

Blessed are they (blessed are you) who are persecuted: we take up our crosses and follow Jesus, committing ourselves to everything He has taught us, even enduring persecution for His sake, but doing so joyfully because we know He has promised us eternal life in our Father's Kingdom.

With Christ living in us we become conformed to His image of peace and love. In the image of Christ we become divine children of His Father

"The only ladder to heaven is the Cross"
-- St. Rose of Lima

Blessed are the peacemakers

Our old hearts are replaced with the pure heart of Jesus our Redeemer. We will see God's face in the faces of everyone with whom we share His love.

Blessed are the pure in heart

When we show our mercy and forgiveness we will be given mercy and forgiveness through Jesus' perfect Sacrifice on the Cross

Blessed are the merciful

Seek the King of Righteousness to be filled by Christ in the Eucharist

← **Turning Point**

Blessed are those who hunger & thirst for righteousness

Yield our will to God's will for our lives = renewal → inherit "the Land"; the Church = dominion to bind and loose

Blessed are the meek

Mourn own sins and world sin = purification → comfort & strength, Reconciliation

Blessed are those who mourn

Those who acknowledge their need for God → Kingdom of Heaven = eternal life promised through Baptism and faithfully living the Law of love on a life time journey of faith

Blessed are the poor in spirit

The Progression of the Beatitudes

Beatitudes contain 7 or 8 (depending on how you count them) successive fundamental spiritual states that every Christian must strive to achieve. The Beatitudes must be lived fully and completely just as the 10 Commandments have to be lived in their entirety. **Gospel of St. Matthew 5:1-11**

SUMMARY OF THE BEATITUDES

<p>BLESSING #1 <i>BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT</i></p>	<p>We're "poor" in spirit because we acknowledge that we are not self-sufficient and that we need God in our lives. We come to Him in childlike faith, knowing that we cannot make it on our own without Him.</p>
<p>PROMISE #1 <i>FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN</i></p>	<p>When we acknowledge the sovereignty of God over our lives we discover that He does not save us because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done for us. If we persevere in faith we are promised the gift of eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.</p>
<p>BLESSING #2 <i>BLESSED ARE THEY WHO MOURN</i></p>	<p>As we yield to spiritual childhood admitting poverty of spirit kneeling in His presence, the more clearly we see God. The more clearly we see God the more we become aware of our imperfections. We become humbled in His presence and we feel the burden of our sins. The result is that we mourn our sins. Repentance and genuine sorrow for our sins purifies us. To mourn sin is a natural outflow of surrender to God through "poverty of spirit".</p>
<p>PROMISE #2 <i>FOR THEY WILL BE COMFORTED</i></p>	<p>Not only does the Holy Spirit comfort us in our sorrow and repentance but through living the Sacraments of our faith He gives us the strength to resist sin and also the strength to stand against sin in our community and in the world. We bear our suffering with a spirit of atonement, reconciliation and love and the result is comfort and strength.</p>
<p>BLESSING #3 <i>BLESSED ARE THE MEEK</i></p>	<p>Christian "meekness" is not weakness. It is based on humility which is expressed in the New Testament as the supernatural quality that is the outgrowth of a renewed nature. This renewal can only come when we surrender our lives to God and seek His divine will in our lives. It is this third step, "<i>blessed are the meek</i>" which renews us and places us as a useful tool in the hands of the Master of the universe.</p>
<p>PROMISE #3 <i>FOR THEY WILL INHERIT THE LAND</i></p>	<p>No longer does Satan have the power to dominate us because we have been reborn through Christian baptism into the family of God. We belong to the God who created and dominates the earth, and as His children and his heirs we inherit the earth and the universal kingdom He has established on earth to lead the nations into the family of God, the Catholic Church.</p>

**PROGRESSION OF
THE BEATITUDES**
“BLESSED ARE.....”

**THE TURNING
POINT**

5.
Merciful –when
we show our
mercy and
forgiveness →
we will
be given mercy
and forgiveness
through Jesus’
perfect Sacrifice
on the Cross

4.
Hunger & thirst for
righteousness →
Filled with the King
King of
Righteousness =
Christ in the
Eucharist

3.
Meek—yield our
will to God’s will
for our lives =
renewal → inherit
“the Land”, the
Church =
dominion to bind
and loose

2.
Mourn –mourn own
sins and world sin =
purification →
comfort & strength,
Reconciliation

1.
Poor in spirit –those
who acknowledge
their need for God
→ Kingdom of
Heaven = eternal
life promised
through Baptism

“The only ladder to heaven is the Cross” St. Rose of Lima

Handout #3, Lesson 4:

THE COVENANT ORDEAL

(an individual must have knowledge of what is God's will for his life
in righteous living when facing a covenant ordeal)

GOD'S PLAN

THE WORD OF GOD/
CHURCH DOCTRINE

SUFFERING/
PERSONAL LOSS/
SACRIFICE

RESULT

SUCCESS IN
ETERNAL TERMS

THE WORLD'S PLAN

EARTHLY VALUES

EARTHLY
REWARDS

RESULT

SUCCESS IN
EARTHLY TERMS

EXAMPLES OF COVENANT ORDEAL

ADAM & EVE
(Genesis 3:1-24)

FAILURE

ABRAHAM & ISAAC
(Genesis 22:1-14)

SUCCESS

JESUS AT GETHSEME
(Matt. 28:36-46; Mk. 14:32-42; Lk. 22:39-46)

SUCCESS

PETER AT THE JEWISH TRIAL OF JESUS
(Matt. 26:69-75; Mk.14:66-72; Lk. 22:55-62; Jn. 18:16-27)

FAILURE

STEPHEN AT HIS TRIAL BEFORE THE
JEWISH SANHEDRIN
(Acts 6:8-60)

SUCCESS

PETER AT HIS CRUCIFIXION
(after fleeing Rome returned to die as a martyr for Christ)
(*The Acts of Peter*)
(See: www.earlychristianwriters.com/actspeter)

SUCCESS