



*«They  
call me  
Holy Father  
and that is  
what  
I must be»*

*(John XXIII).*

## *The Way of Holiness*

To know what is the way to holiness, we must go with the Apostles up the mount of the Beatitudes to draw near to Jesus and listen to the words of life that come from his lips. Today too he says to us again:

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!* The divine Teacher proclaims “blessed” and, we could say, “canonizes” first of all the poor in spirit, that is, those whose heart is free of prejudices and conditionings, and who are therefore totally disposed to the divine will. Their total and trusting fidelity to God presupposes renunciation and consistent self-detachment.

*Blessed are those who mourn!* This is the blessedness not only of those who suffer from the many misfortunes that belong to the mortal human condition, but also those who courageously accept the sufferings that result from the sincere profession of Gospel morality.

*Blessed are the pure in heart!* He proclaims blessed those who are not content with outward or ritual purity, but seek that absolute inner rectitude which excludes all deceit and duplicity.

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness!* Human righteousness is already a very lofty goal, which ennoble the heart of whoever pursues it, but Jesus is thinking of that greater righteousness which lies in seeking God’s saving will: blessed above all are those who hunger and thirst for this righteousness. For Jesus says: “He who does the will of my Father who is in heaven shall enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 7:21).

*Blessed are the merciful!* Happy are those who overcome their hardness of heart and indifference, to recognize in practice the primacy of compassionate love, following the example of the Good Samaritan and, in the last analysis, of the Father “rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4).

*Blessed are the peacemakers!* Peace, the sum of all messianic blessings, is a demanding task. In a world marked by tremendous antagonisms and barriers, fraternal harmony inspired by love and sharing must be promoted by overcoming hostilities and conflicts. Blessed are those who dedicate themselves to this most noble endeavour!

The saints took these words of Jesus seriously. They believed that they would find “happiness” by putting them into practice in their lives. And they realized their truth in everyday experience: despite their trials, moments of darkness and failures, they already tasted here below the deep joy of communion with Christ. In him they discovered the initial seed, already present in time, of the future glory of God’s kingdom.

*(John Paul II, 1 November 2000)*