



## MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, January 29, 2023

Fourth Sunday  
In Ordinary Time

4:00 PM  
8:00 AM  
10:00 AM

Gathering: Gather Your People BB 309

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 103)

*Loving and forgiving are you, Oh Lord;  
slow to anger, rich in kindness, loving  
and forgiving are you.*

Preparation: Hosea BB 665

Mass Parts: Mass Of Creation

Communion: In The Breaking Of The Bread BB 321  
Our Blessing Cup BB 358

Recessional: Take The Word Of God With You BB 382



Out of respect for the Lord and in consideration of fellow parishioners, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

### UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTIONS

January 29	No Second Collection
February 5	Property Management
February 12	Catholic Schools
February 19	Fuel
February 22	Aid to Churches in Central / Eastern Europe / Africa

### PLEASE HELP US!

As you leave church, kindly take your Bulletin with you - or return it to the basket at the entrance of the Church, return your music book and Mass card to their proper place, and pick up after yourself as you leave.

## ✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$9700.00 each week in order to make ends meet. This amount represents an adjusted budget offertory of \$8500.00 per week plus the combination of budgeted Property and Fuel second collections (\$4800.00 per month divided into 4 weeks or \$1200.00 weekly). Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the Parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

January 15, 2023

Offertory **\$7,900.62**

**COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR  
JANUARY 22, 2023  
WILL APPEAR IN NEXT WEEK'S BULLETIN**



Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish uses **Parish Giving** to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE CATHOLIC APPEAL

The Diocese of Manchester has created a new annual New Hampshire Catholic Appeal (NHCA) to enable the Catholic Church in New Hampshire to meet the increasing needs of parishes, retired clergy, seminarians, Catholic schools, and much more. Our parish will begin participating in the NHCA in May 2023. Additional information will be made available in the future.

### Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/\$100	\$3,000/\$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/\$75	\$2,250/\$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/\$60	\$1,800/\$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/\$50	\$1,500/\$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/\$40	\$1,200/\$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/\$30	\$900/\$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/\$25	\$750/\$15
\$15,000	\$750/\$15	\$450/\$9

### Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

## ✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

### SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

We appreciate the gracious support of our bulletin by our Advertisers. Please be sure to support our advertisers by calling them first!

If you have a business and would like to place an ad in our bulletin, call 1-800-333-3166.

### CANDLES

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one, as well as the Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon in Newton. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00. Please call the Parish Office at 382-8324.

### BLESSING OF COUPLES

There will be a special blessing of couples at the conclusion of all Liturgies on the weekend of **February 11-12**. Please pray for those married among us and remember those preparing to be married as well.

### FOR OUR RECORDS

We need your help to keep our records current. If there are any births, deaths, marriages, moves, or address changes in your family, please notify the parish office at [jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net) or call 603-382-8324. If you are new to our parish, registration forms are available at the entrances of both churches. You can also find a registration form on our website at <http://stlukenh.org>.

### MEN OF ST. JOSEPH

Our ministry aims to emulate St. Joseph and become better husbands, fathers, sons and brothers. There are no dues and the Men of St. Joseph do not participate in projects or other volunteer efforts as a group, but instead, gather together for sharing among men to help them be a better person, a better family man, and a better member of the Church. Join us on Saturday morning, **January 21, 2023 from 8:00 to 9:00 AM** in the parish hall on the Plaistow campus.

### CLOTHING DRIVE

#### **Kimberly's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Give Away!!!**

WE DID IT!!!!!!

GRAND TOTAL FOR 2023:

2,775 POUNDS OF CLOTHING! along with 6 bags of non-perishable food items for the food pantry!

The above will be distributed amongst potentially 8 different locations/organizations, all with missions to serve those who are less fortunate and underserved.

As always, I would be nothing without the support from my family and volunteers and without those who have been so generous with their donations year after year. Thank you on behalf of all of the receiving organizations and I look forward to seeing you again next year!

May God bless you throughout the year,

Kimberly Clenord

### RETROUVAILLE

#### **A Lifeline For Married Couples**

Retrouvaille (pronounced Retro-vi) means rediscovery in French. This program helps couples put their broken pieces back together and rediscover their love for each other. This program starts with a weekend which teaches couples a new form of communication called Dialogue and lets couples know that they are not alone. Our next Retrouvaille weekend is **March 10-12, 2023**. For more information, email [3023@halpourmarriage.org](mailto:3023@halpourmarriage.org).

