



PO Box 271227 + Flower Mound, TX + 75027 + 1-800-803-0118 + www.dritaly.com

Blessed Be the Poor

[St. Leo the Great](#)



Dearly beloved, when our Lord Jesus Christ was preaching the Gospel of the kingdom and healing various illnesses throughout the whole of Galilee, the fame of his mighty works spread into all of Syria, and great crowds from all parts of Judea flocked to the heavenly physician. Because human ignorance is slow to believe what it does not see, and equally slow to hope for what it does not know, those who were to be instructed in the divine teaching had first to be aroused by bodily benefits and visible miracles so that, once they had experienced his gracious power, they would no longer doubt the wholesome effect of his doctrine.

In order, therefore, to transform outward healings into inward remedies, and to cure men's souls now that he had healed their bodies, our Lord separated himself from the surrounding crowds, climbed to the solitude of a neighboring mountain, and called the apostles to himself. From the height of this mystical site he then instructed them in the most lofty doctrines, suggesting both by the very nature of the place and by what he was doing that it was he who long ago had honoured Moses by speaking to him. At that time, his words showed a terrifying justice, but now they reveal a sacred compassion, in order to fulfill what was promised in the words of the prophet Jeremiah: *Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I shall establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. After those days, says the Lord, I shall put my laws within them and write them on their hearts.*

And so it was that he who had spoken to Moses spoke also to the apostles. Writing in the hearts of his disciples, the swift hand of the Word composed the ordinances of the new covenant. And this was not done as formerly, in the midst of dense clouds, amid terrifying sounds and lightning, so that the people were frightened away from approaching the mountain. Instead, there was a tranquil discourse which clearly reached the ears of all who stood nearby so that the

PO Box 271227 + Flower Mound, TX + 75027 + 1-800-803-0118 + www.dritaly.com

harshness of the law might be softened by the gentleness of grace, and the spirit of adoption might dispel the terror of slavery.

Concerning the content of Christ's teaching, his own sacred words bear witness; thus whoever longs to attain eternal blessedness can now recognize the steps that lead to that high happiness. *Blessed*, he says, *are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. It might have been unclear to which poor he was referring, if after the words *Blessed are the poor*, he had not added anything about the kind of poor he had in mind. For then the poverty that many suffer because of grave and harsh necessity might seem sufficient to merit the kingdom of heaven.

But when he says: *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, he shows that the kingdom of heaven is to be given to those who are distinguished by their humility of soul rather than by their lack of worldly goods.

This excerpt from St. Leo's Sermon 95 on the Beatitudes (verses 1-2: PL 54, 461-462) is used in the Roman Office of Readings for Thursday of the 22nd week in Ordinary Time.



The Fathers of the Church - Who They Are and Why They Matter

In a single, upbeat talk, full of examples and stories about some of the Church's most intriguing personalities, Marcellino D'Ambrosio explains who people are talking about when they refer to the "Fathers of the Church" or "Early Church Fathers." Though the ranks of the fathers include a tremendous variety of cultures, locales, and personalities, there is surprising consensus that emerges from them on a variety of the most important questions of our day. In this talk, Marcellino makes clear just how much these figures have to teach us today.

[Retail - \\$8.95 CD](#)

[Audio Tape - \\$8.95](#)

Early Church Fathers - VOL II

Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio, host of EWTN's Early Church Fathers TV series, continues to acquaint us with the colorful personalities of the earliest Christian teachers, making their dynamic message accessible, enjoyable, and relevant to the challenges of everyday life. This, the second volume of series, consists of shows produced in 2006 and covering fascinating personalities such as the courageous St. John Chrysostom, the outspoken bible scholar, Jerome, and 17 other heroes of the Early Church.

