

## **6<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, Cycle C: Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

Do you feel that you are "blest"? Now, I don't know about you, but when I look back at my life and the current position that I'm in, I find it impossible to be anything other than grateful. I believe that many of you may feel the same way. For we as a nation have a rather elevated standard of living when compared to other places in the world. Not many in the world have a better life style than we do. And for all of this, I would have to say that nearly all of us feel "blest".

In the new age of "spirituality" in which we are now living, the language of "blessedness" is rather in vogue. That is, people are more willing to talk about a world beyond this one that we currently see. Even people who are not overtly religious or have been in a 12-step program will often speak of a "higher power". And we hear it over and over again as people describe their lives as "blest".

Now I ask you to think for a moment and recall your most "blest" day? Maybe it was the day you got married or gave birth to your first child. Perhaps, it was the day your life was spared on the battlefield or the day you got a big promotion. Whatever and whenever, I'm sure that it made a big impression on you. And if you will recall, you probably felt close to God that day.

It shouldn't surprise us then, when we look back on those "blest" moments that they have a common denominator. They were all good times, happy times and even enviable times. Those most "blest" of days are generally considered by most of us as incredibly joyful times. Thus, we can only be a little confused and perplexed when we hear a Scripture passage proclaimed like our Gospel Reading for today.

Oh, it's a familiar theme, that's for sure. However, it's not the Sermon on the Mount that we find in Matthew's Gospel. Today's Reading comes from the Sermon on the Plain from Luke's Gospel. And although they parallel one another in many ways, it is in Luke's Gospel that we discover a series of admonishments or "woes" revealed. Now, no matter how many times we have heard this particular Reading, these words tend to make us squirm just a little. We might even ask ourselves: What is God trying to show us, reveal to us or tell us about the world and our actions?

The discomfort that I feel when I hear this passage and maybe the discomfort that you experience may be coming from God as he tries to make me more aware of who I am and how I could be doing more than I'm currently willing to do. This uneasiness that we feel from this Gospel Reading may be the action of the Holy Spirit struggling to make us become our best, be more faithful and be more God-like.

It's when I more closely follow and empty myself like Jesus and I lay down my life for others--- that's when I discover his love and acquire a feeling of true "blessedness". It's then that I may have the courage to examine my life a little more carefully and heed the warnings that we heard in our Gospel reading today.

"Woe to you who are rich" - Maybe I need to start being a little more generous.

"Woe to you who are filled now" – Maybe I need to start saying "no" to some things in my life.

"Woe to you when all speak well of you" – Maybe I need to speak out more about injustice in the world and swallow my ego.

It's when we can start to live for others and put aside our egos, it's when we can stop counting the cost that's when we can experience a joy in our lives beyond our greatest expectations. No more rat races, no more keeping up with the Jones' or the Rodriguez', no more judging ourselves by the number of our accomplishments or the lack thereof, but simply by placing our faith in God then we will recall that we are loved beyond all measure. God is watching over us despite the craziness of this world.

If we would but follow God's plan in which we live for, in and with him that's when we will discover what it is to be truly "blest", to be "blest" for all eternity.