

Reflection on Gospel –1st November ..Feast of All Saints

St. Matthew's Gospel Ch. 5 : 1—12. ..The Beatitudes

It has been said that if this was the only passage to survive the onslaught of time through the years , it would be sufficient to be a complete blueprint for Christianity. It fits well with the feastday , for everyone who has been presumably admitted to the Kingdom , has in some way practiced at least some if not all these attitudes in their lives. These teachings may be a compendium of what Jesus said over the course of his short public ministry , reflecting His attitudes to people and the way He promoted these teachings His disciples.

Each Beatitude implies a contradiction –to paraphrase ..-

“Those who mourn will be comforted.”..”The sad will receive consolation “

“The meek will inherit the earth”.....” The deprived will receive the fullness of life “.

We know this does not happen instantaneously ... It takes time for the Kingdom of God to come to fruition. God never works in a hurry He leaves that to us. The results of His Kingdom's values begin with our listening and watching from an early age in our Christian homes, schools and parishes. We learn the ABC of our faith at our parents side –observing their behaviour and catching their attitudes to life. The saying is true “Religion is caught not taught “ . What's the value/ use of a Catholic school unless it follows on the example of good-parenting ?? By this is not just meant attendance at Church services --although these are important but following a way of life which is truly patterned on respect for Christian values and a sincere prayer life, which corresponds to the child's age and character.

So often children arrive at school and /or at catechism class without knowledge of a single prayer or proper knowledge of any religion whatever –and its not their fault . Neither can parents always be blamed in this secular -orientated society . We need to claim back our heritage as Christians in our own society of today , and not be afraid of offending anyone.

During this time of lockdown re-visited it would be helpful for all children to receive some instruction from their parents concerning their basic Faith . Information can be obtained from the web via Catholic sources or simple books bought online which contain the outlines of our faith. Better than this , is prayer shared together with one -or both parents at a convenient time for all. The practice of Family Rosary has much to be commended. We know that now the home is the domestic church...in fact it may soon become for us and for some children the only church.

Why not invest some time / energy in buying a children's Bible and sharing the word of God with them ? It will do much good, and give them a springboard to real faith, not just an accumulation of facts. Our Pope and Cardinal have chosen this year as the Year of the Word of God . When did you last read your Bible and/ or a Catholic prayer book ? What do you know of the lives of the Saints , not just those of centuries ago, but those men and women who struggled with issues of faith like we do, with family problems like we do, with anxieties , pain , bereavement , and separation from loved ones . Its worth a try..

May the saints whom we have known on earth and are now in Heaven , our families and friends intercede for us all in these difficult days.

AMEN