

Praying the Beatitudes

How to use this resource

In mission, as with every area of Christian life, prayer is a vital foundation. To help you reflect on some of the questions raised by the mission workshop, Ian Adams (CMS Spirituality Adviser) has written some prayers based on the beatitudes from Matthew 5. You can use this resource in any way that you find helpful, but a simple suggestion might be:

- Read the beatitude and take a few minutes to reflect on it. You may want to read it more than once.
- Read the question(s) as though you are asking them to God. Don't try to answer them straight away.
- With the question held before God, read the prayer either out loud or silently.
- Spend some time in silence listening for God's voice. Possible answers to the questions may start to occur to you.

You can do this either on your own or in a small group. There are eight beatitudes, eight questions and eight prayers. You may want to use one each day for eight days, or use one per week for eight weeks.

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:3)

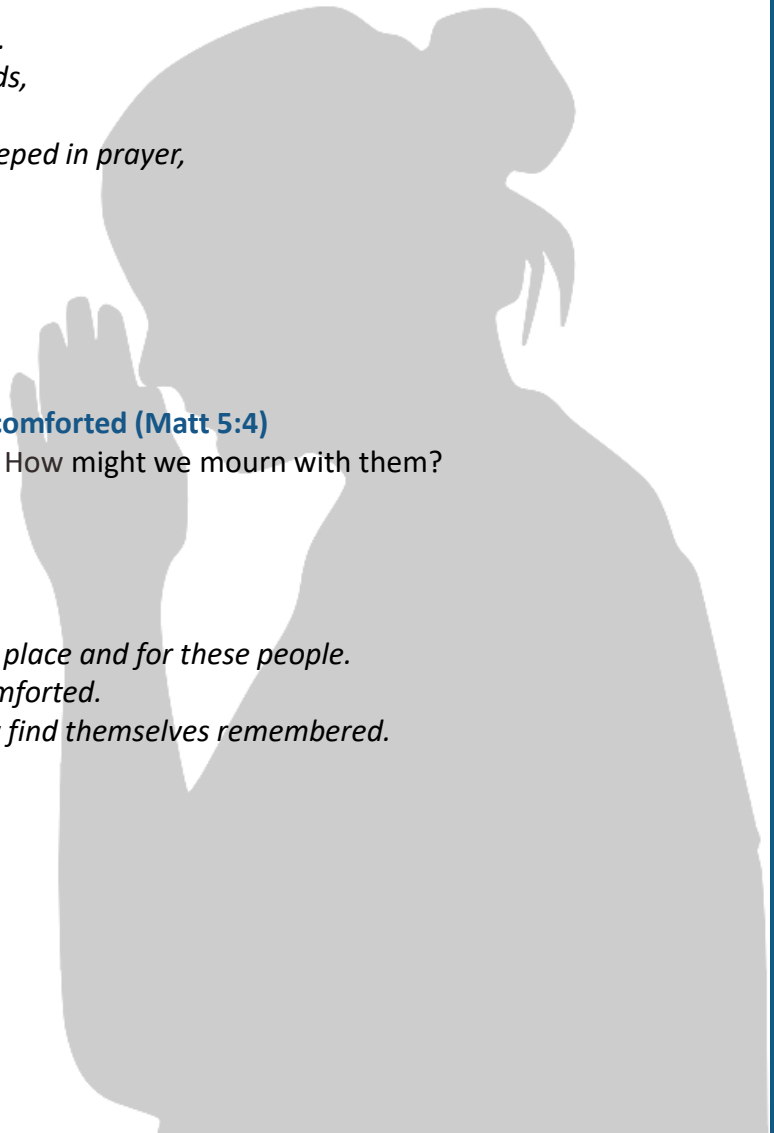
QUESTION: How might being 'poor in spirit' shape us as people of God in mission?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
we thank you for calling us in this time to this place.
Help us to become the people that this context needs,
to become the people you are calling into being,
poor in spirit, strong in faith, abounding in love, steeped in prayer,
- and in everything - full of joy.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*

2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted (Matt 5:4)

QUESTION: Who is mourning, in our own context? How might we mourn with them?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
we thank you for bringing your hope and healing
into every area of our lives.
Help us now to carry your hope and healing for this place and for these people.
May we be with those who mourn; may they be comforted.
May we be with those who are forgotten; may they find themselves remembered.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*



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3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5)

QUESTION: What might God be already doing here? How can we meekly follow God into mission and resist our own agendas?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
You are here in our gathering, and you are here in our community.
The mission here is yours,
the healing of all things is your work, and your delight.
Help us to discern your presence,
and in our actions to be both humble and faithful, meek and bold,
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*

4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled (Matt 5:6)

