



The Benedictine Tide

Benedictine Sisters of Florida

Touching Lives through Prayer and Service

Summer 2021

The Beatitudes

Jesus' Sermon
on the Mount



The scriptures tell us, "You are the light of the world."

It is in *The Beatitudes* that Jesus teaches us that our spiritual life lives. As we live them so goes the world...

The Eight Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

*Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

(Matthew Chapter 5)

Reflections on Jesus' Gift of the Beatitudes

The BEATITUDES: Looking Back through a long Lens — I Was There That Day

(Matthew 5: 3-12 and Luke 6: 20-23)

The evangelist Matthew tells the story in his Gospel of the day Jesus offered us a bequest that gathered many of His lessons into one gift-wrapped package we call the BEATITUDES. The evangelist Luke, too, relates his version of that afternoon on the mountainside (Matthew 5:3-12 and Luke 6:20-23). Both men may have been there, but Matthew's version contains more details. I know that Luke gleaned an insight into home life from Mary, Jesus' mother. *This particular day I know Matthew was there, hearing Jesus firsthand. He was seated right beside me. I can conjure up his image now. He wasn't very agile so he kept squirming to find a comfortable position on the grassy slope.*

LISTEN UP NOW! Jesus is getting ready to speak. Look around you. The Beatitudes that He'll share are not some pie-in-the-sky sayings. What Jesus says reflects what He saw so often. He gives us a gift to unwrap and remember in our everyday life. **"Blessed are they."**

Jesus spots a rich man and his wife who live very simply-did you notice her peasant style dress? She got it at the Jerusalem Good Will store. This couple has a reputation for generosity. Raising his hand in blessing over the crowd, Jesus says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the kingdom of God is theirs."

See that family there? That one, the family that is mourning the death of their infant daughter. Hear Jesus when he says: "Blessed are the sorrowing, they shall be comforted."

Turning to make eye contact with the family whose only child is in a wheelchair and has many special needs, Jesus said: "Blessed are the lowly; they shall inherit the land."

Seeing some of John's disciples, Jesus senses the people's hunger for His words. But, the sun is high in the sky. Some have traveled far and Jesus knows they must be weary and hungry. But they wait with an air of expectancy to see if He will offer them a word. Jesus does not disappoint as he says: "Blest are they who hunger and thirst for holiness, they shall have their fill."

Oh, look over to your right. Do you see the older woman gently soothing a fretting infant so a young mother can rock her fretting toddler to sleep? Hear Jesus when he says: "Blessed are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs."

Why is Jesus looking over there? He seems to be focusing on some who've lost interest in his sermon. He knows that they've heard this before in different ways. This time it might soak in if they'd just listen. He knows their deep desire to be always in his presence. He reminds them: "Blest are the single-hearted for they shall see God."

What's He smiling about now? Oh, I see. It's that young father rolling a ball of yarn back and forth to his two young sons. A moment ago they were squabbling over the ball. Gently flicking the ball in the direction of each boy in turn seems to be a habit of his. And all the time Papa's listening so intently to Jesus' words. "Blest are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God."

Jesus' expression changes. Mmmm. He is looking at those church officials. The ones who have dared to follow him. They know they're going to be the object of tomorrow's gossip fest. Jesus speaks directly to them. "Blessed are those persecuted for holiness sake; the reign of God is theirs."

Slowly scanning the entire crowd, Jesus goes on to say: "Blest are YOU when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven. You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot."

Again, I remind you: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Sister Roberta Bailey



The Be Attitude

The people of Jesus' day and ours know in their hearts that more than keeping the rules or knowing the right answers, it's doing with love—the Be-attitude, living the Gospel.

If I had to write the Beatitudes, maybe they would look like this: Blessed are those who know they need God—who mourn wrong doing, know sadness, pain, loss...

God will comfort them.

Blessed are the meek, the humble who seek and depend on God. They are open and find God **WIT them; i.e. with them, in them, working through them.** Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

They will strive to do God's will, express attitudes of **BEing** that speak louder/clearer than words—Mercy, purity of heart—They will be peace-makers and they will be persecuted by those who are blind/deaf to God's Presence **WIT** us.

