

Blessed are You...

I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

FIRST READING (Jer 17:5-8)

Those who trust in humans

⁵Thus says the LORD:/ Cursed are those who trust in mortals,/ who make flesh their strength,/ whose hearts turn away from the LORD./ ⁶They are like a barren bush in the wasteland/ that enjoys no change of season,/ But stands in lava beds in the wilderness,/ a land, salty and uninhabited./

Those who trust in the Lord

⁷Blessed are those who **trust in the LORD**:/ the LORD will be their trust./ ⁸They are like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream:/ It does not fear heat when it comes,/ its leaves stay green;/ In the year of drought it shows no distress,/ but still produces fruit./

THE FOCUS: **Trust in the Lord**

COMMENTARY

- The text is divided into two parts:
 - Part 1: those who **trust** in humans (vv.5-6)
This describes those who trust in humans // seeks strength in flesh: cursed, like a barren bush (*simile*), enjoys no change of season, stands in a lava waste, a salt and empty earth (*cannot survive long*).
 - Part 2: those who **trust** in the Lord (vv.7-8)
This describes those who trust in the Lord // hope in the Lord: blessed, like a tree planted (*simile*), well-nourished (watered), fears not the heat for leaves stay, in drought, bears fruit.



- The Reading has a very strong word against those who do not trust in the Lord (but men): **Cursed** are they.... (they should be cut off, fruitless, ousted) (*Isinumpa*). They have no future. They do not enjoy life (no change in their lives, no seasons, all dry and boring).
- In contrast, those who trust (hope) in the Lord are strongly commended: **Blessed** are they.... (happy are they, fortunate are they... They are satisfied in their lives. They have continuous supply of energy. They survive and are productive no matter what the external conditions are.

REFLECTIONS

Each Christian should ask: whom do I really trust? In practice, one knows whether he/she trusts in the Lord or not. When one goes to the politicians more than the Lord (in prayer) for directions (no trust in the Lord). When one goes to the army general more for his/her protection (no trust in the Lord).

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6)

**BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HOPE
IN THE LORD.**

SECOND READING (1 Cor 15:12, 16-20)

^{12*}But if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some among you say there is no **resurrection of the dead**? ¹⁶For **if the dead are not raised**, neither has Christ been raised, ¹⁷and if Christ has not been raised,* your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all.

THE FOCUS: The Resurrection of the Dead

COMMENTARY

- V.12 argues that the dead will resurrect on the basis of Christ's resurrection. If we accept Christ's resurrection, we must also accept the resurrection of the dead.
- Vv.16-19 describe what happens if Christ has not resurrected, if the dead will not resurrect: Faith in vain (*sayang*). We are still in living in sin (hopeless). We are most pitiable people (*pinakakawawa*).
- V.20 affirms Christ's resurrection, first fruit of the dead.

REFLECTIONS

The faith in the resurrection gives us assurance of the resurrection of the dead.

The truth of Christ's resurrection is the key to hope, key to believe in its implications, like the resurrection of the dead. Faith in Christ's resurrection gives meaning / dignity to our Christian faith and Christian living.

GOSPEL READING (Lk 6:17, 20-26)

Setting: Plain

^{17*} And he came down with them and stood on a stretch of level ground. A great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon.

Beatitudes

²⁰ And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said: "**Blessed** are you who are poor,/ for the kingdom of God is yours./ ²¹**Blessed** are you who are now hungry,/ for you will be satisfied./ **Blessed** are you who are now weeping,/ for you will laugh./ ²²**Blessed** are you when people hate you,/ and when they exclude and insult you,/ and denounce your name as evil/ on account of the Son of Man./ ²³ Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors/ treated the prophets in the same way./

Woes

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

²⁵ But **woe** to you who are filled now,/ for you will be hungry./ **Woe** to you who laugh now,/ for you will grieve and weep./ ²⁶ **Woe** to you when all speak well of you,/ for their ancestors treated the false prophets in this way.

THE FOCUS: The Beatitudes

COMMENTARY

- The text is known as "Sermon on the Plain" in contrast to the "Sermon on the Mount" of Matthew.
- It deals with blessedness and woes, the opposites.
- Vv.20-23 contain the beatitudes (*to the poor, hungry, weeping, hated*).
- V.24-26 contain the woes (*to the rich, filled, laughing, spoken well of*).
- The text speaks of the reversal of fortunes.

REFLECTIONS

The Christian should not always be looking for privileges (happy happy), for things one's can always enjoy.

II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR SHARING/HOMILY

The First Reading contrasts the blessed and the cursed. The Second Reading implies that we are blessed if we believed in the resurrection of Christ and of the dead. The Gospel Reading juxtaposes the blessed and the cursed (*woed*).

The homilist must be able to develop who are blessed and who are not in the eyes of God.

How to develop your homily

Begin by relating a story about someone who starts poor then becomes rich later in life (or vice versa). The gospel story is already happening here and now: the rise and fall of business establishments, of politicians, movie and TV stars, etc.

Who are blessed (*suwerte, masaya, mapalad, kaayaaya*) in the eyes of God?

Those who put their faith in him, those who trust in the Lord (*First Reading*).

Those who believe in the resurrection of Jesus and our resurrection at the end times (*Second Reading*).

Those who willingly endure inconveniences, who make sacrifices, who are in solidarity with the poor (*Gospel Reading*).

Who are not blessed (*cursed, buwisit, di kaayaaya, malas*) in the eyes of God?

Those who do not trust in the Lord, but in the humans beings (politicians, rich and powerful, *padrinos*, etc.)

Those who teach that there is no such thing as resurrection or afterlife.

Those who do not fear condemned when they go against the will of God.

Our families, churches, parishes, government leaders and society must be composed of blessed people.

We cannot move forward if everyone is accursed.

The First Reading describes the cursed as unproductive, fruitless (*walang pakinabang*), one's life boring, no excitement, no joy.

The Second Reading describes those who are not blessed (no faith in the resurrection) as pitiable (*kawawa, miserable*).

The Gospel Reading states their destiny: they will be poor, will cry, will be sorry, will hunger, etc.

In this eucharist, we are **blessed** because we believe in the power of the Lord over us. We trust in his forgiveness. We believe that he will save us. In the eucharist, we celebrate our belief in the resurrection, life-after and our salvation.

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III. OUR CONTEXT

1. Do a Song Analysis of *Ang Puso Ko'y Nag-pupuri*. Why is Mary praising the Lord? What are the reversals of values that Mary narrates in her Magnificat?
2. How true is this statement (from a Latin American theologian) in your community: "It is only the poor who can liberate the rich!" Do you believe it? Why and why not?
3. Share an experience when you consider our people (Filipinos) as very fortunate. Why? (HM)