

Year A - 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 5:1-12

Blessed are the poor in spirit.



When Jesus saw the crowds,
he went up on the side of a mountain and sat down.
Jesus' disciples gathered around him, and he taught them:
"God blesses those people who depend only on him.
They belong to the kingdom of heaven!
"God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort!
"God blesses those people who are humble. The earth will belong to them!
"God blesses those people who want to obey him more than to eat or drink.
They will be given what they want!
"God blesses those people who are merciful. They will be treated with mercy!
"God blesses those people whose hearts are pure. They will see him!
"God blesses those people who make peace. They will be called his children!
God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right.
They belong to the kingdom of heaven.
"God will bless you when people insult you, mistreat you,
and tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of me.
Be happy and excited! You will have a great reward in heaven."



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God blesses...



Introduction

- Jesus teaches what it means to be truly happy.
- Today's gospel is the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and we usually refer to it as the Beatitudes. The message it contains is in sharp contrast to the messages the disciples were used to hearing and those we hear in our society today.

Message

- God wants us all to be happy. But true happiness comes from inside us, when our hearts are filled with God's love and goodness.
- This gospel seems back to front. The people that Jesus tells us that 'God blesses', or in some translations as 'happy', are not the people that we would normally think of as being 'blessed' or 'happy'.
- Jesus is saying that God's favour is on those who grieve, are humble, whose hearts are pure, who make peace, are treated badly for doing right...
- Jesus tells us what kinds of people will be blessed by God and also what will happen to them, e.g. God blesses those who grieve. They will find comfort!
- God blesses each of us because God loves us unconditionally .



Discussion

- Begin by checking with the children if there are any words or phrases that they don't understand. Also check if there are any words or phrases that stood out for them
- If you got some presents at Christmas, I wonder how you felt when you opened them. Presents can sometimes make us feel happy for a while but sometimes we get tired of our things and wish we had something new.
- I wonder what could make you happy forever
- Today Jesus shares with us the secret of being happy forever and it seems upside down in a way. The things he tells us will make us happy seem to be the opposite to what we are used to hearing.
- What kinds of people did Jesus say would be happy?
- I wonder what can you do for someone who is sad? Or hungry or thirsty? Or is poor? Or afraid to stand up for what they believe in?
- I wonder what you can do to help Jesus' message come alive this week?