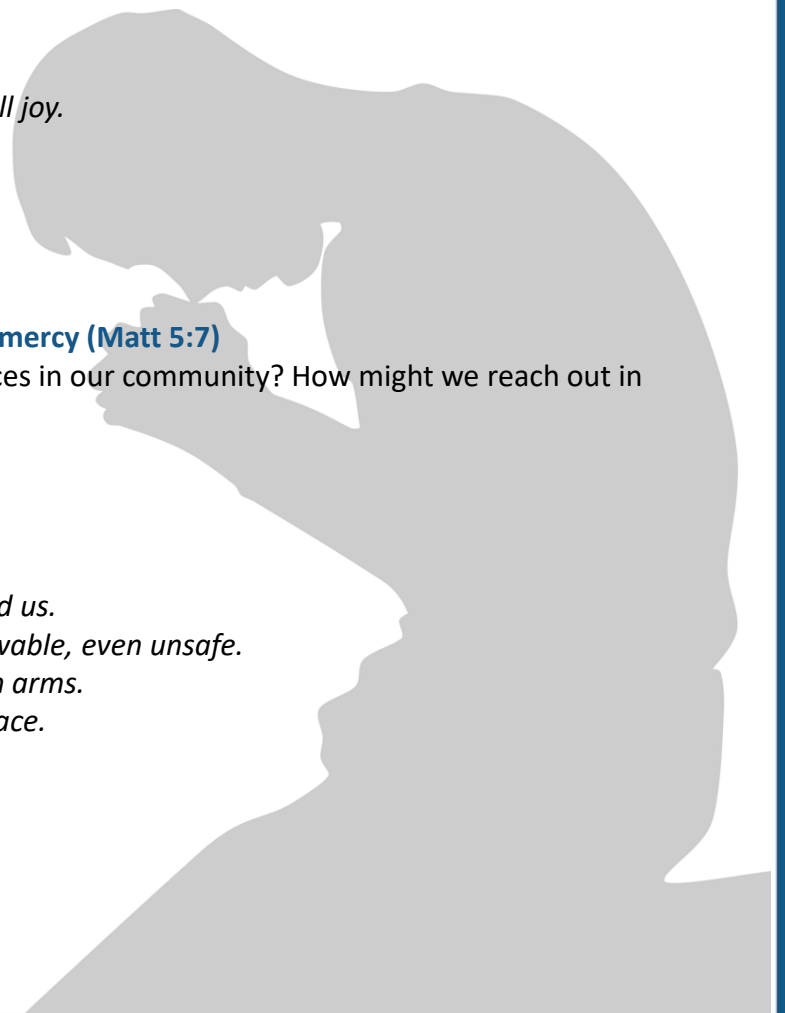
QUESTION: What are the needs of this community? What is to be celebrated?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
In this place, hidden or for all to see -
there is much need - and there is much to celebrate.
Give us, we pray, 'eyes to see and ears to hear'.
With all those who suffer
may we hunger and thirst for righteousness.
With all those who celebrate
may we find you and point to you, the source of all joy.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*

5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy (Matt 5:7)

QUESTION: Where are the apparently unsafe places in our community? How might we reach out in mercy in those places?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
Thank you for reaching out to us,
wherever we have been, whatever we have done.
Help us now to reach out in mercy to those around us.
Give us courage to enter places that seem unknowable, even unsafe.
Enable us to be people with open hearts and open arms.
May shame and blame give way to mercy and peace.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*



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6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God (Matt 5:8)

QUESTION: How can we challenge destructive world views, whilst retaining compassion for those who hold such views?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
give us, we pray, clarity to see this world as you see it.
Give us wisdom to understand how others see things,
and compassion when their view seems strange or difficult.
Help us to be people who are pure in heart,
growing in transparency,
through whom your love and light may shine.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*

7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (Matt 5:9)

QUESTION: How are the cultures in our area changing? How can we bring people together in your name?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
help us to become adept at recognising the elements
that shape the various cultures of this time and this place.
Help us to celebrate all that is good,
and to resist whatever is destructive.
Give us courage to bring the peace of the risen Jesus here
in word and in action, in gesture and in proclamation.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*

8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:10)

QUESTION: In our sharing of the good news of Jesus, how and where might our language need to be adapted; what is essential?

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God of grace
help us, we pray, to share the good news of Jesus Christ
in word and action, in gesture and in proclamation
that are both accessible in our cultures and true to you.
Give us grace, mercy and peace as we speak of Jesus.
Give us courage when this comes at a cost.
Bless all our sisters and brothers around the world
who are being persecuted at this time for their love for you;
may they know your presence.
And so, in Jesus' name,
may your kingdom come,
and your will be done.
Amen.*