### AMAZONSMILE FOUNDATION

**AmazonSmile.com** is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at [www.amazonsmile.com](http://www.amazonsmile.com). For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

**Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.**

### **WHILE AWAY THIS WINTER...**

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Winter even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Winter months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

## ✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

### Sunday, January 29

10:00 AM Religious Ed – K through 6 *Plaistow*

### Tuesday, January 31

6:30 PM The Cultural World of the New Testament *Plaistow*

### Wednesday, February 1

Holy Angels Church  
Open All Day For Prayer

### Thursday, February 2

8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*  
10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting *Plaistow*

### Saturday, February 4

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

### Sunday, February 5

10:00 AM Religious Ed – K to 6 *Plaistow*  
11:00 AM Grade 3 Meeting for Parents and Students and Others Who Have Missed Sacraments *Plaistow*

## RESTROOM BREAKS DURING MASS

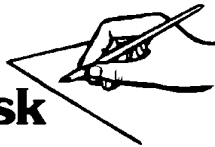
### Attention Parents

Please be sure to accompany your young children when they need to use the restroom during Mass. This is for their safety and your peace of mind!

## PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

## From the Pastor's Desk



### HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed until Spring 2023. This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.

## ✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

### Saturday, January 28 ~ Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Zeph 2:3, 3:12-13; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 5:1-12a (Vigil)*

4:00 PM Joyce Marroncelli by the  
St. Vincent de Paul Society  
*Plaistow*

### Sunday, January 29 ~ Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Zeph 2:3, 3:12-13; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 5:1-12a*

8:00 AM Eileen Meader and Deceased Members of the Pineau family by Joan Meader  
*Newton*

10:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Plaistow*

### Monday, January 30 ~ Weekday

*Heb 11:32-40; Mk 5:1-20*

8:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Newton*

### Tuesday, January 31 ~ John Bosco, Priest

*Heb 12:1-4; Mk 5:21-43*

8:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Plaistow*

### Wednesday, February 1 ~ Weekday

*Heb 12:4-7, 11-15; Mk 6:1-6*

6:30 PM Sr. Pauline Sauvageau  
by the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary  
*Plaistow*

### Thursday, February 2 ~ The Presentation of the Lord

*Mal 3:1-4; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40*

8:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Newton*

### Friday, February 3 ~ Blaise, Bishop and Martyr:

*Ansgar, Bishop*

*Heb 13:1-8; Mk 6:14-29*

**NO MASS**

### Saturday, February 4 ~ Weekday

*Heb 13:15-17, 20-21; Mk 6:30-34 (Day)*

*Is 58:7-10; 1 Cor 2:1-5; Mt 5:13-16 (Vigil)*

4:00 PM People of the Parish  
*Plaistow*

### Sunday, February 5 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Is 58:7-10; 1 Cor 2:1-5; Mt 5:13-16*

8:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Newton*

10:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Plaistow*



### WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry, and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.**

In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date. **Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding to travel to Church during winter storms.**

### FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2022, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

### MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH

Did you know that all Catholics are required to be married in the Church as a condition of the validity of their marriage? Any Catholic married in a civil ceremony (JP) or in any religious ceremony other than a Catholic one (unless specifically excepted by the Bishop) is not living out the Sacrament of Marriage in its fullness according to the teaching of the Church. Contact Father Albert in the Parish Office for more information and assistance.

### THE GOD MINUTE

Every morning a small group of priests, religious, and lay people start their day in prayer. Soft music, sacred scripture, and a thoughtful reflection are weaved into a 10-minute prayer called "The God Minute." It's then uploaded for you to access and pray along with us on your own time. And it's free. Listen with your coffee in the morning, while driving to work, or taking a walk. See how easy and beautiful prayer can be! [www.thegodminute.org](http://www.thegodminute.org)

### END OF LIFE PLANNING

**Three Beliefs** is a document from the Diocese of Manchester that gives valuable assistance to Catholics and others on end-of-life issues. **Three Beliefs** explains Catholic teaching on life-sustaining treatment and care and includes the New Hampshire Advance Directive form modified in such a way to make it consistent with both Catholic teaching and New Hampshire law. **Three Beliefs** contains a helpful FAQ section and wallet cards that include important information for healthcare providers.

