

## Closing Prayer

O God,  
who alone can satisfy our deepest hungers,  
protect us from the lure of wealth and power;  
move our hearts to seek first your kingdom,  
that ours may be the security and joy  
of those who place their trust in you.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

*Opening prayers* · Ordinary Time 6, Year C<sup>2</sup>

CPL • LBC Year C Proper 02.odt • 2023-03-08

<sup>2</sup> *Opening prayers* : scripture-related collects for the years A, B and C from the sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999.

## Proper 2

*Sunday between 11 and 17 February, inclusive, if earlier than the Second Sunday before Lent* ·

The Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Principal Service readings

Jeremiah 17.5-10

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord

Psalm 1

Blessed are those who have not sought the counsel of the wicked

1 Corinthians 15.12-20

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile

Luke 6.17-26

The Lukan Beatitudes and Woes

### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,  
speak to our hearts in the stillness,  
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,  
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;  
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

### Gospel Reading

#### *Beatitudes and Woes*

<sup>17</sup>He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>18</sup>They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. <sup>19</sup>And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

<sup>20</sup>Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

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

<sup>21</sup>‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup>‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup>Rejoice on that day and leap

for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

<sup>24</sup>But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

<sup>25</sup>Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup>Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

Luke 6.17-26 NRSV<sup>1</sup>

## Comments and Questions

Whereas Matthew has the 'Sermon on the Mount', Luke has the 'Sermon on the Plain' (6.17). In this, Christ preaches to us in the everyday plain of our existence, ordinary life. This sermon contains particular sayings of Jesus. It is possible that it contains a summary of other sermons. It presupposes the basic teaching of Jesus, that is, it is assumed that Jesus is teaching those who already believe in him.

Luke's audience is contains many gentiles, so Luke has to explain things quite fully, especially about prayer. Luke's gospel is filled with images of Jesus praying.

He reign of God is changed because of the 'good news' (*kerygma*) of Jesus Christ. It had always been understood that God's reign would be established when God came to rule as King. In the beatitudes the word for *reign* is a verb; it is not a place. The implication of the sermon is that God's rule is already happening, and so we should live accordingly. For Luke's Jesus we preach by how we live.

By placing the sermon on the plain, Luke shows that the gospel message is inclusive, it is for everybody.

Jesus takes the blessings conferred on those who suffer at the bottom, reverses the blessings, and turns them into woes or curses for those who

enjoy favour at the top. God is at work: the mighty are cast down, the lowly are lifted up.

## Quotations

### 1

I never find 'Blessed are the rich', or 'Blessed be the noble', but 'Blessed be the meek', and, 'Blessed be the poor', and, 'Blessed be the mourners, for they shall be comforted'. And yet, O God!, most carry themselves so, as if they not only desired, but even feared to be blessed.

*Life of George Herbert / Izaak Walton. 1670*

### 2

Now peacemaking is a divine work. For peace means reconciliation, and God is the author of peace and of reconciliation. ... It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the particular blessing which attaches to peacemakers is that "they shall be called sons of God." For they are seeking to do what their Father has done, loving people with his love.

*The message of the Sermon on the Mount / John R. W. Stott. 1978*

### 3

When God wants to sort out the world, as the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount make clear, he doesn't send in the tanks. He sends in the meek, the broken, the justice hungry, the peacemakers, the pure-hearted and so on.

*The challenge of Jesus: rediscovering who Jesus was and is / N.T. Wright. 1999*

## Related topics

*For further study:*

Morality; moral decision making; justice

<sup>1</sup> *New Revised Standard Version Bible* is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.