

Homily for Gwen Stevens Memorial

In the gospel Reading we once again heard what has sometimes been called Jesus Sermon on the Mount, but better known as the Beatitudes. The words are beautiful and the temptation for many is to not see that they are a manifesto for radical action on the part of those who chose to follow in the way of Jesus. There is much in the world of our today that is like the time and place of Jesus' day. We live in a time of violence, racial intolerance, injustice, economic disparity and blatant hate. The beatitudes call us to lives embracing unconditional love for all people. No exceptions. Gwen was a living example of what this truly means. Embracing the vision of the beatitudes is to accept that we were created to be this way in all our interactions with others. The kingdom of God is not something to attain after we die, but rather is something to be lived here and now. It is something we are called to embrace so that we are transformed more fully into what God calls us to be now. Fully human and fully divine.

There are those who think that the Ten commandments provide all that we need to provide us with a moral compass. That path has not worked well. To embrace the Beatitudes requires that we fully accept that we are loved unconditionally by God and that we then learn to love ourselves, our neighbors, and the whole of God's creation unconditionally. It has taken a lifetime for me to embrace this fulness of

this truth I am committed to continue this journey for whatever days are left for me to be fully present and engaged. I invite you to do the same with the Beatitudes as your light to bring clarity for the journey.