

## 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

### GOSPEL

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Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon. Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

‘How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God. Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied. Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.

Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

‘But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry. Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep.

‘Alas for you when the world speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.’

(Luke 6:17; 20–26)

### DID YOU KNOW?

Points of interest and Catholic lore

- This text is commonly known as ‘the Beatitudes’, which derives from the Latin word meaning ‘blessing’..
- Both Matthew and Luke report this famous sermon of Jesus; however, their reports have slight differences.
- The main difference is that Luke balances the ‘blessings’ with a series of ‘woes’, which are directed at would-be disciples who are still focusing on the signs of success in this world.

### EXPLORING THE WORD

Luke carefully describes who is present at this gathering, which includes the newly formed twelve special friends of Jesus, as well as many other disciples, and both Jews and foreigners who come out of curiosity. Although Jesus’ words are meant for all, they are especially addressed to his disciples.

Luke does not address ‘the poor in spirit’ or ‘those who hunger and thirst for justice’ as Matthew does. Luke focuses more on the experiences of those who are literally poor, hungry and suffering. These people were persecuted as part of the status quo of their day—and they were the ones who were open to the new order that Jesus announced in his preaching of the kingdom. The powerful, who directed the established order of the day, could not bear such a challenge to their own position; therefore, they will ‘drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal’ for preaching the new order of God’s kingdom. This is the challenge that disciples must face.

- Jesus’ words challenge our assumptions of what we need to be happy and blessed. How do you feel about this?
- Reflect on what makes you truly happy.

### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Opportunities for group discussion and personal prayer

- What are your ultimate pursuits?
- What would you see reversed in our present order?
- Choose one of the Beatitudes that specifically applies to you and live it out this week. Alternatively, if you feel that the ‘woes’ are directed at you, take steps to make yourself a little less comfortable or switch your attention to other matters.
- Remember a time of difficulty or suffering in your own life. Was there a hidden blessing for you in that experience? How and when did you come to realise the blessing that is born from pain? Share your stories.
- This week, repeat the response to the psalm often:

*Happy are they who hope in the Lord.*

