

On the Beatitudes: St Leo the Great

The Lord then goes on to say: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. This hunger is not for bodily food, this thirst is not for any earthly drink: it is a longing to be blessed with righteousness, and, by penetrating the secret of all mysteries, to be filled with the Lord himself. Happy is the soul that longs for the food of righteousness and thirsts for this kind of drink; it would not seek such things if it had not already savoured their delight. When the soul hears the voice of the Spirit saying to it through the prophet: Taste and see that the Lord is good, it has already received a portion of God's goodness, and is on fire with love, the love that gives joy of the utmost purity. It counts as nothing all that belongs to time; it is entirely consumed with desire to eat and drink the food of righteousness. The soul lays hold of the true meaning of the first and great commandment: You shall love the Lord God with your whole heart, and your whole mind and your whole strength, for to love God is nothing else than to love righteousness. Finally, just as concern for one's neighbour is added to love of God, so the virtue of mercy is added to the desire for righteousness, as it is said: Blessed are the merciful, for God will be merciful to them.

Remember, Christian, the surpassing worth of the wisdom that is yours. Bear in mind the kind of school in which you are to learn your skills, the rewards to which you are called. Mercy itself wishes you to be merciful, righteousness itself wishes you to be righteous, so that the Creator may shine forth in his creature, and the image of God be reflected in the mirror of the human heart as it imitates his qualities.



Sunday 30th August 2026 Trinity 13 / 22nd Ordinary Gospel: Matt 16: 21 – end



In today's Gospel the Lord speaks in explicit terms about the cross that He is to bear. He says to His disciples (i.e. you and me) that if we are to be his followers, we also must renounce ourselves and take up the cross and follow him. To us, today, the cross has become a religious symbol, and as a result our senses are numb to its horrifying power. We must never forget that for the first eight centuries of the Christian era the cross was not depicted in Christian art, such were its associations with violence. For the Christian the cross is seen through the eyes of faith, and faith teaches us that this instrument of suffering and death was the very thing God used to reconcile what was divided. The eyes of faith look at the cross and see the reach of the Divine Love for mankind. The power of His cross always triumphs over the world's evil.

Words from St Leo (concluded)

The faith of those who live their faith is a serene faith. What you long for will be given you; what you love will be yours for ever.