

Homily on Wisdom 3:1-9 and Matthew 5:1-12a

Theme: Blessed Are Those Who Trust in God

My brothers and sisters,

Today, as we remember and pray for our beloved departed brothers and sisters, the readings offer a message of profound hope and comfort. They address core questions of the human soul: What becomes of those who suffer? Does faithfulness matter when life is difficult? Where is God when the righteous face trials? What rewards await those who strive to live according by Gospel values? Are our departed loved ones, who cherished the beatitudes, now with God?

In the first reading from the Book of Wisdom, we find these reassuring words: *"The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them."* At first glance, this might seem to conflict with our everyday experience. Every day, evil people thrive in harmful behaviors such as corruption, violence, and deception, continuing cycles of injustice and suffering. Meanwhile, good people endure illness, loss, disappointment, and even persecution. Yet the Wisdom writer affirms that suffering does not have the final say for those belonging to God. Those faithful to Him are cherished in His eyes; He considers them worthy of Himself. Just as gold is tested in the furnace, they will ultimately shine with God's glory.

Sometimes we feel our struggles to remain faithful yield no immediate reward. So, we may be tempted to ask ourselves, "Is it worth it?" Here, the wisdom author answers with a resounding yes. This advice is for you and me, especially for all who have endured hardship, loss, rejection, or suffering for God and his people. As always, God is at work even when we cannot see it. With God, the just are never abandoned; they are always in His hands. The world may look upon the trials of the righteous and see only defeat. Wisdom tells us that God sees something entirely different. What appears to be loss may be a blessing in disguise. What appears to be failure can become victory. What appears to be death may lead to eternal life.

This message is further echoed in the Gospel. Jesus climbs the mountain and proclaims the Beatitudes. These go beyond simple moral lessons. The Beatitudes remind us that suffering and death are not signs of God's absence. In fact, they can become moments of profound encounter with Him. The meek, the merciful, the pure of heart, and those who hunger for righteousness often carry hidden crosses. Yet Jesus calls them blessed because God's grace works within them. The people Jesus calls "blessed" are not those the world usually admires. As always, the world praises power, wealth, status, and success. Jesus praises humility, mercy, purity, and perseverance in suffering. He invites us to take our cross and follow him.

Why? Because God's Kingdom operates by a different logic. True happiness is not found in possessing more but in "being" more and belonging more fully to God. Genuine blessedness is not the absence of suffering but the presence of God's grace.

The Beatitudes teach us the path to holiness. A grieving mother or father who continues to trust God, even in times of hardship. A Christian who forgives despite deep wounds is blessed. Another Christian who stands for truth, even when it is unpopular, is blessed. A disciple who quietly serves others without recognition is blessed.

This is precisely the hope found in the first reading. The righteous are tested, but they are precious in God's sight. Their faith is not wasted. Their sacrifices are not forgotten. Their trust will be rewarded. Hence, our loved ones who have gone before us are blessed indeed.

These readings are especially comforting as we remember the departed or reflect on the mystery of life after death. Wisdom assures us that those who die in God's friendship remain in His hands. Likewise, Jesus assures us that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who follow Him faithfully. Therefore, death is not the end of the story, for God's love is stronger than death.

As Christians, we are called to embody the Beatitudes daily. Our mission is to foster peace in a harsh, divided world and to bring hope into lives often shadowed by despair. By doing so, we bear witness that God's Kingdom is already among us.

Today, let us ask for the grace to trust God when we are tested, to remain faithful even when the path is difficult, and to believe that true blessedness lies not in worldly success but in communion with Christ.

For the souls of the just are indeed in the hand of God, and those who trust in Him shall understand truth and abide with Him in love forever.