



## SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



BLESSED ARE YOU POOR

LUKE 6.17; 20-26.

Fr Laurence Kriegshauser 2.11.07

These words of Jesus tell us why we're here. We are the poor. Poor in our inability to give ourselves eternal life. We can only beg to receive it. We need Jesus because we want life, authentic life that never ends. All my efforts can never achieve this life, it is God's to give. And it is Jesus who offers it, who satisfies our hunger for life and truth. No one else has made this offer. He sacrificed himself for us out of love. He died and rose again to give us a share in his resurrection. We are here because he communicates that life to us through the Eucharist in which he renews his offering of himself to the Father so that we can offer it with him and share in its fruits. As he gathers us into his own self-offering, he fills us with his risen life, the life that we seek.

We are poor in another way. Poor in virtue. We are to love God with our whole heart and strength, but selfishness creeps in and holds us back from the full gift of self. We need forgiveness for preferring ourselves to God. Jesus grants that forgiveness freely for our past sins and our present sluggishness. If we weep for those sins we are blessed; we will laugh when we experience the gift of forgiveness. We are here because we need forgiveness and the food that strengthens us in love, makes us little by little more selfless. We are here for the food that makes us saints.

Finally we are here because we want joy, lasting joy, the joy of union with the one who made us and gave himself for us. We are here to enjoy the fullness of love, communion with God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Deepen your hunger for the Lord. Tell your friends how he satisfies that hunger. Help them understand his love for them and the intimacy by which he communicates himself to you in the Eucharist. Tell them how this sacrament, in making you one with God, makes you one with his Body on earth, unites you with all men and women in love. How it enables you to find your own unique place in this body, receiving and giving love. Tell them how by recognizing your own insufficiency and putting down roots in Christ you experience strength, like a tree planted beside the water.

The Eucharist has the power to change the world, to make us one, to bring us to eternal life. Poor, we come to be made rich, hungry to be filled, weeping to laugh, misunderstood by the world to be rewarded in heaven. Let us ask the Lord to make his Eucharist fully effective in us so that we may bring his life to the world, which is poor and hungry and sad without knowing it.