, a definitive list of commands (Thou shalt not ...). Rather, they are commendations for a way of living, of being in the world, of caring for others, especially the sick, powerless, poor and afflicted.

Our gospel reading challenges us to reflect on our attitudes and values in the light of Jesus' teaching and his compassion for all those in need of healing.

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