



## *Beatitudes and Becoming Saints*

1. Read together the profile of a saint profile that you, your family or your group have agreed upon as someone you would like to learn more about. Go to <http://www.excitingholiness.org/first-edition/index.cgi?ix1.html> or go to the parish website and download Saints of the Anglican Liturgical Year
2. Read the Gospel for the Feast of All Saints: Matthew 5:1-12. Use the Study notes below to learn more about the spirituality of sanctity and follow the study notes.
3. Identify which beatitude(s) best describes the saint you have been exploring together.
4. Develop a poster for your saint or holy person using drawings or pictures from magazines that illustrate what he or she stood for (e.g., Dorothy Day and serving the poor, St. Paul and proclaiming the Good News, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and teaching, etc.). Put the name of the saint on the poster and find several pictures that illustrate the life and actions of the saint.
5. Complete the following sentences and then write them on the saint poster:
  - *(Saint or holy person) wants us to live our faith by....*
  - *(Saint or holy person) shared with the world the gift of ....*
  - *If (Saint or holy person) were here today, he or she would tell us to....*
  - *If we want to follow the example of (Saint or holy person), we should...*
  - Write the appropriate Beatitude (or key words) on your saint poster.
  - Think about the Beatitude gift that God gave the saint on your poster. Think about how you could use that same gift in your own way in your daily life. Come up with one specific example of how you can use

that gift and write it on your poster. Start your sentence with: "I can use  
the gift of \_\_\_\_\_ by

\_\_\_\_\_.

# *The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10)*

(by James Merhaut, published by St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2006.)

## **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:**

The poor in spirit know that everything is a gift from God. They know that they are dependent on God, not material possessions, for their security. They are not rugged individuals who claim that they don't need anybody. They receive God into their lives by graciously accepting the help of others.

## **Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted:**

Those who mourn are aware that something is wrong. Their mourning motivates them to relieve the suffering in the world and in themselves caused by evil. They who cannot or will not mourn shield themselves from the suffering in our world and pretend it's not there. They shut off their emotions, so that they will not have to feel the pain, and they believe that if there is no suffering then there is no reason for them to act on behalf of those who suffer. Those who mourn feel their own pain and the pain of others, and work to alleviate that pain. The depths of pain can be the pathway to great peace and joy if one is open to the gift of mourning.

## **Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth:**

The meek embrace the gift of physical powerlessness. They have the courage to act without the false security of weapons. They are careful to unleash their anger at proper times and in proper ways. They allow God to control their emotions rather than allowing their emotions to control themselves. They do not seek to get their way by overpowering others. They are patient. They do not jump to quick solutions to problems; rather, they will take time to understand before speaking and acting.

## **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled:**

They who hunger and thirst for righteousness want goodness and justice, especially for the poor, more than anything. They feel as though they will die without it. They want their relationship with God to be right, they want human relationships to be right, and they want all the relationships of creation to be right. Whether they succeed or not in getting these relationships right is not the point, they are blessed because they want it bad, and they work for it.

## **Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy:**

The merciful are those who refuse to perpetuate a cycle of violence. We are merciful when we have a right to punish another person and we choose not to exercise that right. Merciful people act with kindness where others might seek

revenge. When the merciful call others to responsibility, they do so with kindness and compassion, not with an intention to destroy the offender.

**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God:**

The pure in heart are motivated by God alone. They give their heart to God and are given the gift of seeing as God sees. They see the sacredness and essential beauty of God's creation. Each person they encounter is seen first and foremost as a beloved child of God. Seeing another person in a negative or judgmental way is a sign that one's heart is not pure, and one's vision of the other's basic goodness is clouded.

**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God:**

*Shalom* is the biblical word for peace, but *shalom* is not passive peace. It means much more than just the absence of conflict. The suffix, "makers", implies that peace must be constructed actively. One cannot say, "I will keep peace by not getting involved." Involvement is necessary for peacemaking. Peacemakers work actively to bring about the justice for which others hunger and thirst.

**Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:**

Jesus did not come to make life easy for us; he came to invite humanity to greatness. Being blessed by God inevitably will lead to persecution in one way or another. God's gifts to each person are unique and can be easily misunderstood by those who do not appreciate diversity. We often face criticism when we live according to the gifts God has given us. Suffering persecution for the sake of goodness is one way that we carry the cross of Christ. Our consolation is not in an easy life; our consolation is in the knowledge that we are living for righteousness' sake - we are living for the kingdom of heaven.

# *Discovering Our Own Beatitude Gifts*

## Do I have the gift of being poor in spirit?

- You have experienced the gift of being poor in spirit if you can draw a picture or write about a time when you really needed help, you asked for help, and you received help from someone who loves you.
- Think about all the times you prayed this past week. Write the number of times you prayed on this line \_\_\_\_\_

People who are poor in spirit pray a lot to God because they know that God means more than anything else in life.

- Write down or draw a picture of your most prized possession.

- How can you share your prized possession with others?

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People who are poor in spirit enjoy things, but they love people more than things.

# *Discovering Our Own Beatitude Gifts*

## Do I have the gift of mourning?

- Draw a picture of something or write about something that makes you sad.

People who have the gift of mourning feel very sad when something goes wrong.

- Write one thing you could do to help change the thing that makes you sad.

# *Discovering Our Own Beatitude Gifts*

## Do I have the gift of being meek?

- Think about a time when you were angry and you said something mean or maybe you even hit someone.
- Describe or draw a picture of how you could have expressed your anger in a better way.

People who have the gift of being meek get angry about things, but they don't let their anger make them do things that they know are not right.

# *Discovering Our Own Beatitude Gifts.*

## Do I have the gift of hungering and thirsting for righteousness?

- How can the world have peace?
- How can poverty be eliminated from the world?
- What should our relationship with creation be like?
- What should our relationship with God be like?

If it was easy for you to answer these questions in simple, clear, and straightforward language, then you may have the gift of hungering and thirsting for righteousness.





# *Discovering Our Own Beatitude Gifts.*

## Do I have the gift of being a peacemaker?

- Is there a war going on in your family, in your community, or in our world? Draw a picture of that war or describe who is fighting and why they are fighting.

- What can you do to help stop the war?

If you are willing to get involved to help stop the war, you may have the gift of being a peacemaker.