

“Jesus speaks to that deepest longing in each man's heart – his search for happiness. To be 'blessed' or happy is to experience God's special love and favour. On the face of it, it might appear as if the beatitudes look for happiness all in the wrong places – in the struggle for peace, in rejection, in doing what is right, in 'mourning'. But this Christian happiness is no pie in the sky. It is something within ourselves, something for which and towards which each person keeps working. It comes from the conviction that God's kingdom, his saving life and love, is present to us and will finally encompass us if we respond to the word and example of his Son. Jesus lived and taught what it means to trust the Father (poor in spirit), to lead a God-controlled life (meek), to have a single-mindedness and sincerity in the service of God (pure in heart), to make and preserve peace among men and to have that outgoing kindness to the heart of God (mercy). Hope and God's strength are held out to sad and suffering disciples.”

*Martin McNamara – Homilies for Weekdays of the Year*

#### **Prayer over the Offerings**

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the Sacrament of our redemption.

#### **Communion Antiphon**

*Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love.  
O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.*

#### **Prayer after Communion**

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, that through this help to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase.

## **4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*Year A*

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2026**

### ***The Good News of the Master, Meek and Humble of Heart***

*Already it's the fourth Sunday of the year & we have covered much ground. Jesus, after John the Baptist' arrest, has begun preaching: announcing repentance, for the Kingdom of God is at hand. He has called his first disciples to follow him & we have heard a general account of his healing ministry. Today, we begin reading the first of five great discourses found in Matthew's Gospel – the Sermon on the Mount. We're actually going to follow this over the next few Sundays. Today's passage acts as an introduction, calling us to a new way of thinking; to a new way of living.*

#### **Entrance Antiphon**

Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

#### **Collect**

Grant us, Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

#### **Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13**

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD.

I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD, those who are left in Israel; they shall do no injustice and speak no lies, nor shall there be

found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall graze and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

#### THE WORD OF THE LORD

The Book of Zephaniah is a very short book, just three chapters long. It was written between 640 and 627 BC to the people of Judah. For the people of Jerusalem it was comparatively a time of peace and prosperity (Judah would be exiled to Babylon in 597 BC). The rich were growing richer at the expense of the poor and leaders more corrupt. The Prophet predicts the coming day of the Lord, when God will punish the nations, including Judah, for their sinfulness, but will yet be merciful to his people. In today's short passage, Zephaniah calls on people not to work for position and wealth, but to live good lives, seeking goodness, integrity, humility; trusting in the Lord

#### Psalm 146(145):6-7. 8-9. 9-10

**Response:** *Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

It is the LORD who preserves fidelity for ever, who does justice to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the LORD who sets prisoners free.

The LORD who opens the eyes of the blind, the LORD who raises up those who are bowed down. It is the LORD who loves the just, the LORD who protects the stranger.

The LORD upholds the orphan and the widow, but thwarts the path of the wicked. The LORD will reign for ever, your God, O Sion, from age to age.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 1: 26 - 31

Consider your calling, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us

wisdom from God, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

#### THE WORD OF THE LORD

Paul, in our Second Reading this week, reinforces the message of Zephaniah in our Old Testament reading, that as Christians we have nothing to boast about except Christ Jesus! In Corinth, at the time of Paul, the Greeks were seeking wisdom, the philosophers, knowledge and understanding. Paul says, no. Everything we are and everything we possess comes from God. Let us look beyond ourselves, beyond our gifts and talents, to God for life. And let us imitate God, in serving and in giving ourselves to one another

*Alleluia, alleluia! Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. Alleluia!*

#### MATTHEW 5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

#### THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD