

GOSPEL PEARLS

God's gifts

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08_06_2020



Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: "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 satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for

righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5: 1-12)

The poor whom Jesus praises in the first beatitude are poor "in spirit". Spiritual poverty is found in those who see in their souls many more limits than merits: our limits are certainly proper to think about, and yet our merits are, in reality, gifts sown in us by God which we use well to bear good fruit. May we ask God's forgiveness for our weaknesses and thank Him for the gifts He gives us to use every day.