Grace and peace to you as you live in God’s Blessings from God, our Father, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now some of you are probably wondering why I am sitting up here this morning. Well our Gospel lesson for today says: “Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. [2] And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:” (Matt. 5:1-2)

How most of the time I have stood before you, but every three years we are in the book of Matthew and we come to the sermon on the mount where Jesus sits before a crowd teaching them. So, on other occasions I have gotten our a latter to sit on and teach a crowd of believers like you, as disciple of Jesus, but today instead of climbing up on a latter to talk to you about Gods Words I have chosen to sit here on this stool and talk to you about God’s word so that we all can better understand what God wants us to know about His love and salvation for all of us. How I know that Jesus gathered His disciples around Him on a mountain side and it just so happens that’s where we are today on the side of a mountain sit and listening to God’s Word about the blessings or congratulations that we as believers in God, have been given.

So, I have to say congratulations, because that’s another way of translating the Greek word translated in most our English Bible as blessed. Each of us, because we have put our faith and live in the hands of Jesus should be congratulated because we are receiving the blessings of God. Now we don’t receive them because of anything that we have done, but because of what God has done in us by the Holy Spirit working through His Word and Sacraments. Each of us are blessed, because of our faith in Jesus Christ, which has given us the ability to live in a special relationship of grace between God and us.

Yes, Congratulations to all of you who are poor in spirit, for you are a citizen of the kingdom of heaven or as it says in our reading for today: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5:3)

As believers in Jesus Christ, the world would say that we have a mixed-up set of priorities. We do not put our priorities for money, a house, a car or other possessions given to us in this world as number one, but instead we make the number one priority in our lives FAITH IN GOD. For as we make our actions and reactions to the things that are given to us in this world revolve
around the FAITH given to us by God, then the things of this world become secondary and our poor spirit in the ways of the world becomes rich in the grace of God given to us through the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. What a blessing it is to put our trust and faith in the hands of God and not our own hands. What a blessing it is to know that as a believer in Jesus Christ and through our Baptism we are now members of the Kingdom of Heaven, where we will be able to live in perfect peace and happiness for all eternity.

You could say that we have failed in our efforts to keep our faith as the number one priority in our lives and you would be right. We are constantly doing just the opposite of what God wants us to be doing. Why in the past week and month some of us may have tried to read the books of Judges and 1 Samuel as we were encouraged to do in our Newsletter or weekly bulletin, but other activities have caused us to miss this day or that day in our daily reading or even in our daily devotions. What are we to do? And how are we ever going to be able to accomplish God’s will in our life when we keep failing? Why, it seems like we know what God wants us to be doing but we find ourselves always doing just the opposite.

Well Congratulations for you who mourn over the sins of your life, for you will be comforted. Or as it says in our reading for today: “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” (Matt. 5:4) We are sinner and deserve the wrath of God and not His grace. Yet in our weakness, in our state of mourning over all our failures and sins that we have committed daily God brings us to the Cross of Jesus Christ and there we once again see how God took the burdens of our sins and lay them upon His Only Son, Jesus Christ, asking Him to accomplish His will in our lives and not ours.

Tommy was up to bat in the neighborhood vacant lot playing baseball with the rest of the gang. He swung with all his might at the first pitch and hit a foul ball right through the window of the Johnson’s house. As the ball crashed through the window everyone ran, picking up what they had and heading for home. When Tommy got home the first person he saw as he came in the door, was his father reading the paper. His Dad looked up and said: Well Tommy what brings you home so early? Tommy’s sat down on the couch and just looked at the bat and glove in his hand. Final after a few minutes of silence Tommy said: “Dad, I hit a foul ball and it when through the Johnson’s window?” “I kind of figured that something like that happened.,” said Tommy’s Father. “Well let’s go over to the Johnson’s and see how bad the damage is and what we can do to help them out till we can get the window replaced.” Together Tommy and his Father walked over to the Johnson’s house, talked with them, cleaned up the broken glass and made a temporary
repair to the window. Later Tommy’s father worked in the Johnson’s yard taking care of the garden, trimming the trees and mowing the grass till the window was paid for in full. As Tommy watched his Father work off the debt he owed he was comforted to know that he had a loving Father who would be there for him no matter what happened.

