

6TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Jeremiah 17:5-8 1 Cor 15:12. 16-20 Luke 6:17. 20-26

The gospel of today presents four blessings and four curses parallel to each other. These blessings and curses are in fact a description of the Hellenistic Communities as Jesus saw them.

Jesus noticed that these were communities formed of rich and poor people living side by side. He noticed how the poor lived alongside the rich and how those lived besides those who had their fill but could not meet each other's needs.

On one side of the spectrum, he saw those weeping and on the other those laughing. He was aware of those badly spoken of, the hated ones and those well-spoken of.

Having seen all that Jesus was moved with compassion and began to exclaim:

- *"How happy are you who are poor, yours is the kingdom of God"...*
- *"But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now"*

To a certain degree Jesus is in fact expressing surprise and shock that there is no meeting point between the rich and the poor.

Reaching an appropriate meeting point in our communities is very important in every community. Sometimes communities and groups of peoples can co-exist and interact at different wavelengths.

I remember going to a birthday party of a three or four year old and I was surprised by the reaction of this little one when his uncle handed him a ten pound note.

The child looked at it and then returned it to him and saying "But I already have that one!!!"

- ❖ Uncle did not do his homework properly to find a fitting meeting point with the lad.
- ❖ For the little boy uncle's tenner wasn't different from what someone had already given him earlier on.

Jesus is saying: "I see life polarised, and until the two polarities embrace each other, blessings be confined onto one side and curses narrowed onto the other."

Let us look at it at a deeper level:

In the language of Jeremia today, Jesus is calling for every man;

- poor or rich
- hungry or filled up,
- weeping or laughing
- poorly spoken of or well-spoken of
- ❖ we all need one thing in common: ie: to put our trust in the Lord.

He is calling for everyone, whatever their condition they are in - to be like a tree planted by the waterside.

Let each side of the polarity be rooted "*by the stream side.*"

- Only then can the polarities embrace each other.
- Only then can the two sides find a meeting point
- Only then can the "haves" and "have-nots" speak at an equal wavelength

A greater challenge is put before those who can count tangible blessings in their lives:

If tangible blessings are not rooted in the Lord they can turn into a curse;

For instance:

Wealth rooted in the Lord can bring people together.

'Having plenty', rooted in the Lord, can bring families and communities together. failing which

- it can also keep them apart
- it can wreck family.

Therefore,

- Poor or rich,
- hungry or full,
- weeping or laughing,
- poorly spoken of or well spoken of we shall be better placed guided by faith.