We are all called to be God-like kind, loving, forgiving ... even to those who aren't. That is non-violence and a call to conversion for each of us. Make it your aim to claim the Be-Attitudes of Christ and to practice them in your day-to-day living. It will be a blessing to others and to yourself as well.

Sister Mary David Hydro

Happenings at the Monastery

July 6th was a day of joy for the Benedictine Sisters of Florida as we announced the gradual re-opening of our home, Holy Name Monastery. We caution - for everyone's safety and especially older guests and Sisters— that you **only plan to visit if you have been vaccinated!** We invite friends and family to Mass on Sundays and in September individuals and small groups can schedule a retreat: Contact S. Mary Clare at: **maryclareneu@gmail.com** or **352-588-7188**.

The Sisters are hoping to host two **concerts**, one this fall 2021 and one in Spring 2022. Information will be on our website once they are confirmed.

Father Andrew Siasa (pictured below with the Sisters), chaplain for Holy Name Monastery celebrated Mass at Holy Name on May 23rd. Father graduated from Saint Leo University and is soon headed back to Africa where he will serve as a middle school principal. He was given a little



gift from the Sisters with many prayers and good wishes for his giving of hope and help.



Flag Day 2021

On Sunday, June 13th in anticipation of Flag Day, our flag was raised for the first time since we had guests here in March 2020. It was frayed and torn due to high winds so we

decided not to raise a new flag until the pandemic passed. We never dreamed it would be such a long time. Now that the CDC restrictions have begun to be lifted, and we have begun to open our doors, this Flag Day seemed a fitting occasion to raise the flag. Everyone gathered outside for the blessing by **Father Clement, O.S.B.**, the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of "Let There Be Peace on Earth." The flag was donated by **Postulant Kathleen Daye** (pictured to Fr. Clement's left) who has dearly treasured it from her mother's funeral ceremony.

Additional attendees were two local dignitaries: **San Antonio City Commissioner John T. Vogel** and representing City of St. Leo, our own Sister Donna DeWitt, OSB.





Election facilitators left to right: Sister Kathy McNany, (then Sister Roberta), Federation President Sister Lynn McKenzie, and Sister Marcia Ziska

The Mantle is Graciously Accepted

The Benedictine Sisters of Florida conducted the election of prioress in April - almost a year late due to Covid-19. We gratefully thank the Federation of Scholastica facilitators who made it possible with their time and expertise in the process.

The community blessed and reaffirmed **Sister Roberta Bailey** as their prioress and pledged their support. The formal and inspiring rite took place during Sunday Mass, June 27, 2021.

Sister Roberta's Address to the Community -

Whew – I'm glad I had a copy of this Rite to digest ahead of time ... all those "Yes!" "I will" exchanged - sounds pretty presumptuous, or pompous or is it just plain "real?" This cross (I am wearing) symbolizes, for me, the commitment we made to each other ten years ago. And, I recall, that to me in Benedict's way of thinking, leading a community is not a one-person task. It seems to me Benedict was saying: this person has the responsibility to oversee and coordinate, but the power ... the will to follow lies in the heart of each member in community. Listening first of all, then following the will of God discerned in the depth of her own being. A person joins community because they don't want to be a loner. We seek community to help us grow into the Creation, the person God had hopes for. We were a twinkle in God's eye long before we pulled ourselves upright delighting all who witnessed it ... like it was something no other child had ever achieved.



We take who we were, and who we've become: the person we are today. Every yesterday is part of the molding into our today that in turn becomes our tomorrow, that is a new Today. Someone recently asked: where does our past begin? I believe it starts with every new breath we take. We live into our future ... each one ... a little piece of who our community is becoming ... stretching and supporting one another. As Pope Francis reminds us: "We are all called to row and dream together." I add, our task is to each participate in establishing the community's rhythm so that our rowing doesn't keep us going in a perpetual circle. In the beginning we observe, then we try to match the rhythm ... at times we may feel like the klutz in the group – flailing with the oar like it's a tennis racket or a gigantic mixing spoon. At such times we can only pray: "Please, dear God, deepen my sense of humor and resiliency. Get me out of this awkward pinch. Help me row better than I dance. I love these people but if I don't soon get into sync, I may clunk someone on the head with this oar you've given me. Lord, if you wish, you can do it; we can do it." Last weekend my fortune cookie was a timely reminder: "Teamwork: the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."



