

## CATHOLIC CONVERSATIONS ON THE SCRIPTURES

Archdiocese of Miami - Ministry of Christian Formation



February 14, 2010 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle C)

**Gospel reading: Luke 6:17,20-26** *[To be read aloud]*

Jesus came down with the twelve and stood on a stretch of level ground with a great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon\*. And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are filled now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for their ancestors treated the false prophets in this way."

\* *Not only Jews from Judea and Jerusalem, but even Gentiles from outside Palestine come to hear Jesus.*

### Brief commentary:

In contrast with Matthew who places Jesus on the mountain to deliver his Sermon, Luke's Jesus comes down from the mountain to meet the people and give them the new law. In typical Lukan style, they have come from all over waiting to hear the word of God and be healed. The listing of the different regions represented emphasizes the inclusivity of the Reign of God. The fourth beatitude holds the key to the Sermon. It is not good just to be poor, or hungry or persecuted, but one is blessed to be treated shamefully like the prophets of old. The woes are directed to the rich who are filled now and do not use their wealth to help the needy, and who do not recognize God as the source of their gifts. Often wealth keeps people from trusting God. At the core of the sermon is Jesus' teaching on the love of one's enemies that has as its source of motivation God's graciousness and compassion for all humanity and Jesus' teaching on the love of one's neighbor that is characterized by forgiveness and generosity.

#### Today's reading offers three significant messages:

- To be "poor" involves a state of dependence.
- Those who realize their need for God are blessed; those who feel self-sufficient are to be pitied.
- No one takes joy in being insulted or persecuted, but such treatment is part of the cost of discipleship.

### For our shared or personal reflection:

*After a brief pause for silent reflection share your answers, ideas or feelings.*

1. How do I really feel about this strange way to measure happiness? Do I "buy into" this set of values of the Reign of God? Give concrete examples.
2. Have I ever experienced one of these "blessings" or "woes" in my own life? Explain.

Suggested readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 581; 1716-1729; 2444; 2546-47.