

// Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”—Matthew 5:3

Heavenly Father,

Your Son emptied Himself and became man to save me from my sins and to open the door to Your Kingdom. Open my eyes to see that my treasure is in heaven.

"For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be" (Matthew 6:21).

Jesus looked at the rich young man with love and asked him to go sell all that he had and follow Him. Right before him was the path to true happiness, but he clung to his possessions and his own will and went away sad (Mark 10:17–27). Jesus then looked at His disciples and said, "It is easier for a camel to pass through [the] eye of [a] needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:25).

What do you think this means?

To be "poor in spirit" does not necessarily mean poor in material things. It is an inner attitude of trusting and depending on God's loving care for you and for all His children (Matthew 6:25–34). It could be a wealthy person like Zacchaeus who generously shared his riches or someone like the poor widow who gave all she had.

By living the virtue of magnificence, a person is able to do great things for God by not hoarding their riches or talents. In doing so, they know that true happiness is found by recognizing God as the source of our gifts and by storing up treasures in heaven.

The inner disposition of being poor in spirit extends beyond giving of material goods. It is also recognizing our dependence on God at all times but especially on God's grace and mercy in times of physical and spiritual suffering. For in our weakness we become strong and learn how to be compassionate. To be poor in spirit means to be compassionate, that is "to suffer with." It can be easy to fall into self-pity or loneliness during times of mental and physical suffering. By looking to the Person of Jesus Christ, you can gain strength by confidently knowing that He, too, experienced suffering and cried out to His Father.



The remedy for the experience of physical and mental poverty is to live this beatitude. It is by giving of oneself that you discover who you are as a child of God. The rich young man couldn't give away security and his possessions, but Zacchaeus and the poor widow did and knew the happiness of the kingdom of heaven.

"For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

For us, Jesus experiences every form of poverty. He was like us in all ways except sin:

■ **When you experience...**

- WEAKNESS
- SICKNESS
- PHYSICAL SUFFERING
- EMPTINESS
- LONELINESS
- ABANDONMENT
- HARDSHIPS

■ **Remember...**

Jesus fell beneath the weight of the cross, so that someone was forced to help him carry it.
—Mark 15:21

He was abandoned by His followers and the Apostles: "Do you also want to leave?"
—John 6:67

Jesus had no place to lay His head.
—Matthew 8:20

From the cross, Jesus said, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"
—Matthew 27:46

■ **Live the Beatitude**

- Take care of those who are ill.
- Visit family and friends.
- Visit grandparents, veterans, retirement homes.
- Help an elderly person with yard work.
- Spend some time reading the Gospels or Psalms.
- Listen to someone.
- Give something away.

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Luke 19:1-10

Father, what are You saying to me in this Scripture?

Jesus enters Jericho and the crowds gather to see Him. What does Zacchaeus do in order to see Jesus?

Jesus looks at Zacchaeus and also the rich young man. Both are wealthy men and have many possessions. Describe their responses to Jesus.

Zacchaeus:

Rich Young Man:

Jesus says that He has “come to seek and save the lost.” How do you know that Zacchaeus changed his life? What beatitude is he living?

Why do you think the people of Jericho grumble that Jesus wants to stay at Zacchaeus' house?

Ask this question in prayer: "Jesus, as soon as Zacchaeus welcomed You into his home—his heart—he was ready to give away all of his possessions. What must I do to be open and receptive to your invitation?" Write down what He says to you.

Imagine Jesus looking at you and saying, "Come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." Write a meditation on how you would you respond to Him.

 MY MEDITATION

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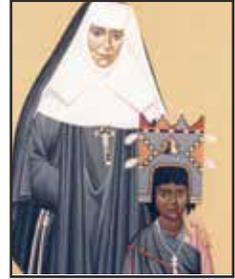


LIVE THE BEATITUDE

ST. KATHARINE DREXEL

Katharine was the daughter of a wealthy Philadelphia banker and philanthropist. Her parents had a uniquely Christian understanding of wealth and its attending responsibilities. Katharine and her sisters grew up knowing how to see the dignity of the human person in the poor.

At the age of 27, she and her sisters went on a tour of the American West. Katharine was deeply moved by the poverty and suffering of the Native Americans.



DATES: 1858–1955 | FEAST: March 3

In 1893, Katharine obtained an audience with Pope Leo XIII where she asked that missionaries be sent to the Native Americans. The pope responded by asking her to become the missionary. She soon did and established a religious community called the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament that served the African and Native Americans.

Over the next sixty years, Katharine and her sisters opened 145 missions, forty-nine elementary schools, and twelve high schools. The last twenty years of her life were spent in prayer and adoration.

"My sweetest Joy is to be in the presence of Jesus in the holy Sacrament."

—St. Katharine Drexel

A Disciple of Christ living the beatitude...

- ✓ Trusts in God's loving providence
- ✓ Recognizes his true treasure is in heaven
- ✓ Is not attached to possessions
- ✓ Gives without counting the cost

RELATED GIFT



The Gift of Fear of the Lord brings forth the fear of offending God by sin. It enables one to seek God Himself as one's only treasure. By living the beatitude "poor in spirit," one is freed from greed and pride.