

DEAR DEACON BULLETIN INSERT

❖ **Dear Deacon Jim,**

The first Beatitude states, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Who are the poor in spirit?

❖ **Response**

I believe the answer to your question is based on the spiritual meaning that Jesus taught during the Sermon on the Mount rather than on the literal meaning. It is based on the spiritual, divine meaning relating to a person's response to God's calling. This calling of God to the human being asks him/her to recognize their spiritual poverty before going to Him to be able to receive through faith the salvation He offers. This Beatitude asks the human being to recognize that God is God.

In this first Beatitude, when Jesus says, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"* He is declaring that, before we can enter God's kingdom, we must first recognize the utter worthlessness of our spiritual poverty and the inability for our eternal salvation.

Regardless of one's earthly happiness or prosperity, to be poor in spirit is to recognize that you depend upon God and to recognize that you are nothing and God is all. To be poor in spirit is to empty oneself; that is to say, to become nothingness and depend totally on God. The person who is poor in spirit recognizes his smallness in front of God and recognizes that God is everything in his life.

Deacon Jim