



# Blessed Be

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*Welcome to this edition of Blessed Be. If you have something you wish to contribute to Blessed Be, or any suggestions you'd like to make, please contact me at [helenmacauley@gmail.com](mailto:helenmacauley@gmail.com)*

*This year we welcome a new pope, Leo XIV, and we hope and pray that he will be granted the ability to restore some order and peace to our very chaotic world. He has taken the name of Leo, out of respect for Leo XIII's stance on justice and poverty. Leo XIII, who was pope from 1878 to 1903, saw that there was a need for respect between workers and employers, with workers being deserving of a living wage and safe working conditions, and consequently, having the right to form trade unions to achieve these outcomes.*

*Some thoughts from Leo XIII:*

~Once the demands of necessity and propriety have been met, the rest that one owns belongs to the poor.

~Nothing is more useful than to look upon the world as it really is, and at the same time to seek elsewhere...for the solace to its troubles.

*Rerum Novarum: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour*

~It is a capital evil with respect to the question We are discussing to take for granted that the one class of society is of itself hostile to the other, as if nature had set rich and poor against each other to fight fiercely in implacable war. This is so abhorrent to reason and truth that the exact opposite is true; for just as in the human body the different members harmonize with one another, whence arises that disposition of parts and proportion in the human figure rightly called symmetry, so likewise nature has commanded in the case of the State that the two classes mentioned should agree harmoniously and should properly form equally balanced counterparts to each other.

*Rerum Novarum: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour*

~The foremost duty, therefore, of the rulers of the State should be to make sure that the laws and institutions, the general character and administration of the commonwealth, shall be such as of themselves to realize public well-being and private prosperity. This is the proper scope of wise statesmanship and is the work of the rulers.

*The Third Way: Foundations of Distributism as Contained in the Writings of **Pope Leo XIII** and **Gilbert K. Chesterton***

*We should also acknowledge the influence of Pope Leo I, Leo the Great, who is credited with having stopped Attila the Hun from attacking Rome to enforce his demand for the sister of Emperor Valentinian III with a dowry. A delegation was sent to discuss this and Leo so impressed Attila that he withdrew.*

*Here are some of his words:*

~Virtue is nothing without the trial of temptation, for there is no conflict without an enemy, no victory without strife.

~Peace is the first thing the angels sang. Peace is the mark of the children of God. Peace is the nurse of love. Peace is the mother of unity. Peace is the rest of the blessed souls. Peace is the dwelling place of eternity.

~Let no one be ashamed of the cross by which Christ has redeemed the world. None of us must be afraid to suffer for the sake of justice or doubt the fulfillment of the promises, for it is through toil that we come to rest and through death that we pass to life.

~As the world attracts us with its appearance, and abundance and variety, it is not easy to turn away from it unless in the beauty of things visible the Creator rather than the creature is loved; for, when He says, 'you shall love the Lord your God from all your heart, and from all your mind, and from all your strength' (Mt. 22:37), He wishes us in nothing to loosen ourselves from the bonds of His love. And when He links the love of our neighbour also to this command, He enjoins on us the imitation of His own goodness, that we should love what He loves and do what He does.

~The faith of those who live their faith is a serene faith. What you long for will be given you; what you love will be yours for ever. Since it is by giving alms that everything is pure for you, you will also receive that blessing which is promised next by the Lord: the Godhead that no man has been able to see. In the inexpressible joy of this eternal vision, human nature will possess what eye has not seen or ear heard, what man's heart has never conceived.

*Like many on the mid-north coast of NSW, I recently endured the unbelievably heavy rainfall that led to so much flooding especially in places like Taree, Kempsey and Croki. I was lucky – my area was only minimally affected. Even so, after four days of mostly being house-bound, I was getting twitchy and frustrated. My thoughts turned to Noah and his family, and I wondered how they coped with cabin-fever. Forty days! And that was only the rain. When I reread the account they were “arc-bound” for 370 days. Totally isolated. No ducking to the shops to pick up a couple of things, no neighbour to whinge about the weather to, A year of just their own company. No-one new to talk to, nothing new to talk about. And everything they knew as normal was gone – friends, enemies, extended family, buildings, work and diet. There must have been days when it seemed like they would never get off the boat, they were doomed to sail on a featureless ocean forever. The miracle to my mind is not the flood that destroyed the world, but that this family came through the whole ordeal intact physically, mentally and spiritually. That can only be down to an awe-inspiring level of faith, hope and commitment.*

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***Ursula de Jesus*** (1604-1668) was a Peruvian slave who was sent to the convent of Santa Clara when she was 12 to serve as a slave to a novice in the convent. In effect she was slave to all the sisters. She was vain and took pains with her appearance. One day, while washing her clothes, she nearly fell into the well, barely managing to hold onto the side. She prayed to Our Lady of Mt Carmel and was then able to pull herself up out of danger. After this she became deeply religious, and had visions of souls in purgatory asking her to intercede for them. In 1642, one of the nuns purchased her freedom. She continued in the convent but was never permitted to become a nun due to her race and social status. She was persuaded to write a journal about her visions.

*~She always wore a hairshirt. One day when she had neglected to put it on, the Lord rebuked her:*

*‘The hair shirt is the fortress of patience.’*

*~Frequently I asked my God why do I have to be the one to work excessively long hours? He reminded me of the excruciating suffering that He endured during the Passion. I stated that if it were not for Him I would not persevere in this, He responded that although the Son of God was quite well off in His kingdom of Glory, He came to suffer and travail for our sake.*

*In a male-dominated world, women's words are often overlooked, disparaged, forgotten. Here are a couple of women I personally have not before come across:*

She was created in the image of God! How can anyone dare slander the vessel that bears such noble imprint? ... And if anyone says that it was a woman, Lady Eve, who caused man's fall from Paradise, I would say that man gained more through Mary than he lost through Eve.

**Christine de Pizan** (1364-1430), *Italian poet who became the first female professional writer of the Middle Ages.*

A happy life is the perfect life to which we are led by a firm faith, cheerful hope, and fervent love.

**Monica of Tagaste** (c.331–387), *mother of the famous theologian Augustine, during a discussion of happiness with Augustine and his young companions.*

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### **My Greatest Need Is You**

Your hope in my heart is the rarest treasure  
Your Name on my tongue is the sweetest word  
My choicest hours  
Are the hours I spend with You --  
O Allah, I can't live in this world  
Without remembering You--  
How can I endure the next world  
Without seeing Your face?  
I am a stranger in Your country  
And lonely among Your worshippers:  
This is the substance of my complaint.

**Rabia al Basri**, (717-801) *poet and Sufi mystic*

