

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN · TAKE-HOME SHEET

Session 6: Not As Those Who Have No Hope

WHAT WE FOUND

- Paul never says do not grieve. He says: not as others do who have no hope. Grief is licensed; despair is evicted; hope changes grief's horizon, not its existence.
- Christians called death sleep so confidently that cemetery means dormitory. Every Catholic cemetery is a sleeping place with an alarm set.
- The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Cor 15:26): the enemy behind the strange force of Jesus's groaning in Bethany on our first night, now formally scheduled for destruction.
- Death is swallowed up in victory (1 Cor 15:54) takes up Isaiah 25:8, the verse we found in Session 1, which reads: He will swallow up death for ever. Different words, one promise, announced as cashed.
- The tears God has kept (Ps 56:8) meet their end in Revelation 21:4: he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more. Every tear this study permitted has been prayed toward that verse.
- The communion of saints: those who die in Christ are not severed from his Body. We entrust all our dead to God's mercy and pray for them (2 Macc 12:43-45; CCC 958), have Masses offered, keep their names and anniversaries: remembrance is traffic, not an archive.
- Job answered at last: the Redeemer who lives is the Man of Sorrows, risen; he has stood on the earth once, and will stand on it at the last. And the title verse at last: blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matt 5:4). Not cheerful; blessed. Not explained; comforted, and by God himself.

THREE VOICES WORTH KEEPING

St. Ambrose (On the Death of His Brother Satyrus II, in summary): nature gives us tears and faith does not confiscate them; the resurrection changes what they mean, so that we grieve as those who expect to receive our dead back.

St. Augustine (Confessions IX): Monica asked only this: remember me at the altar of the Lord, wherever you are. He held his tears back, then wept freely before God, prayed for her, and asked his readers to pray too. We still do.

The Roman Liturgy (Preface I for the Dead (older ICEL wording); the preface is quoted at CCC 1012): Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

1. Have a Mass offered for one of your dead this month: call the parish office; it is simpler than most people think. Go if you can.
2. Pray Revelation 21:1-5 once each night this week, and let verse 4 be the last thing your grief hears before sleep.
3. Write a short note of pure presence to someone grieving: no fixing, no explaining. I was thinking of you, and I am praying for [name] by name. Send it.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope."

1 Thessalonians 4:13

Before next session: This study ends; the communion does not. Keep your bookend sheet in your Bible at Psalm 22, and keep praying for your dead by name.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 958, 1012, 1030-1032