

by Fr. Christopher Szarke

In today's Gospel, Jesus was simply blessing his followers. This included the down and out. Those at the bottom of the social ladder. The vulnerable. Everyone.

God is blessing everyone no matter what the circumstances of her or his – of our – lives. God is blessing the person who lives among the rural poor of this region. God is blessing the refugee whose future suddenly seems even more precarious. God is blessing the parishioners who are mourning after experiencing sudden and painful losses. God is blessing our friends and family members who struggle with addiction. God loves all of us so much that we don't have conditions placed upon us in order to receive God's blessing.

As Christians, we have been transformed in ways that the world doesn't typically value. So, while God doesn't hold this as conditions for blessing, we live out our transformed values in our attitudes. Being poor in spirit, we trust God. We, as followers of Christ, are called to be kind to others. We need to bear the poor and destitute in our hearts and respond in ways that are merciful. Being pure in heart means that we live in ways that are consistent with the values we hold. We are called to establish peace as an outcome of justice. This means that others will oppose us since they do not recognize the rights of others. We will still stand for what is right no matter what the cost.

Amen.