

Life is not fair. Sometimes you make the right plans, you have the right values, you do the right things, but you don't get the results you wanted. Jesús Hernández was a man who loved God, who married and raised a family, served as a model for his children and grandchildren, and worked hard as a welder, but suffered from disease. His life was brief, but his love was deep. He will be greatly missed by family and friends. It is easy to summarize his biography and come to the conclusion that life is not fair.

But the Book of Wisdom from the Old Testament has another idea: "The souls of the just are in the hands of God, where no torment will touch them. They seemed in view of the foolish to be dead, ...but they are at peace." When people live in justice, they experience peace in this life, and through the mercy of God they live also in peace in eternal life.

Jesus Christ makes a similar point in the Beatitudes. Today's gospel reading is the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, the first discourse that Jesus gives in the gospel of Matthew. The entire sermon is filled with advice and insights that have become well known to us. It is a powerful collection of sayings from our Lord and Savior. In the Beatitudes, Jesus makes us think. We naturally assume that those who are poor in spirit are sad, that those who weep are unhappy, and that those who hunger and thirst for justice will not be satisfied. But Jesus says no. These are the people who are blessed, whose hopes will be fulfilled. A person may appear to be poor. A person who does not have a large house, an expensive car, or many clothes can still be rich in other ways. That same person may be rich in faith, in family, and in peace. The poor in spirit sometimes have a happy spirit because they have learned what is most important in life. They see how shallow are the things of this world, and how deep is the promise of God.

Today we offer our prayers to God for our brother Jesús Hernández. We pray that God will look kindly upon this man whom he created, will forgive his sins, and reward his good spirit with eternal life.

May our prayers today also inspire each one of us to live good lives. May this mass increase our faith in God, our dedication to work, and the love we have for our families. Sometimes we will get discouraged. We will do the right things, but not get the results we wanted. We will think that life is not fair. But we will find peace in following Christ as did the first disciples who heard his Sermon on the Mount. We pray that one day we - together with our brother Jesús - may enjoy the blessing of the kingdom of heaven.