

## Scripture Reading

### A Reading of the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 5:3*)

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

### Reflection – Blessed are those who realise they need God in everything, theirs is the kingdom of heaven

**Jesus was born poor.** When Jesus was borne incarnate, God's will chose poor parents for Him so that He was born into poverty. Instead of a gilded palace suitable for the only Son of God, Jesus was placed in a manger upon His birth in a cold stable where He had only the warm breath of a donkey to provide heat during that cold winter night. His earthly career was helping His foster father St Joseph in his carpentry workshop. Jesus identified with the poor; sinners and tax collectors, though shunned by the religious elite, were welcomed by Him. Though the whole universe belong to Him as He is the Son of God, Jesus owned no property and did not even have a bed on earth (Cf. *Matthew 8:20*).

**Though Jesus was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9).** Jesus came to show us how to live a simple, holy life. A life that is not enslaved to self or material attachments. His simplicity and poverty while He was on earth make reparation for the excesses in our life in pandering to our own opinion, our pride, our desires that have no bearing on the truth or our eternal salvation which should be the goal of our earthly life. To atone for our pride, Jesus humbled Himself *who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage, rather He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant (Philippians 2:6-7)*.

**The prodigal son was blessed in having his eyes opened to the saving truth.** The prodigal son after having squandered his share of his inheritance was left destitute and desperate, far away from home. He, who once was blind to reality, was rudely awakened to the fact of his dependence on his kind and loving father. He felt and realized his extreme need, his very life hung in the balance. Stripped to the core, freed of all attachments he came face to face with the saving, transforming truth. He needed his father. He went home. His father welcomed him back as if he has not behaved badly. He was more likely to fare better in the future than the other son who did not fall. Having his eyes opened, he was unlikely to betray the trust in his father again, knowing that he needed his father in everything. Do we need to be stripped of all our possessions in order to realize that in reality we need God in everything?

**Humility is needed to help us realize the truth of how we stand before God.** How we look at ourselves usually depends on several factors. These may include the family we are born into, our parents, our education, our work, our achievements, our possessions, our social status, etc. These are but gifts from God. Though we would like to think our achievements are made solely through our own sweat and blood, the reality is without the grace of God, we are not able to draw in the next breath. Jesus says: *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."* (*John 15:5*). Is there anything in our possession besides our sins that we can truly call our own? We forget oftentimes that all are gifts from God, even the trials and tribulation in our life given to us to humble us and to strengthen in faith.

### Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, Scripture says *surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; He weighs the islands as though they were fine dust (Isaiah 40:15)*. Help me live in the truth that I am totally dependent upon You for everything no matter how comfortable or successful my life may seem. Help me realize that all the good things in life are but Your gifts to me and that I should not be engrossed with the gifts but with the Giver. You are the One who loves me truly and understand me more than I understand myself, and who can give me an eternal life of peace, love and joy which should be the aim of my life. Purify my heart and mind of erroneous thinking and pride that distance me from the truth and which make me focus on myself and the passing things of this world. Instead may I rejoice in the blessedness of the truth that You are my shepherd and in You I am not lacking in anything I need (Cf. *Psalm 23:1*). Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.