

ALL SAINTS' DAY



THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

HYMN

*For all the saints, who from their labors rest, who thee by faith confessed,
thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blessed. Alleluia, alleluia!*

*O blest communion, fellowship divine! We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine. Alleluia, alleluia!*

*From earth's wide bounds, from oceans farthest coast, through gates of pearl
streams countless host, singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia, alleluia!*



**Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and
blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen**



Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and
fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to
follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to
those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through
Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God,
in glory everlasting. Amen.

THE HYMN OF PRAISE

Glorify the Lord, all you works of the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.
In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Let the people of God glorify the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.
Glorify the Lord, O priests and servants of the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.
Glorify the Lord, O spirits and souls of the righteous,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.
You that are holy and humble of heart, glorify the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Let us glorify the Lord: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.
In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

THE FIRST LESSON

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I, John, looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"For this reason they are before the throne of God,
and worship him day and night within his temple,
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.
They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat;
for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Psalm 34:1-10,22

Benedicam Dominum

1 I will bless the Lord at all times; *
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.
2 I will glory in the Lord; *
let the humble hear and rejoice.
3 Proclaim with me the greatness of the Lord; *
let us exalt his Name together.
4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me *
and delivered me out of all my terror.
5 Look upon him and be radiant, *
and let not your faces be ashamed.
6 I called in my affliction and the Lord heard me *
and saved me from all my troubles.
7 The angel of the Lord encompasses those who fear him, *
and he will deliver them.
8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; *
happy are they who trust in him!
9 Fear the Lord, you that are his saints, *
for those who fear him lack nothing.
10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger, *
but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.
22 The Lord ransoms the life of his servants, *
and none will be punished who trust in him.

THE SECOND LESSON

2 Corinthians 5:14-19 (Substituted Lesson*)

For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

THE GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"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 receive 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 for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people 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, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

REFLECTION

by

Norm Wright

"I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting."

On this All Saints' Day we not only remember those who have gone before, but we ponder the interconnection that exists between those who are past, those who are present, and those who are yet to be as expressed in the term, "the communion of saints." The word saint is derived from the Latin word, "Sanctus" - holy - which in Hebrew is *קֹדֶשׁ* *kodesh*, meaning set apart or other. Within Christianity, saint is term that can be broadly applied to all members of Christ's Body.

With that being said, it is important to understand that the Body of Christ is not limited to those who are recognized as Christians through baptism, confirmation, and their participation in the Holy Eucharist but to all who, by God's grace, do what Jesus did and taught. Jesus said, "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice." [John 10:16]

People that come to mind in this category are like the French-born Jew, Simone Weil, a philosopher and mystic who never formally converted to Christianity but deeply loved Jesus and felt great compassion for the poor and persecuted throughout her life. Another is Mahatma Gandhi, a life-long Hindu, who not only admired the beatitudes of Jesus in today's Gospel lesson but also put them into practice and liberated a whole nation through the practice of non-violence.

There are untold others who may not have even heard of Jesus, much less, converted to Christianity but who practiced and are practicing what Jesus taught whether from the perspective

of a different religion or as awakened human beings who understand the interconnectedness between one another and all life on this planet. These too are in the Body of Christ and are among the saints we honor today. Jesus said, “If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, **even though you do not believe me, believe the works**, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” [John 10:32-38]

As the well-known hymn says, “There’s a wideness in God’s mercy like the wideness of the sea; there’s a kindness in his justice, which is more than liberty.” [TH 1982 #470] There is, in all major religions, a sense of interconnectedness; a communion of creation in which nothing God has created is lost. In spite of all the evil, wrongdoing, and needless tragedy played out in our world and in our lives, there is a strong undercurrent within our Scriptures that indicates everything culminates in God.

Consider these words of St. Paul from today’s second lesson, “ In ***Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespasses against them.***” Such mercy and loving-kindness seems so unimaginable in today’s polarized world that it borders on what one might consider divine naiveté.

But God is not naive. God is purposeful. In and through Christ Jesus God knows our every weakness and our every failure as individuals, as nations, and as a species.

There is nothing about us that God doesn’t know and that God doesn’t forgive. This is what Jesus was hinting at in his Parable of Landlord and Hired Workers [Matthew 20:1-16] and in Parable of the Prodigal Son [Luke 15:11-32].

Such a loving desire to reconcile the world and forgive all is so unbelievable that we can recoil at the thought of it because, at a worldly level, it doesn’t make sense, it doesn’t seem right, and it doesn’t seem fair. We are all prone to a retributive payback mentality for wrongs done to us. We are prone to withhold forgiveness until the offender demonstrates a measure of contrition, asks for it, or begs for it. Even then some, who claim to follow Jesus, may not offer it.

This is not God’s way. This is not the way of Jesus. Our ability, as Christian, to ask for forgiveness is strictly based on being forgiving. [See Luke 11: 2-4]

Those we honor as saints today are those who in this life followed the way of Jesus and who worked at reconciling the world; those who did justice, loved kindness, and walked humbly with our God. They are those who embraced the message of the beatitudes and viewed the world through its holy lens.

