

Good First.

The Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time



February 1, 2026

1 CORINTHIANS 1: 26 – 31

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord."

MATTHEW 5: 1 – 12A

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen

BLESSED WHERE WE STAND

The Beatitudes confront us with a truth that unsettles the world's definition of blessing. Jesus looks out at the crowds and dares to call poor, grieving, hungry, and rejected people blessed. Not because suffering is good, but because God is already present there. The kingdom of God is not only something we wait for at the end of time; it is breaking into the present wherever hearts are open to God's way of love, justice, and mercy.

St. Paul helps us see why this way of living matters. God does not wait for strength, success, or perfection. God chooses the weak, the lowly, and what the world overlooks, so that our confidence rests not in ourselves but in God alone. When God is first, even our limitations become places where grace can work. What looks like foolishness to the world becomes wisdom rooted in Christ.

The Beatitudes are not ideals meant for someday; they are a way of life available now. To be poor in spirit is to place our trust in God rather than in what we possess or control. To hunger for righteousness is to long for a world where all are treated with dignity and have enough to thrive. To be meek, merciful, and peacemakers is to reflect the heart of God in a world that often rewards power and self-protection.

Pope Francis reminds us that the Beatitudes are our Christian identity card. They show us who Jesus is—and who we are called to be. Following Christ means choosing the side of the lowly and the broken, not from a place of superiority, but from shared dependence on God. This path may not always feel safe or comfortable. In fact, living the Beatitudes may bring resistance. But it is precisely there, close to the cross, that real joy and blessing are found.

This week, we are invited to look honestly at our lives and ask: where might God already be calling me blessed, even if the world says otherwise? When God is first, we begin to see differently. We discover that the kingdom is already among us—and that we are being asked to help build it, here and now.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What did you hear in the homily or reflection this week that stayed with you or challenged you? Why do you think it caught your attention right now?
- The Beatitudes name people and situations the world often overlooks or avoids. Which Beatitude feels closest to your current life experience, and how does it reshape what you think it means to be “blessed”?
- St. Paul reminds us that God chooses what is weak or lowly so that our confidence rests in God, not in ourselves. Where in your life do you feel inadequate or unqualified, and how might God be inviting you to trust Him more deeply there?
- The reflection says that the Kingdom of God is both “here” and “not yet.” Where do you see signs of God's Kingdom already present in your daily life or community, and where do you feel called to help build it more intentionally?
- Living the Beatitudes may cost us comfort, approval, or a sense of safety. What is one small but concrete way you can put God first this week by choosing mercy, humility, or peacemaking, even if it feels uncomfortable?