

one

Today we meditate on the 4th Beatitude: Blessed are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

Righteousness may have a negative connotation if you think of someone who is self-righteous.

But according to Jesus, “Righteous” refers to those who do the will of God.

Therefore, when Jesus says, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,” he means those who ***hunger*** to do the will of God. They have a burning **desire** to be united to God by doing His will.

two

At the Last Supper Peter said to Jesus, “Lord I am ready to go to prison and to die for you.”

That was no arrogant boast, it was the **desire** of a man who loved Jesus. Yes, Peter was weak, and he fell many times – but it was his good desire coupled with the Mercy of Jesus that carried him to the finish line.

Jesus will provide the mercy, and that is why this beatitude – to hunger and thirst must go with the next one – those full of Mercy.

But our job is to foster the right desire within us.

St. Thomas Aquinas was asked what it took to become a saint. He said, “To will it.” To desire it.

The question for us is this: What do we desire the most? Will you say Heaven? Good, but know what that means. Heaven means union with Jesus by doing His will. Is that what you want more than anything else? Be honest here. For God knows your heart.

three

To become righteous, that is, to do the will of God we must persevere and not give up.

In John 15:1-10, Jesus said: I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser...As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must **remain** part of the vine, neither can you unless you **remain** in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever **remains** in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not **remain** in me is like a branch that has been thrown away - he withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt. If you **remain** in me and my words **remain** in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it. It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. **Remain** in my love. If you keep my commandments you will **remain** in my love, just as I have

kept my Father's commandments and **remain** in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete.

four

In the passage we just heard, ten times Jesus tells us to *remain*.

Pope Benedict says that the word *remain* in the original Greek text means to *Persevere*. We must Persevere in:

- Daily meditation and a *Resolution*
- Persevere in the practice of *virtue*
- Persevere in your marriage
- Persevere in the duties of your life
- Persevere in trust during suffering
- And when you fall, just persevere in going back to the Mercy of Jesus in Confession
- Persevere! Keep going! Don't Quit!

five

The whole point of the 4th Beatitude is to foster a greater desire for union with Jesus and to do his will.

So how do we increase our desire for God? Well, how do we increase our desire for anything? By thinking about that thing and by experiencing it.

This is the power of prayer.

Prayer is friendship with God. It is spending time with him, talking, listening and just being with him.

But meditation or mental prayer is the most transformative because we engage the intellect to think about God. And the more we think about anything, the more we desire it. That is the whole point of advertising – and it works.

If you persevere in daily meditation, then you will desire God and his will more and you will reach the goal – Holiness and Heaven.

Just keep going. You can do it!