The New Hampshire Advance Directive form was revised by a law that is consistent with Catholic teaching and the changes to the New Hampshire form. If you completed an advance directive before 2021 and your intentions for your end-of-life care have not changed, you do not need to complete a new form as long as your advance directive was valid when it was executed. For example, if you completed the October 2007 version of **Three Beliefs** and signed the document before two witnesses or a notary public or justice of the peace, you do not need to complete a new advance directive form.

Copies of **Three Beliefs** are available at the church entrance.

### EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual, but it is a great source of grace for us as a parish family, as well.

We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord, **but** we need more people so there will be at least two people at each hour. We are also looking for people who would be able to substitute.

**Newton – Thursday  
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**

If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

**The Church in Plaistow is open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.**

## ✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	603-382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	603-382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	603-819-4949
Preschool	603-382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	603-382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	<a href="mailto:fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net">fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Cathy Smith	<a href="mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net">csmith@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Joyce Szczapa	<a href="mailto:jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net">jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Jackie Tremblay	<a href="mailto:jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net">jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Val Barczak	<a href="mailto:mvmbarczak@comcast.net">mvmbarczak@comcast.net</a>
Parish Council	<a href="mailto:parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net">parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net</a>



## ❖ Community News ❖



### SAINT JUDE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MONTHLY FOOD DRIVE

The Knights of Columbus of our Parish are sponsoring a monthly food drive to support the Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry. A list of items needed, along with a paper shopping bag, will be distributed at the end

of Masses on the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of each month to those who wish to participate. We ask that you bring back the non-perishable food items the following weekend (4<sup>th</sup> weekend of the month). You are also welcome to drop off donations at the Parish Office during normal business hours or at one of our Parish churches. Monetary donations are also welcome (make checks payable to Saint Luke Food Pantry), or gift cards to local supermarkets. Thank you for reaching out to help families in our community who need assistance. The Knights and the Food Pantry appreciate your generosity and support.



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to [www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/](http://www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/) or **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite fellow parishioners & friends to do the same.

**St. Vincent  
de Paul  
Society**



### Your “Dropped Dollar” Hard At Work

Thank you for your continued support of the St. Vincent de Paul Society! Please know that your “dropped dollars” are being used wisely to help the poor in our area. Your generosity does not go unnoticed.

Drop-a-Dollar in the St. Vincent de Paul box  
on your way out of church.

Remember ~ 100% of your donation is used to help  
those who need a hand up, not a hand out.

Our next meeting on **Wednesday, February 15 at 7:00 PM**. We meet downstairs in the Church Hall in Plaistow. **New members are always welcome!**

If you seek assistance or need information about the St. Vincent de Paul Society, call 603-382-8324 x315.

**Hear, OH LORD, and answer me  
for I am poor and needy.**

### MAKE 2023 THE YEAR YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

You can create a brighter future for a child who has experienced abuse or neglect by becoming a CASA volunteer advocate. If you have the heart to help, we'll teach you the rest. Apply now for our January or March training! Learn more at [www.casanh.org](http://www.casanh.org).

### CURSILLO

If you have a desire to know Jesus more closely, a Cursillo is for you. The Cursillo weekend is a short course in Christianity. The purpose of the weekend is to facilitate a meaningful personal encounter with Christ and his body, the Church. The three day weekend is also the bridge connecting the faithful with the supportive post-Cursillo community, where we live our faith joyfully with our fellow Christians. Cursillo weekends are being offered at the Sato Center in Hookset, NH. To find out more, contact Mark Collopy at 603-833-7341 or explore [www.nhcursillo.org](http://www.nhcursillo.org).

### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A Men's AA Step Meeting is being on Sunday mornings from 7:00 to 8:00 AM at the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish Hall in Plaistow, NH (Holy Angels). Bring your own coffee. For more information, call 617-921-9899.



### DO SOMETHING GOOD WITH US

The Knights of Columbus are a vital and vibrant part of St Luke the Evangelist Parish.

We welcome any practicing Catholic man,  
18 or older, to join the Knights.

We are sons, fathers, husbands and grandfathers,  
whose main purpose is charitable works in support  
of our parish and community.

