

Poor in Spirit

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. . .”
(Matthew 5:3; the Beatitudes, Jesus Christ)*

It was at Sunday Mass, at All Saints Catholic Church, (in Milwaukee, Wisconsin), in fall 2018, that I had an epiphany: I realized that I was one of the “poor in spirit!” The sermon, which centered on this verse, Matthew 5:3, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” pointed out to me that my faith life was deficient in many ways. Or that’s what I thought, at the moment. I was deeply consoled that Jesus had a special place in His heart for the downtrodden, the broken, the faith-challenged. I was in good company! Also, I was encouraged by the realization that I don’t have to have it all together, that my poverty of spirit could become my strength—‘When I am weak, then I am strong’—(Apostle Paul).

Years earlier, I wrote:

the hole

there was a hole
in St. Francis of Assisi’s garb
by his shoulder—egg-sized
in a picture on the cover of his biography
it suddenly occurred to me that THIS represented the
poverty of spirit I had been hearing about
a hole in the tattered clothing of a poor man

poverty of spirit
when you know—you just know you have a *lack*
when you can see that
a part of you will not be satisfied—maybe never
a brokenness, emptiness, possibly a crushed identity

but it is in this very hole that God may do the best work
because God knows the power of *mercy*
and its redeeming qualities
that can make a wayward soul come to life again

I have been there—have you?
in the hole of emotional distress
in the hole of psychological stress
in the hole of physical duress
pretty familiar territory for many—
intimately known by many more

yet there is a comfort and solace in being aware
of a personal poverty of spirit...
to be at peace in the midst of this lack
knowing that the light of Christ can shine
through any darkness, in any place, at any time

if you sense *a poverty of spirit* in your life today
rest in it knowing how
the freedom of a trapped miner
comes in discovery of a light-flooded hole above
. . . and you shall be set free too

by Rich Melcher