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Review of the publication: Ježišove blahoslavenstvá. Biblicko-spirituálne zamyslenia [The Beatitudes of Jesus. Biblical Spiritual Reflections]

Reviewed publication: Trstenský, F., *Ježišove blahoslavenstvá. Biblicko-spirituálne zamyslenia* [The Beatitudes of Jesus. Biblical Spiritual Reflections]. Ružomberok, 2016. ISBN 978-80-561-0385-2, p. 80.

The author of the publication, *The Beatitudes of Jesus*, prof. František Trstenský, studied Biblical Sciences and Archaeology in and obtained his doctorate in Theological Sciences. He is currently a professor at the Theological Institute in Spišská Kapitula - Spišské Podhradie, which is part of the University in Ružomberok. He lectures on the New Testament and Biblical Greek. The following information about the author suggests that it is worth reading some of his work – his professionalism, meaningfulness and comprehensibility, may be attributed to his latest publication, which was published by the publishing house of the Catholic University in Ružomberok.

The A6 format of the publication already appears very practical. The reader will be interested, already before opening the book, by the cover itself with a picture of frescoes, by Fra Angelico (Giovanni da Fiesole), depicting Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Dominating the fresco is Christ – the Teacher, sitting on a rock in the middle of a barren landscape; on the ground around him, sit apostles and they are looking at him. Already through the selection of this work for the cover, the author wants to suggest something. According to him, the picture by Fra Angelico is not just about the impartial observer, but it is a call to be a part of it. Similarly,

during a reading of the publication, *The Beatitudes of Jesus*, the author encourages us "... to become one of the apostles, who will listen carefully, with his face drawn to Jesus, to the words of his teacher" (p. 11).

The publication has a very logical and coherent structure. The author has devoted the first chapter to a justification of the selection of the image on the cover. In the next chapter, he goes on to talk about the Beatitudes in general. He notes how difficult it is today to talk about Beatitudes, because nowadays people have completely different criteria for happiness, as opposed to how Jesus sees them. The author relies on a number of Old Testament quotations and the Psalms, but also indicates the precise location of the term "beatified" in the New Testament. According to the author, Beatitudes "...do not form the peak, but a gateway through which we enter to the requirements of the Gospel of Christ" (p. 9).

The next chapter talks about the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew and the author explains their solid structure. Then, in the individual chapters, he devotes himself to each of the Beatitudes separately. He relies on the words from Greek, through which he brings the reader greater light into the understanding of many concepts and formulations. He also explains the perception of the Beatitudes in the context of the time and the religion in which they were written.

Particularly valuable are the author's considerations and his efforts to more extensively "translate" the individual Beatitudes in his own words. From all of those, we shall at least state the first of them, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*" (Mt 5:3). In the words of the author: "*The fullness of happiness and joy belongs to those, who confess that they need God and create Him space in their lives, because in such people God already operated and brought His work into fulfilment*" (p. 34). In the publication, there is an incredible fountain of valuable ideas and its first reading encourages the reader to begin studying it deeper. The language of the publication is scientific; the author processed the issue in a very knowledgeable way, however, so that it is understandable to the lay public, the community of the faithful, who have an open heart to delve more fully into the Gospel of Christ.

Undoubtedly, references to sources and the literature of big names like Pope Francis, John Paul II or J. Ratzinger also contribute to the quality of the publication.

In conclusion, he has sought to encourage the reader towards reaching for this exceptional publication, in what way if not with the quote by the author himself: *“To be beatified is to tread the path directed towards God. It is a relief from an unhealthy connection towards ensuring our own lives. This is what makes a man free to listen to God, fulfil His will in order to serve others”* (p. 20).

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