

Sunday Message

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

THE WORD

Year C • 2 November 2025 • Psalter Week 2

THE SAINT NEXT DOOR

MATTHEW 5:1-12

When we think of saints, we usually think of a particular category of people. We think of the mostly clergy and religious officially canonised by the Church. Their lives were carefully scrutinised, their writings and actions thoroughly investigated, to be sure of their heroic virtues.

The title of saint or blessed is accorded only to those outstanding in sanctity – mystics, martyrs, missionaries, pastors, founders of religious orders. It seems out of reach of the rest of us.

In *Gaudete et Exsultate* ("Rejoice and be Glad"), Pope Francis challenged this way of thinking: "To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious." We do not have to be "swooning in mystic rapture" or walking around with "lowered eyes" to be a saint. Sanctity isn't just for those who can withdraw from ordinary affairs to spend much time in prayer. We are all "called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves".

The late pope reminded us that the call to holiness comes with baptism and that "in the Church, holy yet made up of sinners, you will find everything you need to grow towards holiness".

Therefore, when we think of holiness, we should not "think only of those already beatified and canonised". Nor should we grow discouraged by examples of holiness that appear unattainable. "The important thing," Pope Francis said, "is that each believer discerns his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts, rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them. We are all called to be witnesses, but there are many actual ways of bearing witness."

The Holy Spirit bestows holiness in abundance among God's faithful people, holiness that makes us the saint next door. ■

SAY

Lord, help me to witness to you by living your way. Help me to become the saint next door. Amen.

PRAY

Remember your deceased loved ones today. Pray that they may be counted among the communion of saints.

LEARN

We are all called to be saints.

To be holy is to "bear witness" to God in all that we do. It is to live the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes are our signpost to heaven.

DO

Visit the grave(s) of your beloved dead this week. Ask the Lord to take them to himself.



REFLECT

Calling other Christians saints was a common practice in the early Church. The Acts of the Apostles describes Saul's persecution of the "saints at Jerusalem" (9:13). Later in Acts, Paul admits, "I... locked up many... saints in prison" (26:10). Paul ends his letter to the Philippians with the words, "All the saints greet you" (4:22).

Members of the early Church referred to each other as saints. Saints were to be found among the spiritually weak and the spiritually strong, the educated and the uneducated, the poor and the well off. Anyone baptised in the name of Jesus was among the saints.

Over the centuries, the understanding of sainthood narrowed, and it began to be applied only to exceptionally holy people. Church authorities took over the saint-making process. A candidate had to meet specific criteria before being formally declared a saint. Sometimes the process is swift. Think of St Teresa of Calcutta or St John Paul II. More often, it takes decades or even centuries.

Even though the feast of All Saints honours the multitude of ordinary saints who will never be canonised, we tend to think of sainthood as applying only to a select few. For most of us, being canonised seems out of reach.

Pope Francis wanted to change this way of thinking. In 2018, he published an apostolic letter entitled *Gaudete et Exsultate*, on our call to be saints. In it, he reminds us of the Second Vatican Council's teaching that "all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord – each in his or her own way – to that perfect holiness by which the Father himself is perfect".

Pope Francis was well aware that being holy isn't easy, and he offered practical steps we can take to become saints. The key is the Beatitudes in today's Gospel, which are the Christian's identity card. Pope Francis provided a practical example to show that everyday sanctity is possible.

"This holiness to which the Lord calls you will grow through small gestures. Here

is an example: a woman goes shopping, she meets a neighbour and they begin to speak, and the gossip starts. But she says in her heart: 'No, I will not speak badly of anyone.' This is a step forward in holiness. Later, at home, one of her children wants to talk to her about his hopes and dreams, and even though she is tired, she sits down and listens with patience and love. That is another sacrifice that brings holiness. Later she experiences some anxiety, but recalling the love of the Virgin Mary, she takes her rosary and prays with faith. Yet another path of holiness. Later still, she goes out onto the street, encounters a poor person and stops to say a kind word to him. One more step."

Each of these gestures is an example of holiness any of us can make any day.

We don't have to go around calling each other saints, as the early Christians did. But we are called to be saints. Living according to the Beatitudes is how we do it. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Let us all rejoice in the Lord,
as we celebrate the feast day in honour of all the Saints,
at whose festival the Angels rejoice
and praise the Son of God.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
by whose gift we venerate in one celebration
the merits of all the Saints,
bestow on us, we pray,
through the prayers of so many intercessors,
an abundance of the reconciliation with you
for which we earnestly long.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

A reading from the Book of Revelation.

I, John, saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, 'Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.' And I heard the number of the sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel.

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels were standing round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 24(23):1-2. 3-4b. 5-6. R. cf. 6

R: Such are the people who seek your face, O Lord.

1. The LORD's is the earth and its fullness,
the world, and those who dwell in it.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the rivers he made it firm. **R.**
2. Who shall climb the mountain of the LORD?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The clean of hands and pure of heart,
whose soul is not set on vain things. **R.**
3. Blessings from the LORD shall he receive,
and right reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the people who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 John 3:1-3

A reading from the First Letter of Saint John.

Beloved: See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Matthew 11:28

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, says the Lord,
and I will give you rest.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 5:1-12a

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May these offerings we bring in honour of all the Saints
be pleasing to you, O Lord,
and grant that, just as we believe the Saints
to be already assured of immortality,
so we may experience their concern for our salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of
righteousness,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

As we adore you, O God, who alone are holy
and wonderful in all your Saints,
we implore your grace,
so that, coming to perfect holiness in the fullness of your love,
we may pass from this pilgrim table
to the banquet of our heavenly homeland.
Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*