Where there is a need, there is a Knight.

Joining is simple – talk to a brother Knight, contact

Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803, email him at

[dans49@comcast.net](mailto:dans49@comcast.net) or you can now join online:

[www.kofc.org/joinus](http://www.kofc.org/joinus)

**THE KNIGHTS OF  
COLUMBUS  
ST. JUDE COUNCIL #6617**  
[www.kofc6617.org](http://www.kofc6617.org)



# Do Something for Lent. Renew your faith.

What is the **Lenten Journey** all about? Prayer, fasting and almsgiving are called the “three pillars” of the Christian way of life. They help support a full and healthy life of discipleship. During Lent we try to repair and strengthen these three pillars, which also are called the “three disciplines” because they help people become better disciples of the Lord.

## **The Lenten Journey is about PRAYER.**

Prayer is conversation with God. Make a good habit of daily prayer. Read the Psalms; and each Lent try and learn one or two by heart. Try to sing your prayer at home, and make every effort to sing well when you worship with others.



**The Lenten Journey is about FASTING.** To prepare himself for his life's work, Jesus fasted in the wilderness. As Christians grow up, they need to learn traditional, healthy ways to fast. When we fast, we deny ourselves some food or other good things. We remind ourselves of how dependent we are on God's gifts, which always must be shared fairly and never taken for granted.

**The Lenten Journey is about GIVING.** Almsgiving means “sharing compassion.” Almsgiving means more than giving away the things we don't need. It means giving away some of the things we do need because someone else also needs them. It means giving of ourselves.

Our **Lenten Journey** is about faith sharing during the Lenten season. It is a way to learn more about your faith and grow as a disciple of the Lord; it is a way to meet fellow parishioners, and to contribute to the life of our Parish.

*All are welcome!*



# What to do?

Today we invite sign-ups for small group Scripture sharing during Lent. We continue to pray together as our 2023 Lenten Journey gets underway. Ask for the Spirit's guidance as you consider your involvement; pray that our Parish's Lenten Journey be blessed.

***Join a small group!*** Groups meet six times during the Lenten season to discuss the upcoming Sunday Lectionary readings. You will learn more about Scripture through the resources provided, participate in interesting discussions, meet some wonderful people, and have the opportunity to build up the Body of Christ.

**You will have the opportunity to sign-up by filling out the registration form in this bulletin today and in the coming weeks, or call the Parish Office at 382-8324.**

***What else?*** During Lent, special *Paschal Mission* inserts in the weekly bulletin will focus on the Lenten Scriptures and on discipleship in the real world. Sunday Homilies will touch on living Jesus' Gospel and on the questions discussed at Group meetings.

***Evangelization – spreading the “Good News” is something everyone can do!***

**Group Meetings begin the week of February 19!  
Meetings will take place in the Church Hall**

# **DISCIPLES ON THE JOURNEY REGISTRATION FORM**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the time and day you prefer**

Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_  
(February 22 – March 29)

Thursday Afternoons at 1:30 p.m. \_\_\_\_  
(February 23 – March 30)

Check if you are willing to be a group leader \_\_\_\_\_

**GROUP MEETINGS BEGIN  
THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 19**

**GROUPS WILL MEET IN THE CHURCH  
HALL**

(Please return this form in the collection basket or bring  
to the parish office)



# The Gospel at Home

## This Week's Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a

In the Gospel, Jesus climbs on a mountainside to teach the Beatitudes. Those who live by these eight principles will learn about how to live like Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount will show us how to experience happiness even in the most trying times. The lowly are uplifted by these teachings. God gives us life and wants us all to be happy.

## Exploring the Gospel Message

**Seeds (Preschool):** Your child learned that Jesus' teachings will bring us happiness. Ask your child about the Beatitudes, which Jesus taught during the Sermon on the Mount. Together as a family, try to make a list of what the teachings are. If you need help, go to this week's Gospel reading. Talk about how to live the Beatitudes as a family.

**Promise (Grades K-1):** Your child explored Jesus' teachings that will help us be happy. Discuss what makes each person in your family happy and how that might fit into the Beatitudes. What are some of the times you have celebrated with each member of the family? Could be birthday, Baptisms, or some other milestone. Pray for continued happiness for your family and others in the community.

