

Liturgy Alive of 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Greeting (See Second Reading)

God has chosen what is weak?
and has made Jesus Christ?
our wisdom and our virtue,?
our holiness and our freedom.?
May the Lord Jesus be always with you.

Introduction by the Celebrant

A. Congratulations If...

To be poor and humble and gentle, merciful and weeping and persecuted – as things that would make us happy sounds quite strange to us. Is it not rather to have things aplenty and power and a lot of fun? To understand these statements we have to look at Jesus himself. For example, he led the life of the poor but he was happy. He suffered, but he made us happy and was at peace with God and himself. Let us ask our Lord that we may understand his teaching better and become more like him.

(or:)

B. Poor And Happy

Today's message of the beatitudes is perhaps the most upsetting and challenging page of the Good News of Jesus Christ; it is right at the heart of the Gospel. The rich, the proud and the mighty are self-satisfied: they have what they want. They are dangerously shut in within themselves and with what they have. The poor and the suffering are not praised because they have nothing or are persecuted, but because the poor and the humble, the gentle and those who weep are aware that they have nothing but themselves to give, and so they are people who hope, expecting everything from God and from people. Let us be among these happy ones.

Penitential Act

Let us ask pardon from the Lord?
that we are still so much unlike him.?

(pause)?

Lord Jesus, you were poor but happy.?

Make us more like you.?

Lord, have mercy. R/ Lord, have mercy.

Jesus Christ, you were gentle and humble.?

Make us more like you:?

Christ, have mercy. R/ Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you were persecuted and yet serene.?
Make us more like you.?
Lord, have mercy. R/ Lord, have mercy.

Be gentle and compassionate?
to us, your sinful people.?
Make us happy by your forgiveness?
and lead us to everlasting life. R/ Amen.

Opening Prayer

A. Congratulations If...

Let us pray?
that we may discover and experience?
God's enduring happiness?
(pause)?
God our Father,?
in your son Jesus you have made it visible?
that you are poor, gentle and humble,?
merciful and just, a lover of peace.?
Make us poor and free,?
let us weep with those who mourn,?
hunger and thirst with those?
who seek what is right and just;?
make us straightforward and sincere of heart,?
and build roads of peace to one another,?
that your happiness may be ours.?
We ask this through Christ our Lord. R/ Amen.
(or:)

B. Poor And Happy

Let us pray that we may seek our happiness?
in the spirit of Jesus and the Gospel?
(pause)?
Lord God, loving Father,?
we ask you today for the kind of happiness?
which you offer us through your Son Jesus.?
Make us aware of the poverty of our hearts,?
that we may have nothing else to give ?
than our own selves,
and that you can fill us with yourself
and with love and concern for people.?
Give us your kind of justice?
that does not judge or condemn.?

Help us to forgive notwithstanding injuries,?
and to love without asking for gratitude.?
Let the spirit of Jesus be alive in us?
now and for ever. R/ Amen.

First Reading Introduction: God Lives Among The Poor And The Humble

The prophet Zephaniah promises to God's people that they will be saved on the day of judgment if they are poor and humble before God, if they have full trust in him.

Second Reading Introduction: God Chooses The Lowly

Almost all the Christians of Corinth come from the poor classes. St. Paul tells them that, precisely because of their humility, they are open to God and that Christ is their strength.

Gospel Introduction: Who Are The Happy People?

If we are aware how poor and empty we are, God will fill us and make us happy.

General Intercessions

Let us pray to our Father in heaven that we may be counted among the poor and humble who expect everything from him and among whom his Son is alive. Let us say: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.

- For those who are groping to find God, that they may discover him; for those who think that they already possess God, that they may seek him, let us pray: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.
- For those who are afraid of the future, that they find trust and confidence: for those who have failed in the past, that they may be given new opportunities, let us pray: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.
- For all who doubt, that they may not despair; for all who have lost their way in life, that they may find a home; for the lonely, that they may encounter a caring person, let us pray: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.
- For those who have no time, that they may take time out to pause and to be available to people; for those who have plenty of time, that they may use it for service, let us pray: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.
- For all who hunger in whatever way, that they may be satisfied; for those who are satisfied, that they may learn what hunger is, let us pray: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.
- For those who are well-off, that they may not become proud; for the high and the mighty, that they may realize how vulnerable they are, let us pray: R/ Lord, fill our empty hearts.

