



NORES

Supporting Catholic Education and Formation



Education Week 10-16 October 2016. Daily Reflections for the Secondary Classroom

Each day offers a short reflection based on the Beatitudes of Christ found in chapter five of Mathew's Gospel. Each reflection focuses on a famous Christian who characterises a particular beatitude in their life. You may wish to select five of the eight beatitudes or extend the prayerful reflection into a second week. It would be good to display a picture of the chosen figure and, before the prayer, offer a few more details of that person's life and significance. You could use the prayer provided or source one of your own.

Blessed are . . .



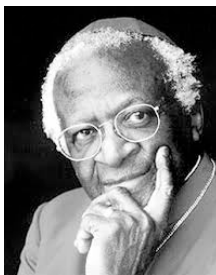
the Poor in Spirit . . .

Blessed Mother Teresa [1910-1997]

Anjez Gonxhe Bojaxhiu was, from her early childhood, a devout Christian. She joined the Loreto Nuns in Dublin when only seventeen years old. Known as Sr. Teresa, she came to India in 1928. She took training to be a Loreto sister and worked as a geography and history teacher at Saint Mary's High School for Girls in Calcutta. She felt such pity for the poor slum dwellers living opposite the convent and wanted to serve them. St. Teresa got permission from the Pope and started her mission. Indira Gandhi said of her "In this world of today, so frenetic, it is easy to forget the most essential things. Mother Teresa teaches us that love is what is most essential."

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Lord, help me to better understand the values and pride of the world and to make wise choices today as I seek to be more like you and less like my selfish-self. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



those who mourn . . .

Desmond Tutu [B 1931]

Desmond Tutu is a human rights defender and Nobel Prize winner from South Africa. He became world famous in the 1980s as an opponent of *apartheid*. He was awarded the *Nobel Prize of Peace* in 1984 for his leading role in the movement to resolve the problems of *Apartheid*. He became the first black African Archbishop in history, when he was elected as Archbishop of Cape Town. During South Africa's move toward democracy in the early 1990s, Tutu propagated the idea of South Africa as 'the Rainbow Nation'. Nelson Mandela appointed Tutu head of the 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission', which investigated allegations of human rights abuses during the apartheid era.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Lord, help me to pay attention to those around me who are suffering through loss or grief. Give me the grace to show to others the love and compassion that you have for each one of us when we are sad or lonely. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



the Meek . . .

St Theresa of Lisieux [1873 – 1897]

St Theresa became known to the world through her autobiography, "Story of a Soul". She described her life as a "little way of spiritual childhood." She lived each day with an unshakable confidence in God's love. "What matters in life," she wrote, "is not great deeds, but great love." Therese lived and taught a spirituality of attending to everyone and everything well and with love. She believed that she should love what is before her with a childlike focus and totally attentiveness. Therese's spirituality is of doing the ordinary, with extraordinary love. Living in a simple way, Theresa was an enormously powerful and strong figure. Meek but not weak!

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Lord, help me to be my best self. You know my tendency to get angry, frustrated, and impatient with others, myself and my circumstances. Almighty God, help me to be kind, merciful and strong in the best way possible. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness . . .

Rosa Parks [1913 – 2005]

Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on an Alabama city bus in December 1955. Segregation was written into law and the front of a Montgomery bus was reserved for white citizens with the seats behind them for black citizens. By refusing to give up her seat black seamstress Rosa Parks helped initiate the civil rights movement in the United States. Mrs Parks later said, 'It was just time... there was opportunity for me to take a stand to express the way I felt about being treated in that manner. I had not planned to get arrested. I had plenty to do without having to end up in jail. But when I had to face that decision, I didn't hesitate to do so because I felt that we had endured that too long'.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Lord, help me to actively make good choices today that will satisfy my deep hunger for doing right and being generous to those around me. Help me to be the best person I can be today. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



the Merciful . . .

Pope Francis [B 1936]

Throughout his public life, Pope Francis has been noted for his humility, emphasis on God's mercy, concern for the poor and commitment to interfaith dialogue. He is credited with having a humble, less formal approach to the papacy than many of those who went before him. Francis shows the power of mercy, especially to the weak and poor. So often we see him reaching out to the underprivileged and showing them compassion, not only with words but through his actions and in his leadership of the Church. 'We are not here to perform a spiritual exercise... but rather to listen to the voice of the Spirit that speaks to everyone in the Church in this, our time, which is indeed the time of mercy'.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Lord, today I offer you my hurts, anger, sadness and disappointments. Enable me to forgive as generously and consistently as you forgive me. Show me the way of your wisdom and love this day. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



the Pure in Heart . . .

Eric Liddle [1902 – 1948]

Eric Henry Liddell was a Scottish athlete, rugby union international, and missionary, who chose to uphold his religious beliefs rather than competing in an Olympic race. At the 1924 summer games in Paris, Liddell refused to run in the heats for his favoured 100 metres because they were held on a Sunday. He instead competed in the 200 and 400 metres where he won a bronze and a gold respectively. He returned to China in 1925 to serve as a missionary teacher. He remained in China for most of his life until his death in a Japanese civilian internment camp in 1945. His life and testimony is remembered around the world. His story has touched the hearts of millions through a film about him that won an Academy Award (Chariots of Fire).

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

Lord, I ask you today for a pure clean and uncluttered heart. Lord, show me what to say 'no' to, so I will have time and energy to do good to others and know you better. May your love soften and transform me to follow you in every decision I make this day. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



the Peacemakers . . .

Betty Williams [B 1943] Mairead Corrigan [B 1944]

Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan were the founders of the women's peace movement in Northern Ireland in 1976. The movement sponsored marches by women from the rival communities in the province in protest against the violence prevalent in their society at that time. They were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1976 when their efforts were credited with reducing the death toll in Northern Ireland and promoting peace in the most difficult of situations. In 1993 Mairead Corrigan said 'I respect the life of each human person, and I will never take another human life. That is my strongest identity, before any flag or religion. We need to recognize that life is sacred and that we are involved in a mystery. The human family is struggling toward a new kind of identity, allowing us to see all people as our brothers and sisters, who deserve absolute respect for their lives, opinions and welfare'.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Lord, help me to follow Jesus in bringing true peace to the world around me. Fill me with your love and courage as I step out in faith. Give me wisdom and understanding to discern how to be a conciliator and the inner confidence to follow you in being a true peacemaker today. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.



those who are Persecuted for Righteousness . . .

Dietrich Bonhoeffer [1906 – 1945]

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian and anti-Nazi dissident. His writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential, and his book 'The Cost of Discipleship' became a modern classic. Apart from his theological writings, Bonhoeffer was known for his staunch resistance to Nazi dictatorship, including vocal opposition to Hitler's euthanasia program and genocidal persecution of the Jews. He was arrested in April 1943 by the Gestapo and imprisoned at Tegel prison for one and a half years before transfer to a Nazi concentration camp. Bonhoeffer was quickly tried and then executed in April 1945 as the Nazi regime was collapsing.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Lord, fill me with courage to speak and live the truth, even when it is not popular or convenient. You have richly blessed me and given to me a purpose and calling. Your desire is that I be salt and light for others. Help me to live out the Beatitudes so that my life can bring life and joy to those around me. I place my hope in You, O Lord, and in your unfailing love. Amen.