On this day we remember with thankfulness those who have gone before us; those who, by the grace of God, built the foundations upon which we stand and those who shaped our lives and set our feet on the path we are walking. It is proper to remember and honor them; not as people of the past but rather as alive in Christ.

The experience which brings this home for me is when I am reading the scriptures writ large in nature; as in, stepping outside for a moment on a still, clear, and frigid moonless winter's night to look at the stars. Such frigid darkness is as close as I can get to experiencing the unimaginable vastness of space, to encounter a silence that speaks, and see with my naked eyes stars that are as far away as 2 million light years. Seeing light in the present that was generated in the far distant past reminds me that nothing in God's creation is lost.

Light perpetual shines.

For Christians, the communion of saints is that timeless bond created by God in Christ Jesus, through whom all things were made. This bond is sealed by the life-giving Holy Spirit who brought life from light and raises all to new life through the outpouring of our Father's love. We who are here today and those who will follow us are entrusted to continue the ministry of reconciling the world to God in Christ so that all may come to know the wideness of God's mercy and experience the kindness of God's justice that exceeds liberty.

May God strengthen us in this endeavor.

*O blest communion, fellowship divine! We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine. Alleluia, alleluia!*

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR ALL SAINTS

Most loving God whose mercy is wider than the sea, we offer you our thanks and praise for those known to us and known only to you in every age and place,

who like Saints Stephen, Peter, and Paul willingly laid down their lives for the Gospel and did not forfeit their faith, their hope, and their love of you;

who like Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Julian of Norwich humbly opened themselves to your will and revealed hearts aglow with your love;

who like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, and Oscar Romero devoted their lives to the nonviolent pursuit of justice and peace;

who like St. Francis, St. Theresa of Calcutta, and Desmond Tutu who committed their lives to reconciling the world to through their offerings of mercy and forgiveness to all.

On this day, we remember all those of sainted memory whose lives have impacted ours and who we name in hearts (*please offer the names of those you carry in your heart*).

Gracious God, who in Christ Jesus has created a timeless bond in the communion of saints, instill in us the strength and will to walk in the paths they forged for the sake and in the name of Jesus.
Amen

THE NICENE CREED (an adaptation - nw)

We have faith in God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We have faith in Christ Jesus,
the Son of God,
eternally begotten of God,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten of one Being.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came to be one with us:
By the power of the Holy Spirit
he was made one of us.
For the sake of all he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day God resurrected him as a new creation.
He ascended to God and is one with God.
His domain has no end.

We have faith in the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life,
who is worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son,
who speaks to listening hearts.

We acknowledge the universal Body of Christ
and affirm the forgiveness of sins
as we await the resurrection to new life in Christ Jesus. Amen

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of Love, we pray for the whole Church and our parish family. Guide your Church and this parish in the way of truth and love.

God of Healing, we pray for Bernard, Sue, Pat and Bev Ann Christensen, Pat Michels, Jolene, Darold Adamson, for Deacon John and for those we hold in our hearts. Grant unto all in need the comfort and healing of your presence.

God our Protector, we pray for those affected by Covid-19; for healthcare workers around the world; for those who provide essential services, first responders, fire fighters, police. We pray for the leaders of all nations, for all government officials every where, and for all those making decisions in times of crisis. Grant them protection and guide those in authority to make wise decisions.

God our Defender, we pray for the homeless and the jobless in our nation, and for those who have lost their homeland, their sense of security, and who find themselves dependent on the good

will of others in strange lands; that their needs are met and grant them the comfort of your Holy Spirit.

God of Life, we pray for those who have died. May all the departed find life in you.

God of Mission, we pray for all bishops, priests, deacons, and all who serve your Church. Grant them guidance in their various ministries and guide us in our mission to enlarge the Family of Faith in our midst.

A PRAYER FOR OUR NATION

Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges: Guide the people of the United States in the election of officials and representatives; that by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

May God be with us.

Let us lift up our hearts and give thanks to the Lord our God; for it is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth through Jesus Christ our Lord. For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Commemoration

Holy and Gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent forth Jesus to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us and to be one with us, so that we may be reconciled to you, the God and Father of all.

On this day, we celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, offering our praise and thanksgiving by recalling Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension. Sanctify us, we pray, that we may faithfully serve you in unity, constancy, and peace: and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ.

By him, and with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. Amen.

As our brother Jesus has taught us we now pray,
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore, let us keep the Feast. Alleluia!



A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I love you above all things. How I long to receive you with all the saints at the heavenly table you have prepared. Since I cannot at this moment receive you in bread and wine come into my life that I may be united with you in the communion of saints. Keep all who long to receive you in your everlasting embrace. Amen

God our Father, whose Son our Lord Jesus Christ in a wonderful Sacrament has left us a memorial of his passion: Grant us so to venerate the sacred mysteries of his Body and Blood, that we may ever perceive within ourselves the fruit of his redemption; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, for ever and ever. Amen



May the almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us. Amen

* The assigned Epistle or Second Lesson for today is 1 John 3:1-3

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