

Family Page

Background Reflection

Jesus gave us the Beatitudes to get to the heart of who we should be as disciples: merciful, reliant upon God, peacemakers, and so on. God wants us to be happy, and in the Beatitudes Jesus teaches us that lasting happiness comes from the intent of our heart and actions.

But the Beatitudes can be confusing. Should mourning and feeling sad for others make us happy? being poor of spirit? being persecuted for upholding justice? Indeed, Jesus says, we are happiest when our relationship with God moves in the right direction. When we are in harmony with others, when we show mercy and kindness to those who have less, when we are building the Kingdom of God, we are happiest.

As you teach your child about the Beatitudes, stress the contrast between temporary happiness and permanent happiness. We know that happiness will last only when it is connected to God and to one another—not to things. Today, think about how each beatitude can bring you closer to God and show the way to lasting happiness.

Family Activities

- Make care bags to give homeless people you may encounter around town. In a plastic ziptop bag, put a pair of socks, a water bottle, a granola bar, some soap, a roll of toilet paper, and other toiletries. Write a note from your family to put in the bag as well. Keep the bags in your car to give out when you see someone who might need one.
- Read together the Featured Story on page 1456 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Matthew 5:6–9). Talk about why being merciful, avoiding sin, and making peace can make us happy. Brainstorm the names of people you know who live some or all of these Beatitudes.
- Watch the video “Young Baseball Fan’s Act of Generosity | World News Tonight with David Muir | ABC News” (YouTube, 2:11) together. Discuss why helping others is the right thing to do and how it can lead to feelings of happiness.

People of Faith

Saint Gemma Galgani (1878–1903)

Saint Gemma was ill most of her life, but she united her sufferings to the sufferings of Jesus. She was poor herself, but she always helped those who had even less. Gemma is the patron saint of pharmacists, as well as those who are poor and unemployed. Her feast day is April 11.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son, Jesus, to teach us how to live. You want us to be happy, so we ask your help in following the Beatitudes Jesus gave us. Amen.

