

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This Sunday, we go up on the mountainside with Jesus to hear one of the most transformative messages in the Gospel of Matthew: The Beatitudes. In a world that constantly tells us to chase power, wealth, and status to find happiness, Jesus turns everything upside down. He declares the poor in spirit, the meek, the mourners, and the merciful as “blessed.” Blessed are the poor in spirit: Those who know they need God above all else. Blessed are the meek: Those who live with humility and gentleness, rather than aggression. Blessed are the peacemakers: Those who actively seek harmony in a divided world. These teachings are not just abstract ideals; they are a direct challenge to the modern "get ahead" mentality. Jesus invites us to find our identity not in what we possess, but in whose we are. The Beatitudes reveal the very heart of God, who draws close to the humble and afflicted.

St. Francis of Assisi is considered a prime example of someone who lived the Beatitudes by embodying radical poverty, humility, and peace during the 13th-century in Italy. He embraced "Lady Poverty" to mirror Christ, acting as a peacemaker during the Crusades and demonstrating profound mercy by serving the marginalized, such as lepers.

To honor the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis and promote peace and spiritual renewal, Pope Leo XIV proclaimed a special Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi, taking place from January 10, 2026, through January 10, 2027. This Jubilee Year invites us to follow the example of St. Francis and reflect on where we are seeking happiness. Are we trying to fill our lives with possessions, or are we letting ourselves be filled by the love of God? As we live, move, and have our being, may we carry these blessings, acting as God's instruments to bring peace and mercy to those overlooked by society.

Peace and All Good!

Fr. Luke
Parochial Administrator