



ME – A SAINT??

(MATTHEW 5:1-12)

Jesus goes up the mountain (which our text, unfortunately, translates as “the hill”): he sits down, which is the position of a rabbi when teaching; it is Jesus who gives the teaching, which is the basic meaning of “Torah”, he does not receive it from elsewhere.

Jesus, then, is interpreting the Law as it could be applied by his disciples in their own time and situation: this was the purpose of the Pharisees, and later the rabbis, to adapt the Torah in such a way that its values could be lived out by those who followed their teaching. When Jesus declares that “my yoke is easy and my burden light”, he is saying that his interpretation of the Law is less strict than that of other teachers. Matthew is thus presenting Jesus’ teaching as the authoritative understanding of what the Law of God implies. ■

REFLECT

Today we celebrate the feast of All Saints. We are not thinking primarily of those Christians who have been canonised, that is, officially recognised by the Church as having lived a holy life and who are held up as examples to inspire us to try our best to live out our baptismal commitment. We are celebrating all those ordinary folk, members of our own families and others who lived out their faith quietly in the rough and tumble of everyday life. Very few of the canonised saints were married people with families.

There used to be a feeling that a holy life was one which could be lived only by people who consecrated their lives to God as priests, nuns, monks or other religious persons. However, the Second Vatican Council did away with this manner of thinking when it taught that everyone is called to holiness. The notion that lay people had to settle for a second-class way of life in the Church was seen to be false. No way of life is higher, better or holier than any other. The manner in which individual people live out their Christian commitment is the way in which they find holiness, which is essentially being close to God and practising the values of the Gospel in the situation in which they find themselves: for many people, this is marriage and family life; other states, such as the single life, are as valid in this regard. No one is excluded from being holy, and that includes you. In the Beatitudes, which form our Gospel reading today, the reward of the kingdom is not promised to those who work miracles, but to the kind of person who is described there. Jesus gives eight Beatitudes rather than Ten Commandments: but in a real sense, they are more demanding. ■

SAY

How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:3)

LEARN

In Matthew’s version of the Gospel, mountains are places of revelation.

The Sermon on the Mount presents Jesus in the same light as Moses, who received the Torah on Mount Sinai.

No state of life is better or holier than any other: everyone is called to holiness.

DO

Make the sign of the cross with holy water. Think of your baptismal promises: they are your way to being holy.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Let us all rejoice in the Lord,
as we celebrate the feast day in honour of all
the Saints,
at whose festival the Angels rejoice
and praise the Son of God.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
by whose gift we venerate in one celebration
the merits of all the Saints,
bestow on us, we pray,
through the prayers of so many intercessors,
an abundance of the reconciliation with you
for which we earnestly long...
Amen.

FIRST READING *Apocalypse 7:2-4,9-14*

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.
I, John, saw another angel rising where the
sun rises, carrying the seal of the living God;
he called in a powerful voice to the four
angels whose duty it was to devastate land
and sea, "Wait before you do any damage on
land or at sea or to the trees, until we have
put the seal on the foreheads of the servants
of our God." Then I heard how many were
sealed: a hundred and forty-four thousand,
out of all the tribes of Israel.

After that I saw a huge number, impossible
to count, of people from every nation, race,
tribe and language; they were standing in
front of the throne and in front of the lamb,
dressed in white robes and holding palms in
their hands. They shouted aloud, "Victory to
our God, who sits on the throne, and to the
Lamb!" And all the angels who were standing
in a circle around the throne, surrounding
the elders and the four animals, prostrated
themselves before the throne, and touched
the ground with their foreheads, worshipping
God with these words: "Amen. Praise and
glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and
honour and power and strength to our God
for ever and ever. Amen."

One of the elders then spoke, and asked
me, "Do you know who these people are,
dressed in white robes, and where they have
come from?" I answered him, "You can tell
me, my Lord." Then he said, "These are the
people who have been through the great
persecution, and they have washed their
robes white again in the blood of the Lamb."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 23

Response:

Such are the men who seek your face, O Lord.

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)
2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,
who desires not worthless things. (R.)
3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

SECOND READING

1 John 3:1-3

A reading from the first letter of St John.
Think of the love that the Father has lavished
on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge
him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children
of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet
been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.
Surely everyone who entertains this hope
must purify himself, must try to be as pure
as Christ.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
Come to me, all you who labour and are
overburdened,
and I will give you rest, says the Lord.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 5:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill.
There he sat down and was joined by his
disciples. Then he began to speak. This is
what he taught them:

"How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.
Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.
Happy those who hunger and thirst for what
is right:
they shall be satisfied.
Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.
Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.
Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.
Happy those who are persecuted in the
cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Happy are you when people abuse you
and persecute you and speak all kinds of

calumny against you on my account. Rejoice
and be glad, for your reward will be great in
heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May these offerings we bring in honour of all
the Saints
be pleasing to you, O Lord,
and grant that, just as we believe the Saints
to be already assured of immortality,
so we may experience their concern for our
salvation...
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall
see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the
sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

As we adore you, O God, who alone are holy
and wonderful in all your Saints,
we implore your grace,
so that, coming to perfect holiness in the
fullness of your love,
we many pass from this pilgrim table
to the banquet of our heavenly homeland...
Amen.