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To wind this down ... I suggest that for the next six years we take as our by-word: Moving confidently into a future unknown that unfolds each new day.

MOVING - CONFIDENTLY – INTO A FUTURE UNKNOWN – THAT UNFOLDS - EACH NEW DAY.

Amen!

Cards, letters and emails of congratulations from friends, family and supporters included comments like the following from **Carol Klar**: "I was thrilled to learn that Sister Roberta will continue as prioress. She must have great strength and energy from the Lord to carry on this role after so many years of serving in this capacity. God bless her and all there."

Many comments were related to Sister Roberta's inspiring Reflections that we eblast weekly. Her followers appreciate Sister's talent for writing and ability to make the Gospels real for today's world .

4 - The Benedictine Tide

It's only two words—**THANK YOU**— and along with our ongoing prayers, the Benedictine Sisters of Florida hope you know how deeply grateful we are for you. You reached deep into your hearts to think of us at a time of great despair in the world. You knew that the income the Sisters are able to generate from our programs, retreats and workshops would come to an abrupt stop in mid-March 2020. You filled that void and made it possible for us to take care of our employees and survive.

The following friends and supporters represent those who made gifts to our mission during Calendar Year 2020. We also welcome, recognize and thank individuals and families new to the Family of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida in 2020.

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In Memorium

Janosh Purackal and his three year-old son,
Daniel-June 11, 2021 in a tragic drowning accident.
 Janosh is Sister Elizabeth's nephew.

Patricia Becker, June 19, 2021

**Please keep them and their families
 in your prayers.**

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 We Appreciate You So Much!*

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The St. Scholastica Circle

Saint Scholastica, twin sister to **Saint Benedict**, is the patron saint of Benedictine Sisters. Together with her brother, she is our co-founder. Saint Scholastica's passion for God led her to offer a sanctuary for women seeking a closer relationship with Him (like St. Benedict did for men). We, the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, share their teachings from the **Rule**. A guide written in the 6th Century, the **Rule** illustrates how we can all live a better life and it continues to be profoundly relevant to this day.

Love of God, care for others, leadership and listening, the gentler iterations of the Benedictine way, are thought to have been St. Scholastica's influence in the writing of the **Rule**. In that regard, we have established **The St. Scholastica Circle**.

Our purpose is to broaden our reach. Those who come for retreat to Holy Name come for a variety of reasons: meaning, clarity and purpose in their lives. There is universality in their overwhelming need for peace, especially in the stressful world in which we live.

Would you like to be a part of helping others overcome the feeling of emptiness and distance from the Light of our Lord? Would you help us build our capacity to improve the quality of life for both women and men in need of our Retreat Hospitality, but can't afford what really is a necessity? Holy Name Monastery is a place for people to just be, to be transformed, and to know they are not alone no matter how devastating their circumstances.

"Everything was an important part of the whole, and seeing the balanced lifestyle in action was powerful."

"Being cared for and cared about by the Sisters, prayer time to be introspective, walks in the gardens, and talking to God have brought me back to what is important."

"Truly blessed having the opportunity to spend this time and reflect."

Won't you join the 38 current members of this circle of care, built to ensure the Benedictine Sisters can sustain their ministry of light? Recurring donations made monthly or quarterly help us plan and grow our Retreat Hospitality Program. Part of your donations will provide partial scholarships for retreatants who qualify. The remainder of the **The St. Scholastica Circle** donations help to fund the program, especially Directed Retreats, leader, curriculum, staff and housekeeping. See box below to easily set-up your account.

Give monthly or quarterly now to support the Sisters' giving of the Light!

- Go to our website to set-up account at: **www.benedictinesistersoffl.org**
- Click on DONATE NOW at top of page
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A donation made to remember or honor a loved one is a precious gift. The Benedictine Sisters of Florida are privileged and honored to receive such gifts that represent one's love and respect for another.

