Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:1).

2 Cor 1:1-7; *Mt 5:1-12*

The church ends the Easter season with Pentecost, then begins the long months of “Ordinary Time.” We had 50 days of Easter to ponder and implement the pattern Jesus left us: Die to yourself and rise again to love God and one another in self-emptying service. This is the Paschal Mystery, our union with the crucified and risen

Christ, who is now present and active in the world though us, the members of his body, animated by the gift of his Holy Spirit.

We have celebrated Pentecost and now trust that the Spirit is with us. We have celebrated the mystery of the Trinity and glimpsed the inner life of God as the beloved community calling us forward. Yesterday we received the real presence of Jesus and the promise of future glory in a wafer of bread and, if possible, in these Covid days, a sip from the cup. The signs are simple, but they reveal a larger shared reality surrounding us like smoke in the wind, a reminder that we are all connected and that all our actions have consequences.

Discipleship is evident in the challenges of the Beatitudes. See what happens if you live your life like this – poor in spirit, meek, hungry and thirsty for justice, merciful, clean of heart, peacemakers, enduring resistance with joy. Only the Holy Spirit can make a life like this possible, but we can begin, one day at a time, one step after another in the direction of greater union with God, now present on the earth through us. Find companions for the journey – other disciples as hesitant and often as skeptical as you are. Try it together, see what happens, always go forward.

We live in time and space. Our days take up ordinary challenges and our prayers are often small and focused on our own daily needs. Yet the direction we take and the way we live will reveal our values and faith. The Beatitudes provide a subtext to daily living. They may seem idealistic, even foolish and impractical, only gestures and words, yet faith tells us they are able to bend the arc of history toward justice. If we make the attitude of the Beatitudes a goal, we will be called on to practice them.

We are surrounded by invisible glory, the voices of past generations, our beloved deceased family and friends, cheering us on. What the mind does not see, the heart knows. A different world is possible. A different world is necessary. Blessed are we if we believe that God is with us to redeem this world.