



## A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

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*“He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly:  
for he has filled the hungry with good things and set the rich away empty.” Mary in Luke 1:52-53*

I have heard that the job of a good preacher is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. I worry when I listen to a homily and find myself in total agreement, or even worse when I feel a bit self-righteous. I think the homilist has done something wrong! People should leave a homily either feeling comforted or challenged. Sometimes both.

The Gospel of Luke is my favorite of the Gospels. Luke’s Gospel has a special focus on people who have been cast aside by the political or religious leadership, as well as the wealthy. Plus, he calls out the latter group of people for how poorly they often treat the people who have been cast aside. In the Gospel reading for today (Luke 6:20-26), Jesus both comforts and afflicts! Jesus is out here setting the standard for good preachers!

He starts off talking about people who are poor, hungry, weeping, hated, and excluded. He tells them the Kingdom of God is theirs! They will be fed, they will laugh, they will receive a reward in heaven! He finishes off that section by saying the people who are hating and excluding others are the same folks who treated the prophets that way! He isn’t beating around the bush about this. The second part of this reading is Jesus warning the rich, the well fed, the laughing, and the well spoken of. In God’s Kingdom that is not the order. Those people will be hungry, grieving, and weeping. That doesn’t sound so nice!

I find myself reading this and seeing myself pretty squarely in the “woes” group of Jesus’ talk. That’s worrisome to me. I would not term myself rich, but there have only been a few times in my life where I have had to worry about hunger, or constant concern about where my next meal will come from. Plus, my ego LOVES when people speak well of me. It’s hard not to like that! I think that most of the people reading this generally fit into this second category.

So how do we respond to this? Do we look away in shame? Do we consign ourselves to be thrown out of God’s Kingdom? Instead, I believe that Jesus is calling us to build the Kingdom of God here, now! A place where the hungry have food and the mourning will leap with joy. It is a place where we all share in the bounty of God’s Creation and love.

**Tim Deveney is Director of the Precious Blood Volunteers a ministry of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. To learn more about this ministry visit [preciousbloodvolunteers.org](https://preciousbloodvolunteers.org)**

*This weekly reflection is made available to all who are part of our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at [votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org](mailto:votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org)*