

Gospel reflections for Sunday 2nd February 2020

[Matthew 5:1-12](#)

This week's reading is from Matthew's gospel that contains the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes. Last week we read how Jesus had commenced his ministry teaching, announcing the good news of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and illness. You can imagine the scene of excitement as the crowds gather around Jesus and he teaches more of this kingdom and a world that might seem upside down or not quite what they expected.

A key word in the passage is 'blessedness.' In today's world the term 'blessedness' might be interpreted as meaning success or happiness. We are encouraged to think that success or 'blessedness' is about having and achieving much. In this passage Jesus presents a very different way of seeing and thinking about 'blessedness'. The word 'blessedness' is not Jesus' promise of happiness or a recipe for success or how you can live your best life. The 'blessedness' Jesus is referring to is a new way of thinking and seeing and a fortunate way of being.

Jesus teaches that God's 'blessedness' can be found in the times and places where we least expect and cannot be earned. In this passage it is associated with the people that our world would not consider as blessed at all. It seems that it is in the most challenging experiences of mourning, meekness, peacemaking, persecution that we find Jesus' form of 'blessedness'. Please do not interpret this to mean that God brings suffering so we can find the blessings or that we are to romanticize the plight of the poor and oppressed. The 'blessedness' that Jesus invites us to see is the reminder of God's promises that we are not alone, we have worth and are loved because of who we are and not because of what we have or achieved. This 'blessedness' also inspires us to care for the poor and weak and to be God's loving presence with those who are suffering.

In a world where power, possessions and wealth are seen as signs of blessing, Jesus offers us a new way of seeing the blessedness that is ours, right now. He also calls us to care for the poor, the refugees, the homeless and those who are mourning and in doing so, be a blessing to others.

Anne