**Good News (Grades 2-3):** What kind of blessings has your family experienced that makes you all happy? Those are the kind of things your child's class discussed this week. Talk about your faith, family and friends, and life in general. Ask your child to summarize the story from this week's lesson titled, "A Colorful Gift." Talk about the Beatitudes and include them in your weekly prayers. How do the Beatitudes help us find true happiness?

**Venture (Grades 4-6):** This week your youngster's class learned about God's Law and Jesus' new law. Ask your son or daughter to describe what happened in the story, "Sadako and the 1,000 Cranes." The Gospel reading about the Beatitudes teaches us how to be happy. See how many beatitudes your young person can remember. Discuss as a family what the Liturgy of the Word means to you. Have your young person describe who Saint John Bosco is. Besides the Beatitudes, discuss the other teachings from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. End with the Lord's Prayer.

**Visions (Grades 7-9):** How much do Moses and Jesus have in common? Your young person should be able to answer that. Plus, talk about what happened in this week's story about Martin Luther King Jr. called "When Even the Children Can Lead." How did the people from the 1950s account fit into Jesus' teaching on the Beatitudes? How do the Beatitudes teach us to think like God? Discuss these questions with your young person. What other teachings from the Sermon on the Mount can your youngster share with the family?

## Pray Together

Gather the family at the kitchen table. In the center of the table, place the family Bible and a lighted candle. Let each person in the family ask for God's help in spreading the happiness of the Beatitudes.. After each person has a say, all can respond with the words, "Jesus you are the source of all happiness." End with the Lord's Prayer.





# Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time (A)

January 29, 2023

## The Beautiful Beatitudes

By Mark Haydu, LC

To follow Christ is to seek lowliness, humility, mercy, and righteousness. The Ten Commandments summarize God's teaching to his people. Jesus gives us a new law that builds on the old. Before it was "You shall not..."; now it is, "Blessed are you when..." He calls us to greater happiness, greater blessing, but it comes with a challenge. Saint Augustine says that Jesus went up the mountain to preach the Beatitudes because he was preaching a higher moral doctrine: "greater precepts of righteousness."

The new law contradicts what our wounded human nature tends to think and feel. We are challenged to believe blessings can come from tears, meekness,

and poverty; that living meekly leads to strength and security. Appreciating these truths requires transforming our minds and hearts. Faith is required. Deeply desiring and living in the right does bring satisfaction. There is consolation in mourning the things that sadden Christ's heart.

If we live by the Beatitudes, many will treat us more generously. We know people who are merciful, and we are quick to show them mercy. When our hearts are clean, we can see God more clearly. Those who seek and create peace are considered by all to be children of God. They are not without trials and suffering, but they are blessed and happy.

Christ calls us to store up treasures in heaven, spiritual blessings that cannot be taken away. Even if we experience difficulty, we will still receive the highest and greatest gift: the kingdom of heaven. +

## Sunday Readings

### **Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13**

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, / who have observed his law; / Seek justice, seek humility.

### **1 Corinthians 1:26-31**

God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong.

### **Matthew 5:1-12a**

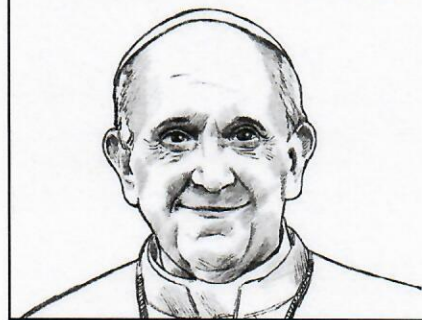
[Jesus said,] "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

*Jesus gives us a new law that builds on the old. Before it was "You shall not..."; now it is, "Blessed are you when...."*

## A Word from Pope Francis

What does...*blessed* mean? The original term does not mean one with a full belly... but rather it is a person who is in a condition of grace, who progresses in God's grace and progresses on God's path: patience, poverty, service to others, comfort....Those who advance in these things are happy and shall be blessed.

General Audience, January 29, 2020



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### ONE QUESTION REFLECTION

- Do I really believe the messages of the Beatitudes?
- How does believing the Beatitudes make a difference in how I live?



