

Family Page

Background Reflection

Sometimes we confuse happiness with everyday feelings, but that is not what Jesus taught us. In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us a path to happiness that seems to contradict our modern understanding of happiness. We might read his teachings and think, How can I be persecuted or insulted and still be happy?

The happiness Jesus describes is a deeper happiness often referred to as joy. We are joyful because we know that we are sons and daughters of God. We are joyful because we belong to God's family, the Church. We are joyful when we actively participate in God's plan for us, even if we don't understand his plan. We are joyful because God promised us true happiness.

During our earthly life, we are working toward eternal happiness with God by living our faith. Jesus gave us the Beatitudes to teach us the way to true happiness by showing us how to imitate him. We no longer worry about what the world thinks of us—we only focus on how God sees us and our world. We are free to make God's priorities our own. In the Beatitudes, we find the perfect way to find happiness in living the New Covenant.

Family Activities

- Read the Featured Story on page 1456 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Matthew 5:6–9). Ask your child to tell you what she or he remembers from this chapter. Discuss how Jesus' message is just as important for us today.
- Brainstorm ways that you can follow the Beatitudes as a family. Make a goal this week to find a way to be more merciful (kind and forgiving), be pure of heart (seek God and God's ways with all your hearts), or work for peace (the good of others and solutions to conflict) as a family.
- Watch the video "BEGINNER MOTIONS (The Beatitudes)" (YouTube, 2:35) together. Discuss how our actions show our beliefs. Remind your child that by following Christ, she or he will find true happiness.

People of Faith

Saint Josephine Bakhita (1868–1947)

Saint Josephine was born in Sudan, where her uncle was a tribal chief. She was kidnapped and sold as a slave. Owner after owner subjected her to severe mistreatment. She was taken to Italy, where she learned about God while staying at a convent of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. The sisters helped her gain her freedom. She asked to be baptized and soon joined the sisters, where she prepared other sisters to be missionaries to Africa. Her feast day is February 8.

Prayer

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

Lord, help our family grow in happiness. Show us how we can be merciful, and pure of heart, and how we can work for peace here on Earth, so that one day we may celebrate with you in Heaven. Amen.

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