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Wednesday's Gospel: The Path of the Beatitudes

Gospel for Wednesday in the
23rd Week of Ordinary Time,
and commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 6:20-26*)

And Jesus lifted up his eyes on his
disciples, and said:

“Blessed are you poor, for yours is
the kingdom of God.

“Blessed are you that hunger now,
for you shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh.

“Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

“But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.

“Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger.

“Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

“Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

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Commentary

The well-known passage of the Beatitudes that Saint Luke recounts here begins by telling us that Jesus “lifted up his eyes on his disciples.” Our Lord looks at us and tells us that a greater happiness exists than what we had ever imagined. He teaches us that we are called to a much higher and deeper happiness – a happiness that cannot be threatened by suffering and sorrow.

Certainly these words of our Lord can be disconcerting. But, at the same time, they give us a lot of light on what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Pope Francis tells us that the Beatitudes are “the Christian’s identity card.”^[1]

They are the path for following Christ, for identifying ourselves with Him through love. In following our Lord in the middle of the world, in the midst of our ordinary work, we

will encounter our Lord in poverty and hunger, in tears and persecution.

The poverty and hunger of not having the material means we need or work; in sorrow and weeping in the face of events that break our heart; in not being understood and even being persecuted for following Christ. These are realities that are present in the daily life of every Christian.

But in undergoing them, it may help us to remember, as our Lord tells us in this Gospel passage, that the final word is always divine, not human. The poor and the hungry will be satisfied; those who weep will be comforted; those who are persecuted will have a great reward in heaven.

^[1] Pope Francis, Morning Mass in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, Monday, June 9, 2014. *L'Osservatore Romano*, weekly ed. in

Spanish language, no. 24, Friday June
13, 2014.

Sebastián Puyal

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