

The Way of Beatitude Living Radical Hope in a World of Division and Despair, **by Casey Cole OFM.**

The St Anthony Book Study read *The Way of Beatitude Living Radical Hope in a World of Division and Despair*, by Casey Cole OFM. Casey Cole has a YouTube channel, *Breaking the Habit*. Fr. Cole described each beatitude and how we can apply it to our lives today.

Jesus said we will always have the poor with us. In Scriptures the poor are considered an affliction. Fr Cole stated that poverty is caused by humanity's greed. That is obvious when looking at homeless people on the streets, and run down, boarded up houses. The Poor in Spirit doesn't refer to the poor, per se, but to how the poor are more accepting of their situation that life throws to them. Many depend upon Jesus to help them through each day, each situation.

Those who mourn is not about the mourning all of us have to do at various periods in our lives, but that we should respond to grief in a holy way. Jesus was talking about those who are capable of caring about others enough to cry and are capable of loving others instead of closing ourselves off to avoid pain. We need to have empathy for others, even those we don't know.

To be meek is not those who are weak, which is how our society views the word meek. Jesus looked at those who are meek are the ones who are able to respond with peace. They have an inner sense that nothing will threaten them. Jesus always had a sense of peace about him because he knew he was from the Father. Jesus wants us to learn to react to our triggers with peace.

Those who hunger and thirst and righteousness can be heard in voices that fight for racial justice. People protest because they don't want to go on with the way society is. They refuse to accept the world the way it is. In Matthew's gospel it points to people with more of a spiritual ambition, the hunger and thirst for righteousness.

We are God's people. We belong to each other through solidarity. Sometimes it doesn't seem as if we have solidarity and other times the solidarity is widely seen. Jesus wants people to treat each other the way God treats us. God shows mercy to us time and time again. He's always forgiving us, he's always showing mercy to us. We are to show mercy to other people

Purity in this Beatitude doesn't refer to moral cleanliness. A person pure of heart is a person whose intentions match their behaviors. They are good to others because they know that's the way God wants us to be. Their actions don't have ulterior motives to impress others. The pure

of heart want to please God and help their neighbor. We should give alms because Jesus wants us to, not to impress other church goers.

Pope Paul VI made the statement “If you want peace work for justice.” Peace is not possible without Jesus. Those who want peace confront injustice. Jesus stated he had not come to bring peace but to bring the sword (MT 10:34.) Jesus has taught us that every person has value and should be treated with dignity. That is what justice is.

The early Christians were beaten and martyred for their beliefs in Jesus. Today that persecution still exists. Christian churches are still attacked because of the beliefs of the parishioners and priests. Our current society and world have turned itself against God. People who publicly praise God are criticized. Yet Christians reject the secular society and world and choose to follow God and the gift that we have.

By Nancy Stone.