Each of us have a loving Father who has taken care of the debt that we owe by sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, down from His heavenly throne to do what we could not do. By the life, death and resurrection Jesus Christ we have been made DEBT FREE and given freedom from all our sins, death and the power of the devil. Yes, we are the sinner and yet our heavenly Father did what was needed to be done by paying for our debts so that we could live with Him for all eternity. What a comfort it is to know that we have a heavenly Father who will be standing by our side to give us the comfort of our forgiveness and the assurance that He will never leave us or forsake us.

Congratulations to all of you who are not trusting in your own abilities but in what God has given to you, for you will inherit the greatest gift of all the earth. Our scripture reading for today says it this way: “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5:5) Meekness is not being a coward but standing upon the Words of God, not upon the ways of the world. It is through the Words of God that we find the true understanding of all that is going on in this world so that we can live at peace with it and not in conflict with it. In meekness, we face the trials and tribulations of this world knowing that as we use the gifts given to us to do God’s will we will live in peace with the world that we are living in now till our Heavenly Father takes us to our heavenly home. In meekness, we deal with the problems of this world using God’s wisdom to guide us along the path to heaven.

Congratulations to all of you who have been hungry and thirsty for the word of God for you will be fed and satisfied. Our Scripture reading for today says it this way: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” (Matt. 5:6) As mothers know so well when one of their children are sick, they will often not feel like eating. Yet it is the nutritious food that they eat that will help them fight off the sickness. When someone who has been sick gets their appetite back they are on the road to recovery and good health. The same is true for our spiritual life. As we deal with the sickness of sin and this world we don’t often have an appetite for God’s Word. Yet as we hunger and thirst for the Word of God we are given the very nutrition we need to fight off the sickness and grow in our strength and maturity with God. Without the proper nutrition, our bodies will become sick and die. Without God’s Word in our
lives our Spiritual life will become sick and die. God has provided us with the proper nutrition and food sources to keep our bodies operating and functioning properly. God has provided us with His Word and Sacraments so that we can have life and live it in the fullness of His righteousness.

Congratulations to each of you who are merciful, for you shall have the mercy of God in your life. Congratulations to you who have found God to be the purpose of your life for by your faith you will see God working in your life now and for all eternity. Congratulations to you who have make the peace of God a part of your life, for you shall live as a son or daughter of God now and for all eternity.

Merciful, purposeful and peaceful lives those are the fruits of the faith given to each of us by God. These are the marks of our Christian faith, for as we show mercy to our neighbor we are sharing what was first given to us. For God in His love and mercy sent His only begotten Son into this world to take away our sins and given us His righteousness. We did everything possible to prevent God’s forgiveness from coming to us. Why on our own we have rejected Jesus’ coming into this world. In fact, we live in a world that is striving to push God out of our lives; yet He calls us with the Gospel and strengthens us with is very own body and blood shed on the cross of Calvary for us.

Merciful, Purposeful and Peaceful lives. As Christian we have been given a purpose for our lives here on this earth. We have been given the keys to Heaven and are asked to unlock the heavenly doors for all those who are lost and looking for the light of the world. The light of God is in our lives so that we can share it with others. It was given to us in our Baptism and it is growing in us as the Holy Spirit enable us to set our goals on being with God now and for all eternity. We have been called to be a Child of God, to share the love, peace and joy that only comes from knowing and living in the Blessings of God. So, I congratulate each of you today as you continue to live by faith in the Love of God given to you as you reach out to your neighbors to share God’s love, grace and mercy with them. Congratulations need to go out to each of you as you face the persecutions and trials of this world by keeping your eyes on Jesus and all that He has done for you. Amen.

Let us pray: O Almighty God, You have blessed us in more way then we will ever understand. Help us to use these blessings to proclaim the Love, peace and joy given to us through Your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.