

## On The Way

### *The Beatitudes and Corpus Christi*

Jesus is the fulfillment and perfection of the Beatitudes. To gaze on his face is to see the Beatitudes. Thus, to strive to live the Beatitudes is to grow in the likeness of Christ. In the Eucharist, we find both the model of every Beatitude and the means to live it.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit.* The Eucharist shows forth Jesus' complete poverty – his complete self-emptying and radical dependence on the Father. He comes to us in poverty, under the humble form of bread. His poverty in the Eucharist in turn enriches and nourishes us. The more we recognize our own poverty and radical need to be nourished, the more the Eucharist satisfies.

*Blessed are they who mourn.* The Eucharist is both the making present and the fruit of Christ's Sacrifice. By his death he nourishes us. So, in our Eucharistic devotion we must mourn the passing of this world, renounce the world's false nourishment, and thus avail ourselves of true nourishment.

*Blessed are the meek.* Jesus' meekness and humility of heart (cf. Mt 11:29) are made present in the Eucharist. He doesn't overwhelm us with his divine power but by the Eucharist communicates it to us in a manner suited to us weak creatures. The Eucharist in turn nurtures in us that same gentle strength with which we serve others.

*Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness.* Jesus hungers and thirsts for our love. That hunger and thirst is made present to us in the Eucharist. He is the Righteous One for whom we ultimately hunger and thirst. Paradoxically, when we receive the Eucharist with the proper dispositions it deepens our hunger and thirst. Further, by conforming us more to Christ, the Eucharist makes us participate more in his own hunger and thirst.

*Blessed are the merciful.* Jesus shows his great mercy by coming to us sinners and feeding us with his Body and Blood. Although incompatible with mortal sin, the Eucharist does heal us of our daily faults and failures. Since he is merciful, it is only right that he receive mercy. He, the Merciful One, receives mercy from us first in our devotion to and reverence for him the Eucharist and then when we, nourished by him, extend that same mercy to others.

*Blessed are the clean of heart.* There is a purity about Jesus' presence in the Eucharist. Nothing about him is absent or divided; he is there, whole and entire. Again, this sets the term of our response. We grow in purity of heart when we strive to be fully present to him – not allowing our attention to wander (as much as we can), not hiding in superficialities, not limiting his access to our hearts.

*Blessed are the peacemakers.* The greatest force for peace in the world is the Eucharist. It is, first, the re-presentation of Sacrifice that establishes peace. Further, the more we allow the Prince of Peace to nourish us, the more we become peacemakers. The more we conform our lives to the sacrificial, merciful, pure love of Jesus in the Eucharist, the more we become instruments of peace in the world.

*Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.* We are given a pledge of beatitude in the Eucharist. May we respond to that gift with such faith, hope, and love that we come to possess it perfectly at the eternal banquet.