

# TRINITY NEWS

JANUARY 30, 2011

## Epiphany IV The Beatitudes: A Thinking Heart and a Feeling Mind

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) reverse the way of looking at principles of instruction. The word "beatitude" means, "blessed" or "happy". It is not so much Torah, "lawful instruction", but *halachah*, "principles of life drawn from experience". The life situation or state of the person comes first rather than laws governing the state of the person. So, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the people of gentle strength, blessed are those who hunger for thirst of righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the cleansed in heart, blessed are the peacemakers; and blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake."

All of these will be rewarded by seeing God, experiencing the Reign of Heaven, being comforted, inheriting the earth, finding fulfilment, discovering peace, being called "the children of God". It is only when we put the rewards together that we see that they are such a comprehensive treatment of the needs of the human soul. The Reign of God includes the redemption of our worst enemies, and the hope of inner and outer peace for ourselves and others whose presence charms, strengthens and nurtures our own pilgrimages. It is a broad sweep of the whole human condition and it leaves nothing out.

The Beatitudes could serve as an introduction to all of the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. His recognition of the "poor in spirit" cuts across all layers of society. It is not a specific recognition of the little ones, the *anawim* of Israel, but it does place them amongst the rich and famous as a model of how all life might be lived (5:3). They are more clearly in mind when he speaks of "the people of unassailable gentle strength" who "will inherit the earth" (5:5). "Meek" is a poor translation of the Greek word *praeis*, because "*meek*" has lost its currency and no longer has its former meaning of "true humility". Powerbrokers do not fear other power brokers. They can deal with them by reciprocal force. But they are afraid of the people of "unassailable gentle strength" in the world. When these gentle ones summon up their courage and decide to use people power by standing in the face of guns and violence and oppression they can topple governments which practice such things. It is much more difficult to stand up to someone who is gently assertive. Such gentle passive resistance refuses to go away.

"Blessed are the pure in heart" (5:5) may also be a misleading translation. The word *katharos* can mean "cleansed", and that is surely closer to the teaching of both Jesus and Paul. Both of those teachers are focused on the cleansing of the total person in our inevitable confrontation with God. Meeting God is not a walk in the park as some current spiritualities would seem to imply. Stephanie Dowrick's "Seeking the Sacred" explores some of the most helpful aspects of current spiritualities. She quotes an Indian sage: "Wisdom teaches me I am nothing. Love teaches me I am everything. Between these two poles my life flows."

I like Dowrick's own words about a "thinking heart and a feeling mind". The teaching of Jesus of Nazareth is about true motivations, looking beneath the surface of outward words and deeds and self-presentations. He teaches us to have a "thinking heart and a feeling mind". This is nowhere more apparent than in the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-12, always useful as a preface to all of his teaching.

**Bishop Arthur Jones**

Your prayers are asked in our healing ministry for Diana Croyston, JPeter, Beryl Tanner, Douglas Tanner, Ron Thoburn, Suzanne Jacobson, Cena Quiapos, Ron Jacob, Bonnie SyCip, Fidelia Matthews, Jovel Llagas, Ted Whale, Ema Duhaylongsod, Emerinciana Gatela, Amy Gonzales, Carrie Angus, Augusto Natividad, Avelina Collado, Eric Williamson, Susan Dalmas, Sunny Cabanang, Jaqueline Acquiatan, Valerie Jones, Carlyn-Fern Manning, Richard Kendall, Johnny Manning Jr, Gloria Domingo, Fr. Barry Cumberland, Katsi Araneta, Emilie Nauntofte, Marian Kermanshahchi, Rosaline Soulsby, Divinagracia Benitez, Les Vye-Parminter, Wilson Teh, Rey del Rosario, Jose Songco, Gitte Volk, Cecile Gutierrez, Frances Krook, Rolando Bautista, Gabrielle Gifford, Nancy King, Len Cabili, Robert Go, Marie Cheung, Hajie Agustin.

## **TO PLAN:**

TUESDAY, Feb. 1.

- Bible Study, 10am
- Bible Study, 7:15pm (# 3 Sta. Potenciana, Urdaneta Village, Makati

THURSDAY, Feb. 3.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel

## **Next week's readings:**

Habakkuk 3:2-6,17-19

Psalms 27

1Corinthians 2:1-11

Matthew 5:13-20

**Official notice is hereby given of the upcoming parish Annual General Meeting on February 13, 2011 following the 9:30 service. Please plan to attend.**

**Committee chairpersons, please prepare your reports now for inclusion in the annual report booklet.**

**Nomination forms for vestry positions are available at the Parish Office.**

**The electoral roll is posted by the office bulletin board. Please check to see that your name is there. If there has been an oversight please let the office know.**