**Lent Devotionals – Day 4**

Family Reading: Matthew 5:1-12

Supplemental Readings: Luke 6:20-23

Prayer Emphasis: Wisdom & Patience

“*Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them*..*.”*

*(Matthew 5:1-2)*

Devotional Thought: “The way up the mountain” is most certainly a perilous journey; a journey wrought with twists, turns, momentary pauses, and seemingly dead ends. However, the journey up the mountain and the mountain itself are also places where sacred lessons are learned.

 The Sermon on the Mount derives its name from the place Jesus chose to teach his disciples and the other followers who were interested in His teachings. There are probably many practical reasons why Jesus chose a perched position to teach the crowds, but there were theological reasons too. Jesus, in this way, acts similar to Moses before Him, who went to the peak of Mount Sinai to receive the commandments and instructions for the Israelite people. Jesus understood His Father delights in using the mountain and the journey to the summit to teach His people. Without our journey up the mountain, where would we learn how to be poor in spirit, meekness, or mercy? How could we understand how to be peacemakers or to handle the persecutions and false accusations of others? The lessons taught on “the way up the mountain” are not always easy, but they are transformative, and not simply for us, but for everyone around us.

 Take a moment and reflect on what the Lord is teaching you. What lessons have you learned? Apply the Lord’s teachings in your everyday life and take enough time to listen. Go before Christ and pray. Ask Jesus to use your journey with Him to teach you His sacred lessons and give you a heavenly vision even in the darkness of the valley.

*Prayer:*

*Lord, high and holy, meek and lowly, Thou hast brought me to the valley of vision, where I live in the depths but see Thee in the heights; hemmed in by mountains of sin I behold Thy glory. Let me learn by paradox that the way down is the way up, that to be low is to be high, that the broken heart is the healed heart, that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit, that the repenting soul is the victorious soul, that to have nothing is to possess all, that to bear the cross is to wear the crown, that to give is to receive, that the valley is the place of vision. Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from deepest wells, and the deeper the wells the brighter Thy stars shine; let me find Thy light in my darkness, Thy life in my death, Thy joy in my sorrow, Thy grace in my sin, Thy riches in my poverty, Thy glory in my valley.*

*(Puritan Prayer)*