

Wednesday of the 23rd Week of Ordinary Time

Lucan Beatitudes Chapter 6

Homily of Bishop Barres

St. Agnes Cathedral

September 7, 2022

Romano Guardini, a favorite theologian of both Pope Francis and Pope Benedict, once described the power of the Beatitudes in this way: The Beatitudes “come from heaven, but they shake, palpably, the foundations of earth.”¹

The Beatitudes turn the logic of the world on its head and challenge us to embrace instead the logic of the Kingdom of God. The Beatitudes are a portrait of He who proclaims them.

The Beatitudes “come from heaven, but they shake, palpably, the foundations of earth.”

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* richly expresses the power of the Beatitudes: “The beatitude we are promised confronts us with decisive moral choices. It invites us to purify our hearts of bad instincts and to seek the love of God above all else. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, in any human achievement – however beneficial it may be – such as science, technology, and art, or indeed in any creature, but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love (1723)...The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostolic catechesis describe for us the paths that lead to the Kingdom of heaven. Sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we tread them, step by step, by everyday acts. By the working of the Word of Christ, we slowly bear fruit in the Church to the glory of God.” (1724)

The Beatitudes “come from heaven, but they shake, palpably, the foundations of earth.”

¹ Romano Guardini, *The Lord*, (Washington DC: Gateway Editions Regnery Publishing, Inc.), 83

In his 2018 Apostolic Exhortation on the Beatitudes, *Rejoice and Be Glad*, Pope Francis describes their power: “Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy when he gave us the Beatitudes...In the Beatitudes, we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives...Although Jesus’ words may strike us as poetic, they clearly run counter to the way things are usually done in our world. Even if we find Jesus’ message attractive, the world pushes us toward another way of living. The Beatitudes are in no way trite or undemanding, quite the opposite. We can only practice them if the Holy Spirit fills us with his power and frees us from our weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride. Let us listen once more to Jesus, with all the love and respect that the Master deserves. Let us allow his words to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live. Otherwise holiness will remain no more than an empty word.” (63, 65-66)

The Beatitudes “come from heaven, but they shake, palpably, the foundations of earth.”

In *Jesus of Nazareth* (Volume 1), Pope Benedict XVI states: “The Beatitudes are the transposition of Cross and Resurrection into discipleship. But they apply to the disciple because they were first paradigmatically lived by Christ himself....the Beatitudes are also a road map for the Church which recognizes in them the model of what she herself should be.”²

The Beatitudes “come from heaven, but they shake, palpably, the foundations of earth.”

² Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth* (Volume 1), (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 74.