Lord our God, from whom all good things come, we pray you today for all those living between hope and fear and for ourselves. Set us free from anxiety and from false security and give us all that is good, through Jesus Christ our Lord. R/ Amen.

Prayer over the Gifts

God our Father,?
these are the gifts of the poor:?

a bit of food, a little wine.?
All the rest we may have?
we did not bring with us?
for they may stand between you and us,?
between us and people.?
Accept us in our riches and our poverty,?
in our weakness and our strength,?
with our sorrows and our joys.?
Let us experience life as a gift from you?
and teach us to give ourselves as we are,?
through Jesus Christ our Lord. R/ Amen.

Introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic prayer, particularly in the preface and before the consecration, is a song of thanksgiving to God, not for what we have done for him but for the happiness he has brought to his people. Let us thank him with all our hearts.

Introduction to the Lord's Prayer

Aware that we are dependent on God,?
we pray the trusting prayer?
of his own Son, Jesus.

Deliver Us

Deliver us Lord, from every evil?
and remove from our hearts?
the shell of selfishness?
that closes us to you and to people.?
Empty our hearts and hands?
from all possessive riches,?
that you yourself may be to us?
the food that satisfies us?
and the water that quenches our thirst.?
May we thus prepare in joy and hope?
the full coming among us?
of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Invitation to Communion

This is Jesus our Lord.?
He was born in poverty,?
and when he preached the Good News?
he had no stone for a pillow?
on which to rest his head.?

And so he could give himself to all?
and become our food and drink.?
Happy are we to receive him now,?
and to let him fill us with his riches.

Thanksgiving after Communion (Bruggeman- Zuidberg)

The following text is a model for a prayer of thanksgiving after communion, which could take the place of the song or the silent thanksgiving after communion. If it is in the people's leaflet, all could pray it together or it may be slowly read by the prayer leader, perhaps with a very brief pause after each part. If it is read by the priest, he concludes with the Prayer after Communion.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people who have made themselves poor?
to enrich others,?
whose house is always a place of welcome?
even to strangers.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people who can listen to the miseries of others,?
who heal wounds by making pain bearable,?
for people who can console.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people who spread peace and rest,?
who are attentive to little things,?
who are happy when others are great.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people who hunger for justice?
who crave to see every person free,?
who suffer when injustice is done to their neighbor.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people whose judgment is gentle,?
who respect the mystery of all life,?
who open their hearts to forgiveness and reconciliation.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people whose intentions are straightforward,?
whose words are sincere,?
for people loyal to their friends.

We thank you, Lord our God,?
for people who believe in roads to peace,?

who turn their swords into instruments of friendship,
who work to make their faith credible?
by committing themselves to one another.

We thank you, Lord our God,
for all the happy people?
whose joy and sense of humor?
bring smiles to those around them,
and whose liberating lifestyle?
is a refreshing ray of hope to all. R/ Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Our God and Father,
you recognize yourself in the poor?
and the humble of this earth?
and to them you give Jesus your Son?
as their companion in life?
May you recognize yourself in us, then,
and show us the way of Jesus?
to the weak and to the victims?
of our pride and our hunger for power?
Make us your happy people,
whose love and sense of humor?
can bring laughter to sad eyes?
and the warmth of hope and joy?
to hearts hardened by pain?
Let your Son be with us now and for ever.

Blessing

Blessed are we?
if we live Christ's message of joy?
as people aware of the poverty of our hearts?
and the insufficiency of our own resources?
Blessed are we?
if we can place ourselves in the hands of God?
Blessed are we when God blesses us:
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. R/ Amen.

Let us go in the peace and the joy of the Lord. R/ Thanks be to God.