

# [65] **FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME** A

## **FIRST READING**

In your midst I will leave a humble and a lowly people.

A reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

**I**f you humbly obey the Lord,  
then come and worship him.  
If you right and are humble,  
you might be safe on that day when the Lord shows his anger.  
I won't destroy any of you that are truly humble  
and come to me for safety.  
The people of Israel who survive will live right  
and refuse to tell lies.  
They will eat in peace,  
and no one will bother them.

The word of the Lord.

## **RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

146:6d-7ab, 7c-9a

*R. (Matthew 5:3) Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!*

God always keeps his word.  
He gives justice to the poor  
and food to the hungry.

*R. Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!*

The Lord sets prisoners free  
and heals blind eyes.  
He gives a helping hand  
to everyone who falls.  
The Lord loves good people  
and looks after strangers.

*R. Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!*

## SECOND READING

God has chosen what is weak by human reckoning.

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians 1:26-31

**M**y dear friends,  
remember what you were when God chose you.  
The people of this world didn't think that many of you were wise.  
Only a few of you were in places of power,  
and not many of you came from important families.

But God chose the foolish things of this world to put the wise to shame.  
He chose the weak things of this world to put the powerful to shame.

What the world thinks is worthless, useless, and nothing at all  
is what God has used  
to destroy what the world considers important.  
God did all this to keep anyone from bragging to him.  
You are God's children.  
He sent Christ Jesus to save us  
and to make us wise, acceptable, and holy.  
So if you want to brag,  
do what the Scriptures say and brag about the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

## ALLELUIA

Matthew 5:12a

*R. Alleluia, alleluia.*

Rejoice and be glad;  
your reward will be great in heaven.

*R. Alleluia, alleluia.*

## GOSPEL

Blessed are the poor in spirit.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 5:1-12ab

**W**hen Jesus saw the crowds,

he went up on the side of a mountain and sat down.

Jesus' disciples gathered around him, and he taught them:

“God blesses those people who depend only on him.  
They belong to the kingdom of heaven!

“God blesses those people who grieve.  
They will find comfort!

“God bless those people who are humble.  
The earth will belong to them!

“God blesses those people who want to obey him  
more than to eat or drink.  
They will be given what they want!

“God blesses those people who are merciful.  
They will be treated with mercy!

“God blesses those people whose hearts are pure.  
They will see him!

“God bless those people who make peace.  
They will be called his children!

“God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right.  
They belong to the kingdom of heaven.

“God will bless you when people insult you, mistreat you,  
and tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of me.  
Be happy and excited!  
You will have a great reward in heaven.”

The gospel of the Lord.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A

### Opening Prayer:

(In order to “get God's attention” let’s shout out the beginning greeting):

### HEY GOD!

Please keep us safe and always on the lookout for Your Son, Jesus, in everyone we meet. Help us to be kind, sweet and always thinking about ways to help other people rather than drawing attention to ourselves. We know You will bless our efforts. Thank You for Jesus and all the things He told us so we can live life right. Amen.

### Readings:

First: Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13  
Response: Psalm 146: 6d-7ab, 7c-9a  
Second: Corinthians 1: 26-31  
Gospel: Matthew: 5: 1-12ab

### Reflection and Discussion:

We just heard over and over the words, “God blesses those people.” So, first of all, let’s talk about blessings. What are they? (Good things that make us happy.) What is one blessing in your life? (Parents, new bicycle or skateboard, a birthday party at an indoor water park, best friend(s), maybe even Jesus.)

Jesus told his friends lots of things in this story that would bring them happiness, too, but they were *really* different than some of the stuff you just mentioned. He was talking about ways for his friends to act toward other people. He said God would bless them or, put in a different way, they would be happy and feel like saying thank you to God ALL the time if they lived as Jesus said they should.

Let’s talk about things you do that make other people happy. (Play with younger sibling, be sweet to my parents and do what they say, tell the truth and not tattle on someone, share my toys, respect the teachers and do my schoolwork.)

Can you even imagine going one step further and being on the lookout for chances to help other people? That is really what Jesus is asking of us. He loves us so much and wants us to know that if we can possibly find ways to be helpful, that’s a very good thing and we will know God’s blessings all our life. You have to keep your eyes wide open in order to live these **Be-Attitudes**. Simply put, they are ways to **BE**.

Here are a few examples. Give me a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” to show if you think you could possibly do this action.

1. Give your mom a hug if you see she’s sad.
2. Listen to your friend tell a story without thinking about the story YOU want to tell.
3. If you’re helping rake leaves and a friend asks you to play, you say you can’t until after the job is all done.
4. When you know you’ve hurt someone’s feelings, say “I’m sorry” right away instead of waiting to be told to say it by your parents.
5. During recess, play with someone in your class that no one else wants to play with, or sit with them at lunch.

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**Activity:**

Give each child four pipe cleaners. (These are available in multi-color packs at craft shops.) Have them shape a pair of glasses and put them on. Now everyone is ready to listen and “be on the lookout for **BE-attitudes**.” Have the group sit on the floor in a circle. Ask them to close their eyes and just for a minute or two think about one good thing they plan to do because of what was talked about today. Now toss something (bean bag, sponge ball or little stuffed animal) to someone and ask them to tell the rest of the group how they will be more like Jesus and live the BE-attitudes. Ask the kids to begin with “God blesses me when I....” That person tosses the article to someone else, and so on, until everyone, including the teacher, has had a chance to play.

**Closing Prayer:**

Thank you, Jesus, for teaching us about the way to be. We need Your help, please, and ask that You keep us safe. Amen.