

2019 All Saints

1. **Recently, we upgraded our computers.** One of the programs that Fr. Anthony installed onto my computer is called “Free File Sync”, S, Y, N, C. It connects or syncs several devices in the Abbot’s office. “Sync “ is a relatively new word to formal English usage, but is much used in the computer world. One Protestant writer, however, used this word very well in reference to the beatitudes. He put it this way:

“In His Beatitudes, Jesus is announcing the Divine “blessed”.

Makarios (Greek for Blessed)

Congratulations

...

Right-on

Right-side up

In-alignment

In sync! (Darrell W. Johnson, *The Beatitudes* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 27-28.)

2. **I am sure you noticed how all the beatitudes begin with “Blessed”.** But perhaps you did not ask yourself why? There is **a unity and harmony among them all.** All are in sync with the divine life of God and waiting to be in sync with our actions and words and attitudes. **The divine life of God is in sync with itself, and so also are the beatitudes, which are a reflection of his harmonious life.**

3. **And did you notice that while each beatitude described a particular blessing,** nonetheless, each one is directed to the same person: **you, me, the disciple?** Again, perhaps you did not ask why. It seems so obvious, but I will say it anyway: **The beatitudes are describing the life of an ordinary Christian in sync with Jesus’ own life and dispositions.**

4. **And did you notice how all the rewards announced really point to one reward?** Which one? The access doors to the Kingdom of God. **All doors in sync!** Which means pursuing even one of the beatitudes leads to pursuing them all. **The eight gates lead into one big City of God.**

5. **In that City, one of the elders pointed out to the Apostle John** the vast multitude he saw circling the Lamb and asked him: “Do you know who these people are?” The Apostle was hesitant to answer and so the elder went on: “These are they who have gone through the great persecution and have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.” These are they who have **received the “love that the Father** has lavished on them”. They have purified themselves by the blood of his love and are now like him, and “see him as he is.” Jesus is the Lamb in the center. **The beatitudes prepare us for a community life that is above, but begins below.**

6. **This is one feature of the beatitudes that is not so obvious: they can’t really and truly be lived except in a community.** It is very difficult to be poor in spirit and merciful and meek if you have nobody to practise these actions upon. The community dimension of the beatitudes gives us **a real experience of what it is like to live like Jesus.** “Families are

the first and most essential Christian community” (Jacques Philippe, *The Eight Doors of the Kingdom: Meditations on the Beatitudes* (Cleveland, OH: Scepter, 2018) 18). And if you find yourself single, then practice them on every one you meet. When we practise the beatitudes together we begin to recognize each other as belonging to one spiritual family of Jesus. The collective witness of the beatitudes is like a beautiful garden. **Its fragrance diffuses for miles, all over the world!**

7. **How can we begin to do this?** Begin with this Eucharist, “desiring the banquet of our heavenly homeland” as the post-Communion Prayer expresses our deepest desires. Then consider which one is closest to your vocation. Next ask yourself which one is most helpful for the struggles you face in living the Gospel. **Then make your choice and keep it all your life!** As you struggle to put the beatitude of your choice into practice you will see how it opens you up to the action of the Holy Spirit. **The Holy Spirit is the one who keeps all the saints and angels in heaven and on earth in sync with the divine life.**

8. **So we see the great gift of the beatitudes and the Saints today.** The beatitudes teach us how to be in sync with the divine life within us. The saints who have purified themselves by practising the beatitudes teach us that the beatitudes practiced in community life bring our earthly communities into sync with the Communion of the Saints who are in turn in sync with the divine life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **To them be glory and praise forever and ever!**