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Connie Charlton
Gabriella Maertens
Anna Sally Redden
Brenda McBath
Michael R. Menendez
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Ruby Hlavinka
Tim and Maria Crosby
Rey and Juanita Casarez
Robert and Phyllis Broz
John Multer
Francis and Anna Crociata
Donna Kremer

Gifts In Memory (Con't)

In Memory Of:

Josephine E. Olivito
 Maria Parisi
 Mason Powell
 Willis Pringer, III
 Sister Mary Grace Riddles
 Roslyn Puzio
 Joe L. Saunders
 Sister Pia Smeddick
 Jack and Carolyn Stanton
 Rob Stanton
 Sonny Storch
 John, Mary and John Jr. Sviantek
 Cathy Vasile
 Stella Vorek
 Howard M. Wansley Jr.
 Howard M. Wansley Sr.
 Rev. Malcolm Wansley
 Elizabeth Weatherford
 Julia B. Williams:

 Kenneth Wilson
 Sara Yager

By:

William Olivito
 G. Jack and Dawn Parisi
 Mark and Connie Powell
 Henry and Rev. Deborah Belusa
 Mary Kathryn Calvert
 Thaddeus Puzio
 Kathleen Saunders
 Jean Strohmeier
 John Parrell and Carol Stanton
 John Parrell and Carol Stanton
 Stella Barthle
 Donna M. Sviantek
 Dr. Jeffrey and Alicia Senese
 John and Stephanie Hipple
 Clara Wansley
 Clara Wansley
 Clara Wansley
 John and Yvonne Boyle
 Rick and Cheryl Chadick
 Pamela LaCrosse
 Luella Wilson
 Francis and Dorothy Beaman

Gifts In Honor

Honor a loved one, friend, colleague or acquaintance for a birthday, anniversary, graduation or just because ...

In Honor Of:

Benedictine Sister of Florida
 Donatelli and Yorio Families
 Joyce Newman Goomer
 Teresa Hernandez
 Sister Mary David Hydro
 Sister Mary Clare Neuhofer
 Gloria O'Brien
 Puzio Family
 Victoria Riggione
 Kathleen Schmitt
 Jeanne Marie Ubbink-Marlow
 Sister Dianne Wansley:

By:

Clara Wansley
 Angela M. Donatelli
 Martha Newman Bennett
 Louis Maddalena
 James and Catherine Krebsbach
 Malloy and Lena Pearson
 Cynthia Sharpe
 Thaddeus Puzio
 Nicholas and Victoria Riggione
 Joanne Trezza
 Jack and Patricia Ubbink
 Clara Wansley
 Jane E. Martinson

Romans 12:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;



Holy Name Monastery

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CORPORATE COMMITMENT

In an effort to address contemporary local needs, we, the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, commit ourselves and our resources to respond with the compassion of Christ to the hungers of the People of God.

Editorial Team

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Faith Pridmore, CFRE,

Director of Mission Advancement

Writers: Benedictine Sisters

Web Master: Cheryl Chadick

Will to Get It Done is Power and Peace

The internet provides a wealth of information about getting your will done. One reason we found fascinating was in question form: "What do **Abraham Lincoln** - one of the most famous lawyers in history, **Martin Luther King Jr.**, **civil rights leader**, billionaire **Howard Hughes** and rock star **Prince** have in common?" They all died without leaving a will. Unfortunately this is not unusual.

Studies inform us that only about 3 in 10 U.S. adults have a will. And less than half of those age 55 and older have one. You may be one of the 60% of people who say they "just haven't gotten around to it" and 27% don't think there is any urgency.

Too often tremendous problems and emotional turmoil take place with loved ones when wishes are not prepared in a will. The state takes over that job and sometimes assets are temporarily frozen to give the courts time to determine how the assets should be allocated. The process can take a long time and you don't want that to be the case for your family so as the famous motto from Nike goes: ***Just do it!***

And if the Benedictine Sisters of Florida is a charity you wish to leave a gift as part of your legacy, your written will ensures that it will happen for the Sisters.

The Benedictine Sisters of Florida, a 501©3 charity, is happy to assist in your life planning with your lawyer. Just contact **Faith Pridmore, CFRE** at:

(352) 588-8320 / hnmdvelopment@saintleo.edu

