

## Eighth Day of Christmas, 1/1 – Maids a-milking



**Scripture:** Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

### **Matthew 5:1-12**

Who would have thought that the Sermon on the Mount’s Beatitudes would be in the middle of the 12 days of Christmas! But thanks be to God that it is! Right at the beginning of this sermon, Jesus shows compassion for the people listening to him. He says blessed are people in various lowly situations. Wow! **Eight of them! Eight maids a-milking!** Their circumstances were difficult and they came to Jesus for hope. He didn’t berate them for being poor in spirit like the others in their culture did, he lifted them up for being lights in their own world that was shadowed and difficult. This is the hope we still find in Jesus. This is still what we are called to do...be hope-bringers to our world.

But what about the maids a-milking? The chant of the 12 days of Christmas was published in England in 1780 and thought to have had French origin. At that time, maids a-milking would have been doing a lowly servant’s job. Again recognizing Jesus’ compassion for even the lowly,

working in a stable in the same environment in which Jesus was born. Where does Jesus show you compassion?

\*Note: Additional spiritual gifts are also listed in 1 Corinthians 12.