THE NEW BEATITUDES BY NADIA BOLZ-WEBER

One: Blessed are the agnostics.

Many: Blessed are they who doubt. Those who aren't sure, who can still be surprised.

One: Blessed are they who are spiritually impoverished and therefore not so certain about everything that they no longer take in new information.

Many: Blessed are those who have nothing to offer.

One: Blessed are the preschoolers who cut in line at communion.

Many: Blessed are the poor in spirit. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

One: Blessed are they for whom death is not an abstraction.

Many: Blessed are they who have buried their loved ones, for whom tears could fill an ocean.

One: Blessed are they who have loved enough to know what loss feels like.

Many: Blessed are the mothers of the miscarried.

One: Blessed are they who don't have the luxury of taking things for granted anymore.

Many: Blessed are they who can't fall apart because they have to keep it together for everyone else.

One: Blessed are those who "still aren't over it yet."

Many: Blessed are those who mourn. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

One: Blessed are those who no one else notices. The kids who sit alone at middle-school lunch tables. The laundry guys at the hospital. The sex workers and the night-shift street sweepers.

Many: Blessed are the forgotten.

One: Blessed are the closeted.

Many: Blessed are the unemployed, the unimpressive, the underrepresented.

One: Blessed are the teens who have to figure out ways to hide the new cuts on their arms.

Many: Blessed are the meek. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

One: Blessed are the wrongly accused, the ones who never catch a break, the ones for whom life is hard, for Jesus chose to surround himself with people like them.

Many: Blessed are those without documentation.

One: Blessed are the ones without lobbyists.

Many: Blessed are foster kids and special-ed kids and every other kid who just wants to feel safe and loved.

One: Blessed are those who make terrible business decisions for the sake of people.

Many: Blessed are the burned-out social workers and the overworked teachers and the pro bono case takers.

One: Blessed are the kindhearted football players and the fundraising trophy wives.

Many: Blessed are the kids who step between the bullies and the weak.

One: Blessed are they who hear that they are forgiven.

Many: Blessed is everyone who has ever forgiven me when I didn't deserve it.

One: Blessed are the merciful, for they totally get it.