# Softening Christianity

By Fr. John F. Kavanaugh, SJ

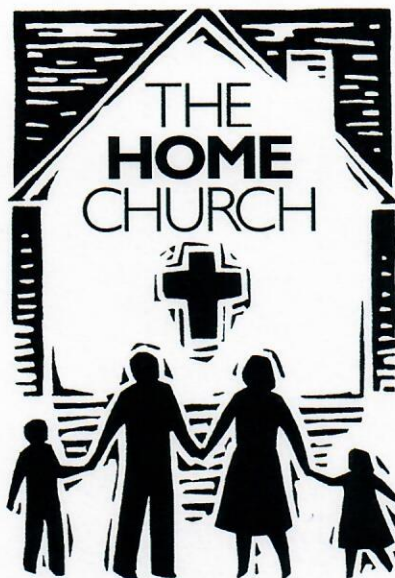
If we are to judge by the Sermon on the Mount, even Jesus, who is God with us, has a view of human affairs thoroughly at odds with our own. If we have to tune out the prophets' mistrust of humankind, imagine the skills of repression we must employ to ignore Christ's rejection of our every human impulse.

The benighted Nietzsche was clever enough to see the terrible truth in the Sermon on the Mount. What Jesus proposes is a bald reversal of human nature. Nietzsche knew that every last one of us wants wealth abounding and a full stomach. We dread suffering and tears. Being hated, ostracized, and insulted by others is among our greatest nightmares.

But Jesus deemed such conditions blessed. We are to rejoice if we are poor and hungry. We are to take delight in our tears and accept gladly our rejection by the powers of the age. This outright rejection of natural wisdom and desire so infuriated Nietzsche that he raged at those who might dare to follow Christ.

Perhaps the most constant failure of Christians is our reluctance to take our own gospels seriously and accept them in their entirety. We have an uncanny ability to block out those portions of Scripture that challenge our prejudices and to magnify those that confirm our own advantage.

A question much ignored these days is whether our faith has anything to do with justice, economics, poverty, or other



sociopolitical issues. We have pried open a yawning gap between the world of faith and the world of "real" issues. As a result, we never have to worry about changing our behavior or confronting our culture. This is quite strange for a people that contends that its way is the way of the Lord Jesus.

Nietzsche realized that there is something in Christianity dreadfully at odds with our natural impulse. He would never settle for some watered-down, feel-good Jesus who pals along with us in our strutting.

Unfortunately, Christians have done just that. Rather than rejecting outright Christ's teachings, we soften and suffocate them with the pillows of our more realistic wisdom. As the great

English writer and theologian Dorothy Sayers observed, we have snared the lion of Judah, trimmed his claws, and turned him into a domesticated kitten. +

Excerpted from *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter* by John F. Kavanaugh, SJ. Visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org) to learn more and review our list of *Daybreaks* authors, including Fr. Ron Rolheiser, Sr. Dianne Bergant, Fr. Daniel Horan, and others.

Henri Nouwen writes: Jean Vanier, who founded a worldwide network of communities for mentally disabled people, [said] Jesus did not say, "Blessed are those who care for the poor," but "Blessed are the poor." As simple as this remark may seem, it offers the key to the kingdom. I asked Vanier: "How do you find the strength to see so many people each day and listen to their many problems and pains?" He smiled and said: "They show me Jesus and give me life." Here lies the...mystery of Christian service: those who serve Jesus in the poor will be fed by him whom they serve. +

Excerpted from *Henri Nouwen: In My Own Words*, © 2001 Liguori Publications, 825170.

## PRAYER

*Gracious God, you who have blessed us so richly, please give us the grace to be a blessing to others. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

The Redemptorists

## WEEKDAY READINGS

January 30—February 4

**Monday, Weekday:**

Heb 11:32–40 / Mk 5:1–20

**Tuesday, St. John Bosco:**

Heb 12:1–4 / Mk 5:21–43

**Wednesday, Weekday:**

Heb 12:4–7, 11–15 / Mk 6:1–6

**Thursday, Presentation of the Lord: Mal 3:1–4 /**


Heb 2:14–18 / Lk 2:22–40 or 2:22–32

**Friday, Weekday:**

Heb 13:1–8 / Mk 6:14–29

**Saturday, Weekday:**

Heb 13:15–17, 20–21 / Mk 6:30–34

Bringing Home  
the Word   
January 29, 2023

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