

Mary, Mother of Jesus Church Woodworth, Louisiana
Lent – 2025 A Study of Matthew Chapter 5 – The Sermon on the Mount
Handout/Session 1 “Jesus and his new world order”

The Sermon on the Mount = a blueprint for the Christian life
The Catholic theologian, Richard Rohr, calls it “Jesus’ alternative plan...Jesus’ new world order”

Contemporary society: 3 different types of cultures, each with their own “bottom line”

- 1) political culture – based on the manipulation of power
- 2) economic culture – based on the manipulation of money
- 3) religious culture – based on the manipulation of a theory about God

Jesus’ alternative plan is an alternative to each of these. He called it the “reign of God,” the guiding image of his life and ministry.

Jesus’ new world order

One must know and understand the difference between the True Sacred and the false sacred

The false sacred:

- 1) begins with a false sense of self
- 2) must have a scapegoat who is wrong
- 3) therefore we must be right

The True Sacred:

- 1) God is One and for all
- 2) God is sovereign to any group ownership or personal manipulation
- 3) God is available as a free gift and not through a “them and us” society
- 4) God needs no victims and creates no victims

Recognition of the True Sacred = freedom to recognize it in all creation and creatures
Empathy for the victim was Jesus’ most transformational principle and the one most difficult to understand and accept

The centrality of Jesus’ teachings: Do Not Judge

The “folly of the cross” (St. Paul)

Obstacles of the True Sacred

- 1) anything mysterious, unknown
- 2) anything well-known, famous
- 3) anything powerful, larger than life
- 4) anything within the natural world

All of these appear sacred, but are not.

All of these appear as the Light, but are not. They can be reflections of the Light but not the Light himself

The True Sacred is the measure by which all things are judged

“Right relationship” is the ultimate and daily measure

Connection and communion

The Sermon on the Mount is based on this premise

Means and ends always in perfect agreement

Jesus is Everyman

Jesus is the human dilemma answered

There is no way to peace, peace is the way

There is no path to love, practicing love is the path

Empathy for the victim brings "right relationship"

"Right relationship" brings "marcarios" = happy