

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12a

What would you say if there is a recipe for perfect joy that lasts forever?

That right, there is a formula for perfect joy that lasts forever and it's available to you. And not just you, but it is available for all people? Interested?

And that's not all: the Author of the recipe for perfect joy that lasts forever cannot be wrong and cannot lie.

My brothers and sisters, perfect joy that lasts forever is given to those whose *religious dispositions* and *moral conduct* meet the demands of Jesus.

In other words, 1) the poor in spirit, 2) those who mourn, 3) the meek, 4) those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, 5) the merciful, 6) the pure in heart, 7) the peacemakers, and 8) those who suffer persecution in their search for God. These are *not* different kinds of people like students attending different school or citizens from different countries. These are different demands made on everyone who wants to follow Jesus and discover perfect joy that lasts forever.

We all want to be happy. Some, however, are misled to believe that happiness is God's way of rewarding good behavior. Teachers give gold stars, coaches give helmet stickers, God gives happiness.

No - Jesus' way is a very different approach. The healthy and the sick, the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor – all people are called independently of their circumstances to perfect joy that lasts forever and it can be had by living up to what Jesus teaches.

POVERTY OF SPIRIT is an attitude of neediness and of humility towards God (not a material poverty). A person poor in spirit trusts in God's mercy to be saved.

Those who **MOURN**. Here our Lord is speaking about those who suffer from any kind of affliction and especially those who are sorry for their sins or are pained by the offences which others offer God *and* they bear their sufferings with love and a spirit of wanting to make it right.

The **MEEK** are those who patiently suffer unjust persecution. The meek are those who remain serene, humble and steadfast in the face of adversity, and do not give way to resentment or discouragement. [In contrast, irritableness usually stems from a lack of humility and interior peace].

A **RIGHTEOUS** person is one who sincerely strives to do the will of God. In other words, a righteous person takes to heart God's Commandments.

MERCY is not merely a matter of giving something to the poor but much more profoundly of being understanding towards other people's defects, overlooking them, helping them to cope with them and loving them despite whatever defects they may have. Being merciful also means rejoicing and suffering with other people.

PURITY (or cleanliness) of heart is a gift of God which expresses itself in a capacity to love, in having an upright and pure attitude to everything noble, beautiful, good and true.

PEACEMAKERS foster peace in themselves and in others and, as a basis for that, try to be reconciled and to reconcile others with God. Being at peace with God is the cause and affect for every other kind of peace.

Some **SUFFER PERSECUTION** for being true to Jesus Christ and His Church. Circumstances arise in a Christian's life that call for heroism – where no compromise is admissible. Either one stays true to Jesus Christ whatever the cost in terms of reputation, life or possessions, or one denies Him.

The Beatitudes are the conditions that Jesus lays down – the recipe – for perfect joy that lasts forever. Everyone is invited to put Jesus' teaching into practice.

The Christian life is no easy matter, but it sure is worthwhile given the reward Jesus promises.