



Lent 2011

With Love and Prayer

Dearest Saviour of the World Family,

I bring you greetings from Sierra Leone and all the children express their warmest appreciation and love for all what you have done for them and us all. You are always in our love and prayers and may God bless you in abundance.

This Month we have succeeded in saving another child from abortion and the pregnant mother is in the house with us and she is doing Good. We pray that this time round we will be able to save the life of both the mother and child.

The Mother is 17yrs a school going girl and the pregnancy is about 3months but at the end of this month we will be able to do the first medical checkup for both the mother and the unborn child.

You are able to do all this with the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and may the almighty bless you with everything you undertake on earth. Pray for me



that I can be not just a mother with 37 children and not just a mother but a caring and loving one. (smile)

thanks you every one with Love

Louisa

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**SAVIOR OF THE WORLD
SIERRA LEONE
WEST AFRICA**

Living the Beatitudes



The little children and Louisa on Sunday morning before Mass

"Thoughtfulness is the beginning of great holiness"

Blessed Theresa of Calcutta

Dearest Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

A little girl named Princess has been an orphan child surrounded by an extraordinarily thoughtful love even from before she was born.

She is the child of a mother who wanted to abort her. That was not a thoughtful choice: it was made under duress.

"Thoughtfulness is the beginning of great holiness": this is a favorite line of Mother Theresa of Calcutta, a line that has made its way on to the walls of many a Missionaries of Charity convent. In her moments of instruction, Mother would remind us that humility is at the root of thoughtfulness. One prays to be humble like our Mother the Virgin Mary so that we may be holy like Jesus.

Humility and thoughtfulness are at the source of the eight Beatitudes. Jesus chose the Beatitudes to be the springboard for his Sermon on the Mount. We take note that St Thomas of Aquinas and St Gregory the Great teach us that the person who wishes to live by the grace of the Beatitudes must begin by practicing those virtues that characterize the earlier ones and only in this way does this person become ready to live the virtues of those that come later. We are

speaking of virtues that are supernatural, that is to say, that they flow forth from God, the Holy Spirit. Because they are supernatural they are powers of the soul given to us from above: one cannot live the virtues of the Beatitudes without God's special help.

God is Love; the Holy Spirit is the personal love of God poured forth into the heart of the one who has faith; and this divine love in action manifests itself by way of seven gifts that enable the person to live the Beatitudes.

We cannot help but notice that Princess wished to be doing what her brothers and sisters were doing: she was – and is – living in an atmosphere of a love that is maturing according to the contours of fundamental Christian virtues. Her physical miracle is simply a sign of a much more important spiritual miracle: a family is forming in beautiful harmony with the will of this family's father. But, let's talk about their "father":

As we enter the spirit of the first Beatitude, I would like to raise a question to all of you: many of you have talked about the young mother of so many orphan children – how can she do it? I hear this same commentary over and over again in Burundi and Rwanda – "Oh, she is such a good-hearted

woman; she has such thoughtful love for these children who have suffered in so many sad ways in their very young lives." But the question I wish to raise is: who is the father of this family?

The father is God himself. He is the Father of Louisa's children; and he is the Father of us all. It is the Father who, through his Word, Jesus Christ, gives us the Beatitudes.

We contemplate the first Beatitude: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven*. To live this Beatitude, one has need of the Holy Spirit's gift called fear of the Lord. Fear of the Lord corresponds to the virtue of humility: we receive the grace to open our eyes and recognize that God deserves first place in our thoughts, desires, decisions, words and actions. First place is God's place, not only when we find ourselves heaving a sigh of relief because we've had the chance to distance ourselves for a moment from the day's stresses. We can and should give first place to God even in the middle of all such tension and confusion. God reigns serene.

