

ALL SAINTS DAY

## *Exercising a generous power*

THE RT. REV. JAKE OWENSBY

**T**hey bear colorful names: Roscoe. Sweetwater. Desert Sky. Buffalo Gap. Horse Hollow. These are all vast farms in Texas. Wind farms.

Giant turbines receive the wind's power and translate it into electricity. Because it is properly channeled, the wind's energy enhances the lives of thousands of people. We take for granted reading after sunset and cooling off at the end of hot day in air-conditioned comfort, driving at night with the aid of streetlights and grabbing ice cream from the freezer.

The same wind that supports modern life can uproot trees and flatten homes. Tornadoes ravage towns every year. Joplin, Missouri, and Moore, Oklahoma, are just two locations on a long list of destruction and loss.

Wind power, like any power, can enhance well-being or deepen misery. Build up or destroy. The key is channeling that immense power for the good. Jesus had something like this in mind when he said, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:5) Only, he wasn't talking about wind power. He had the power of each human life in mind.

I have to confess, until recently the meekness passage was my least favorite Beatitude. Without realizing it, I had been reading it something like this: "Blessed are the weak, for they shall inherit

the earth."

Strictly speaking, I have always known that Jesus had something else in mind. But I figured the whole peacemaker thing farther down the list of Beatitudes said it much better, so I read right past the idea of meekness.

Then my friend Nick Knisely, bishop of Rhode Island, set me straight. He told me that "meek" means "power under control." If you look up the Greek word that we translate as meek, you'll see that he's exactly right.

### **For reflection...**

- Who has been generous toward you? How did their generosity affect your life? How is it continuing to shape your life?
- What need do see in the world around you?
- How can you give of yourself to help in addressing that need?

God invests in each of us the power to transform the world. When we devote our time, our spiritual gifts, and our financial resources to God's dream of a just and peaceful creation, our energies feed the hungry, heal the sick, mend fractured relationships, and restore shattered lives. In other words, God works through our generosity to restore the world.

On All Saints' Day we remember that saints are not weak. The creator and redeemer of all things flows through them. Flows through us. We can exercise a generous power.



Jake Owensby was consecrated as the fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Western Louisiana in 2012 after serving as dean of St. Mark's Cathedral in Shreveport. Prior to serving as dean, he served in the dioceses of Florida, Alabama and Missouri. He blogs at Pelican/Anglican, <http://pelicananglican.blogspot.com>.

PARISH NAME

address | phone | website