**From the Desk of the Pastor ....**

In the Gospel passage today we are given to hear the Beatitudes according to St. Luke. Jesus spoke to the ordinary people of his time, most of whom faced daily trials with poverty, hunger, grief, sorrow, sadness and persecution. Jesus surprised everyone when he pronounced those despised, weeping, the hungry and the poor as ‘blessed’.

The evangelist reserves the blessedness to people who are ‘poor’, meaning those who lack the necessities of life; The ‘hungry’ as those who do not have the wherewith all to obtain food. In contrast, the ‘rich’ are those whose possessions insulate them from need; they are sheltered from hunger, the lot of the poor. The ‘full’ are people who are fully satisfied. They enjoy a prosperity that enables them to gratify their desires.

The ‘laughter’ of the third woe, expressed the satisfied wellbeing of the fortunate one’s of the world; the ‘tears’ of the third beatitude expresses the distress of those who know in their world only privation and suffering. The beatitude is addressed to suffering, struggling and unhappy people, crushed by their circumstances.

In the fourth woe, those ‘flattered’ are the fortunate ones, while those ‘reviled’ are the suffering and the persecuted Christians.

St. Luke directs the beatitudes to clarify the mission of Jesus, the role of Savior called upon to exercise in favor of those who believe in Him, especially in favor of those who are persecuted and suffer for their faith in Him.

At the same time, Jesus according to St. Luke does not ignore the elite, those who are rich and well fed, happy and admired, that they are in fact easily led on their way to perdition, and disaster, the very woes they thought they had escaped. He wants to motivate them to conversion in keeping with the social message of Jesus, which is possible only by way of radical renunciation.

**PARISH COMMUNITY NEWS**

**Fixing God’s House**

This Campaign Fund money is classified as “Restricted Income” to be used only to pay for the projects mentioned in the “Fixing God’s House” brochure.

If you have not yet made your pledge and wish to do so, you may send in your donations, designating in the memo of your check as “Fixing God’s House”. There are several options available for you to give to this campaign:
- you can drop your check at the Parish Office, or mail it
- you may give “On-Line”
- you may also put in the Sunday collection in an envelope, marked as “Fixing God’s House”

Thank you for continuing the legacy of St. John the Evangelist.

**Fixing God’s House**

Our Parish Hispanic Community (HPC) has embarked upon a “kick off” campaign for “Fixing God’s House”. We are invited to join them in this endeavor. The kick off begins with a raffle; tickets will cost $5.00 with a grand prize of $500.00. You may buy the raffle tickets from the HPC members. For further information please contact, Gloria & Jose Calero or Sonia & Mario Urquilla.

**Office Closed**

The Parish office *will be closed on Monday, February 18th*, in observance of Presidents’ Day. The office will re-open on Tuesday, February 19th.

**The Beatitudes**

The Beatitudes are a series of blessings that are found in the fifth chapter of Matthew in the Christian Bible. These blessings were given by Jesus to his disciples during the Sermon on the Mount. Each blessing offers a future reward to the person possessing a specific character quality. The word ‘beatitudes’ is derived from beatitudo, a Latin word meaning ‘blessedness’; hence, the name is used to refer to this biblical passage where each verse begins with the word ‘blessed.’ In the Beatitudes, Jesus is describing the characteristics of the ideal follower of Christ and the blessings he or she will receive, both on Earth and in Heaven. However, there is evidence that this section of the Bible has influenced people of other religious beliefs. For example, Mahatma Gandhi, although born into the Hindu religion, wrote about the significance of these verses. Gandhi disclosed that he read the entire Bible, but was moved by ‘the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart.’ The Beatitudes are also accepted as a lesson in social justice by some readers who choose to read the verses from a literary standpoint instead of a religious one.