

## Monday Week 10 of Ordinary Time

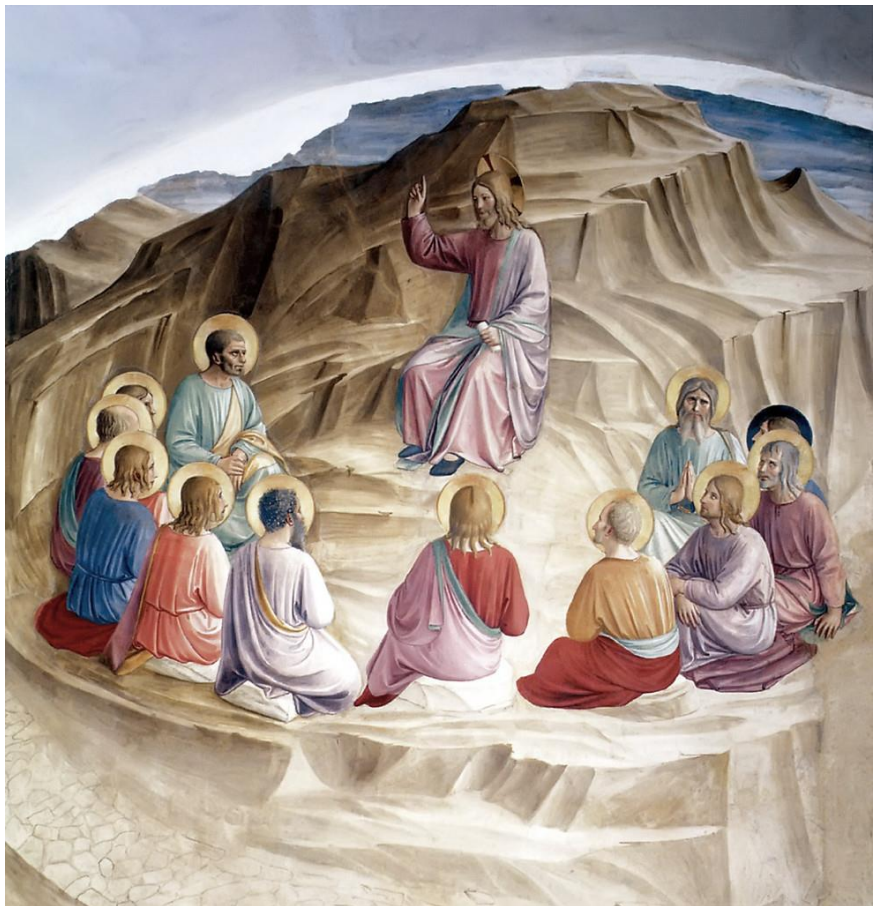
### II Cor. 1:1-1, Mt. 5:1-12

Today's Gospel is one of the most well-known passages in Sacred Scriptures and a wonderful opportunity to reflect on what being a Christian is. The Beatitudes are the opening statements of three chapters of Jesus' teaching, better known as the "Sermon on the Mount." The Catechism describes the Beatitudes as showing us the countenance of Jesus (paragraph 1717), meaning that they give us a picture of the person of Jesus, and therefore of the perfect Christian.

The Lectionary uses the word "happy" which is a weak translation of "Blessed". We talk of "beatification" and "canonisation" in the context of those holy man and women who are in heaven (saints) and the title "Blessed" is given to those who are on the way to being declared a saint (canonised). Therefore the "Beatitudes" are not just a portrait of Jesus but show us how we can be united with Christ in our daily life on earth and hope for Eternal Life with Him hereafter.

The Beatitudes set out eight "attitudes" and God's reward for each one, together compiling a picture of what it is to be holy as Christ is holy. The first beatitude, blessing the "poor in Spirit" can be confusing, but as soon as we recognise our own poverty of spirit, we are open to being filled with God's Holy Spirit.

This picture, by Blessed Fra Angelico, shows Christ preaching to His disciples on a bare mountain. The bare



earth represents poverty of spirit which remains bare until it is “watered” by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Note that all the disciples have a golden halo, except for one. Even being close to Jesus and one of His chosen group, does not guarantee the rewards promised in the Beatitudes, unless our hearts are in the right place.

The Beatitudes set out a heart-led way of life and maybe we can use the structure as a prayer:

- Father, I pray for the grace recognise my poverty of spirit so that I can humbly receive your Word today, recognising that I need it more than anything else.
- I pray for the grace to mourn for those who are afflicted by the reality of sin.
- I pray for the grace to be Christ-like today.
- I pray for the grace to hunger and thirst for justice; to hunger and thirst for the Gospel.
- I pray for the grace to be merciful, compassionate, and forgiving.
- I pray for the grace to align my will with you, and to keep my heart pure.
- I pray for your grace in my relationships with other people; that they may be filled with your peace.
- I pray for the grace to persevere steadily in my faith even when those around me disagree with me.

Finally, I pray for the grace to rejoice in my faith, knowing that your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, became man to lead me to you, our heavenly Father. Amen.