The sin that this Beatitude enables us to eradicate from our lives is that of pride. Just as humility is the source of every virtue, even of

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Living the Beatitudes

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thoughtfulness and compassion, pride is the source of every vice. The one who is proud has found someone that he or she thinks deserves first place: not God. The proud person gives first place to self; even when he or she attempts to speak or act humbly, this moment of humility may actually be a nonverbal invitation to everyone around to voice their admiration and praise: "Oh, you must be a good-hearted, warm, tenderly-loving person to express yourself so humbly..." ... when in actuality your goal in conducting yourself in visibly humble ways was to fortify your own pride, that is to say, to fortify your conviction that you are the one who should be in first place.

The children in Louisa's family have had to learn to give God first place in their struggle with pain, loneliness and hunger. Louisa's strict rules for daily prayer, rules that all the children are obeying because they want to obey them, reinforce the children's awareness that God for them is Everything. He reigns supreme. His love has engendered this atmosphere of thoughtfulness.

The second Beatitude, *Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth*, renders

us newly capable to live without anger, hidden or expressed. The supernatural virtue that God wishes to give us by the Holy Spirit's gift of piety enables us not only to express ourselves with genuine respect, gratitude and hence worship for Almighty God; but this gift of piety also enables us to respect each and every human being as God's work of art. The gift of piety enables us to respect what God wishes to do in the life of each and every person, whether this person is already manifesting great signs of sanctity; or is simply showing that he or she is currently a big sinner in need of conversion.

We consider someone like St John Bosco who placed himself at the service of thousands of Italian children, all of whom were criminals and had seen the inside of prisons, detention centers, and other institutions designed to correct the incorrigibles. At the end of his life, he could truthfully say: "Not once have I been angry with a child or with a teenager." That's why he's a saint: he lived the grace of the Second Beatitude by the Holy Spirit's gift of piety.

The sin corresponding to this Beatitude is anger. The Beatitude helps us to control our anger by reinforcing our patience and our interior

ability to be silent. St Francis de Sales mentioned at the end of his life that at almost every moment of his daily routine he could feel anger inside of his heart. But also at every moment he could feel the Holy Spirit prodding him to be peaceful in his speech and in his conduct especially in the presence of those who were provoking his anger.

St Francis was a very public person. Indeed all witnesses tell us that not once did St Francis de Sales show signs of anger. This is the gift of piety, the ability to respect what the Holy Spirit wants to do in the hearts of even those who cause us much unnecessary suffering.

To live this Beatitude, and therefore to subdue one's anger, one can practice five very healthy rules for interior silence.

To be continued

Fr. John Gibson OCD

The children in Louisa's family have had to learn to give God first place in their struggle with pain, loneliness, and hunger.



Doing the daily laundry

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Upcoming Events

Taste of Africa

Free authentic African foods, African art & clothing to see and/or purchase. Video presentation of the home and children.

Sunday, March 13th

After all the Masses

St. Michael Parish

Schererville

Sunday, March 27

After 11AM Mass

Nativity Parish

Portage

Fish Fry

Friday, March 18th

4-7:30pm

St. Edward School Gym, Lowell

World famous Knights of Columbus fish, chicken strips, fries, parsley potatoes, cole slaw, applesauce, bread & butter, coffee, pop, and home-made desserts *including cheesecake*

Adults \$10, seniors \$9, children \$5, under 5 free

Updates

On the land donated to the home by the government of Sierra Leone, Louisa has tried to start a small farm to provide vegetables for the children. She was planning on also selling any extra to provide a bit of an income. She planned corn and cassava. Unfortunately, the dry season has been much drier than usual and the vegetables have not done well. Most have died. But she is hoping that she will

have enough time to plant a second crop right now, before the rainy season begins in earnest.

We have purchased a water tank for the home so that they can have running water inside the home. It is set up and working very well. Since it takes the generator to pump the water from the well into the tank, and the generator uses gasoline, Louisa

has only been filling the tank every third day. The children are restricted in their use of the inside water so as to save money. They still have to haul about half the water into house by hand, but they are very happy that this extensive chore has been lessened.

Thank you for making this possible!

Thank you, Jesus!