**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEB. 15-16, 2025**

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 6: 17; 20-26

And he came down with them and stood on a stretch of level

ground.

And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,

for the kingdom of God is yours.

Blessed are you who are now hungry,
for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who are now weeping,
for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you,
and when they exclude and insult you,
and denounce your name as evil
on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be
great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the
same way.

But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.
But woe to you who are filled now,
for you will be hungry.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will grieve and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you,
for their ancestors treated the false prophets in this way.

**Intercession**

May we seek ways to bring comfort to the poor, joy to those who weep, sustenance to the hungry, and Christ’s love to the excluded, including support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

It’s a topsy turvy world in today’s Gospel. Jesus turns all our notions of what good and desired upside down in the Sermon on the Mount. Now that his twelve apostles have been selected, Jesus shares with the crowd what it means to be his followers. It’s as if he is warning them: “Buckle up, it’s going to be a bumpy ride.”

You are blessed in your poverty, hunger, sorrow, and isolation. Following Jesus is not going to be easy. But those who have the courage to follow Christ will enjoy eternal happiness – forever happiness, not the transient “happiness” of the temporal world.

This had to be difficult to hear. The Messiah, after all, was supposed to deliver the Jews from oppression (at least in the common understanding), not tell them that they should be happy in their torment. But Jesus preached what needed to be heard, not necessarily what people wanted to hear. He shocked the crowds, reminding the sorrowful that good would come from this suffering, and cautioning the self-assured that self-centered satisfaction leads to endless regret in the next life.

Let us pray that we draw closer to God through our own suffering. And may contentment in our good fortune on Earth not blind us to opportunities, such as supporting the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, to address the needs of others among us.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

With the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is establishing his priorities. He has just healed numerous people “…of their diseases; and even those who were tormented by unclean spirits were cured,” and “everyone in the crowd sought to touch him because power came forth from him and healed them all.” (Luke 6:18-19). It is the beginning of a ministry full of tender and compassionate miracles that reveal Christ’s infinite mercy. He restores sight to the blind, raises the dead, cures lepers so that can return to society, makes the lame walk again. He heals them *all*. He doesn’t pick and choose. Rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, physically or spiritually crippled – all are deserving of His mercy.

When He begins to preach, He continues to convey His concern for the lowly as He elevates the poor, hungry, weeping, and hated. We can continue His mission through our own preferential treatment for those in need, whether this need is physical or spiritual poverty, through support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal. Please prayerfully consider a gift.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Brightly lit skies, perhaps with rays of light breaking through white clouds.

Header: “Behold, your reward will be great in heaven” – Luke 6:23

Copy: In times of distress, it’s important to remember our struggles on Earth are temporary. We can help those in our community in need of God’s love and grace through support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal.