

Blessed  
are those  
who mourn,  
for they shall be  
**comforted**

Mt 5:4

## Reflection:

June 2026

The first missionary-disciple I knew was my grandmother. Before she married, she worked with the Red Cross in Indonesia. She was a faith-filled woman with the gift of healing. The two things I remember most about her were her love for the cross and the way she always comforted others. I'm realising more and more that Jesus meant these two things to go together: 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted'.

Have you ever wondered why mourning could be called 'blessed?' Jesus knew he would rise from the dead. As he told his disciples, his death was necessary for him to enter into glory<sup>i</sup>, and he had to leave so that he could send the Holy Spirit<sup>ii</sup>.

In his farewell discourse, Jesus calls the Spirit the Paraclete. This word is deeply significant because it shares the same Greek root as the word for 'comforted'. It suggests that when we mourn, Jesus sends us the Comforter to stand truly by our side.

St. John Chrysostom said, "Mourning is a great thing, for it is the very mother of the Spirit's consolation... as soon as you begin to mourn, the Spirit begins to comfort." That comfort meets us in the places we actually mourn. We know the ache of losing someone we love. It's hard to accept because death was never part of God's plan in the beginning. Yet even there, the Holy Spirit consoles us, reminding us that God will raise our mortal bodies<sup>ii</sup>.

I also find myself mourning when I pray with Jesus's passion - 'For the sake of his sorrowful passion, have mercy on us...' God's mercy comforts us there too. And when I mourn my own sins that wound the life of grace in me, the Holy Spirit meets me in confession: 'God the Father of mercies... has sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins.'

Discipleship brings its own mourning. There's deep joy in following Jesus, but also the weight of the cross. St Paul put words to this: 'Blessed be the God... of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort others... For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too'<sup>iv</sup>.



The first missionary-disciple was Mary Magdalene. I keep coming back to the comfort she received when she recognised the risen Jesus<sup>v</sup>. Looking at her and my grandmother, I see that to be a missionary-disciple is to live out the second beatitude fully - knowing the comfort of God, even in suffering. It is then that we can be comforters to those around us, because we always take the Holy Spirit, the Consoler, wherever we go.

- When was a moment when I received the consolation of the Father?
- Am I still mourning something? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to comfort me?
- Do I bring consolation to others when I minister to them?
- Have I ever thought that being a missionary disciple is about bringing the Holy Spirit, the Consoler, to a world that mourns? What might this look like?

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i Lk 24:26

ii Jn 16:7

iii Rom 8:11

iv 2 Cor 1:3-5

v Jn 20:1-17

