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**First Reading:** Jeremiah 17:5-8  
**Response:** "**Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord**" (Ps.39:5)  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 1:1-4,6.  
**Second Reading:** I Corinthians 15:12,16-20  
**Gospel:** Luke 6:17. 20-26

The rock of our faith is Jesus Christ. He is risen, alive. In his resurrection we see our resurrection. We are not born to die but to live, not for just a time but forever. This is God's way, the way of life. Alternatively is the God-less world of wealth and power, the way of the wicked.

We have to choose our way. The wicked choose the world with its false promises and power-brokers, like Juda's king did in Jeremiah's time, trusting in military alliances. "**A curse on the man who puts his trust in man...whose heart turns from the Lord**" (Jer. 17:5).

Such are the wicked, "**like dry scrub in the wasteland**" (Jer.17:6). The righteous confidently "**puts his trust in the Lord**" (Jer.17:7) and described as the tree growing near living waters with "**its roots in the stream**" (Jer. 17:8). Where is your hope? Is it in God and his Word?

The Response affirms and practically repeats what Jeremiah is saying. "**Happy the man who has placed his trust in the Lord**" (Ps.39:5). Such is the way of blessing. "**He is like a tree that is planted beside the flowing waters**" (Ps.1:3)

Psalm 1, the responsorial psalm, some exegetes believe, is based on Jeremiah's portrayal of the two ways. It explains that "**the way of the wicked leads to doom**" (Ps.1:6).

Difference in two ways is ultimately doom or salvation. Salvation is spelt in the name of Jesus (*Jeshua*), Christ, the anointed one, who conquered sin in its most powerful weapon, death as seen in the resurrection. "**If Christ has not risen, your faith is in vain**" (1Co. 15:16)

The resurrection of Christ is "**the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep**" (1Co.15:20), the first fruits of all resurrections to come. Because he rose and defeated death, we know we shall rise again. This is the way of the just, the way of all believers.

The just way, Jesus spells out in the beatitudes. The first is "**How happy are you who are poor**" (Lk.6:20). Interestingly, the original Greek word used for poor here is πτωχος, *ptochos*, which identifies with being a beggar. Is not Christ is telling us that we are blessed if we know how to beg, ask, pray without ceasing? "The poor don't tire," says a Swahili proverb.

Future happiness lies with "**hunger**" for God (Lk.6:21) and "**persecuted**" for truth (Lk.6:22). By contrast, are the woes for who compromise themselves and base their lives on worldly wealth. "**Alas for you who are rich,**" (Lk.6:24). The way to true happiness is Jesus Christ.

Make time to study the word of God in the *Scriptures*. Trust the Lord's way to happiness.

We encounter the Lord and receive the grace to follow his way through Word and *Sacrament*.

Study the *Teaching* and meaning of the beatitudes and implications of the contrasting woes.

Examine your way of life. What **are we doing to have a closer walk with God?** (*Witness*)

### **FOR THE CHILDREN**

Read and discuss the beatitudes and the woes mentioned in the **Gospel**.

Discuss how the **Liturgy** with its sacraments helps us to follow God's way.

Give the children the **Teaching** of the beatitudes and meaning of the woes.

Encourage the children to **Witness** to the ways of God, not the temptations of the world.

### **FOR TEENAGERS (Shared Christian Praxis)**

**Name the Present Action:** *What does beatitudes and trust in God mean to you?*

**Your Story and Vision:** *Ever placed your trust in God or practiced any beatitude?*

**Church's Story and Vision:** *Give Church's teaching on trusting in God and the beatitudes.*

**Yours and Church's Vision:** Consider how you can trust in God and live the beatitudes; and work for the building of the Kingdom of God.

### **RCIA**

Our faith is not just about knowing how to live the beatitudes and trust in the God “who comes down to our level, adapting his Godhead to our ability to understand.”<sup>(i)</sup> Our faith is also a doing faith. We have to live the beatitudes, trusting in the grace of God.

(i) **THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING. My Friend in God': 4.** Penguin Books Ltd. Harmondsworth, England. 1987. p.62

### **LIFE EXPERIENCE**

Trusting God reminds me of a mountaineer, losing his foothold. He was hurtling down to the ground when fortunately his safety-rope held up his fall. Suspended in mid-air, he cried to God to help him and would obediently do his will. A voice answered: “Cut the rope.” He could not take the chance. Hanging there, he froze to death in the cold of the night.

Next morning some hikers found a dead mountaineer hanging from a rope that stopped just four feet above the ground.

What is the ultimate hope of our trust?

### **LITTLE ANGELINA**

Little Angelina closed her eyes and fell backwards. She knew that I would catch her. She seems to trust me, more than I can trust God.

### **IMPORTANT WORD**

Psalms 1 mentions how happy the person who trusts in God, **pondering** His ways. ‘Ponder’ here translates from the Hebrew הָגָה , *hagah*, having many meanings. Here it could mean ‘meditate’ (1:2) and so connected to prayer and communication with God. From הָגָה has developed the word *hegeh*, meaning utterance and speaking. Its other meanings, range from a ‘sigh’ to ‘muttering’ or rolling thunder (*Job 37:2*). Poetically, it could even mean the murmuring sound of a harp, which David loved to use and sing his psalms.

The psalms are certainly a wonderful way to walk with God and trust in his ways. An ancient exhortation says: “Go forth, go forth on those ancient paths on which our ancient fathers trod.”<sup>(i)</sup>

(i) **THE RIG VEDA. Yama and the Fathers: 10.14.** Transl. Wendy D. O’Flaherty. Penguin Books, Bungay, U.K. p. 111.

**Watchword:** “*How happy are the poor*” (Lk.6:20).

Hebrew: אַשְׁרֵיכֶם הָעֵיִים ‘Ashreykhem ha’aniyim.

Greek: Μακαριοὶ οἱ πτωχοὶ. Makarioi hoi ptochoi

Latin: Beati pauperes.

Spanish: Bienaventurados vosotros los pobres.

Portuguese: Bem-aventurados vos, os pobres.

French: Heureux, vous qui etes pauvres.

German: Selig seid ihr Armen.

Afrikaans: Geseend is julle wat arm is.

Zulu: Ninenhlanhla nina abampofu.

Xhosa: Hayi uyolo lwenu, nina basweleyo.

Sotho: Ho lehlohonolo lona mafutsana.

Irish: Is meaner daoibhse ata bocht.