

Sunday, November 1, 2020

All Saints Day, Year A

Introduction

All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. As November heralds the dying of the landscape in many northern regions, the readings and liturgy call us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptism is complete. At the Lord's table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

The book of Revelation is written to seven churches in western Asia Minor during a time of great oppression. Today's reading is a response to the question asked in 6:17: "Who is able to stand?" The writer gives the faithful the assurance of God's protection and a vision of victory.

⁹After this I 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. ¹⁰They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

¹¹And 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, ¹²singing,

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

¹³Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" ¹⁴I 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.

¹⁵For 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.

¹⁶They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,

nor any scorching heat;
¹⁷for 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: Psalm 34:1-10, 22

Fear the LORD, you saints of the LORD; for those who fear the LORD lack nothing. (Ps. 34:9)

¹I will bless the LORD| at all times;
the praise of God shall ever be | in my mouth.
²**I will glory | in the LORD;**
let the lowly hear | and rejoice. R
³Proclaim with me the greatness | of the LORD;
let us exalt God’s | name together.
⁴**I sought the LORD, who | answered me**
and delivered me from | all my terrors.
⁵Look upon the LORD| 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. R
⁷The angel of the LORD encamps around those who | fear the LORD
and de- | livers them.
⁸**Taste and see that the | LORD is good;**
happy are they who take ref- | uge in God!
⁹Fear the LORD, you saints | of the LORD,
for those who fear the | LORD lack nothing.
¹⁰**The lions are in want and | suffer hunger,**
but those who seek the LORD lack nothing | that is good.
²²O LORD, you redeem the life | of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will | not be punished. **R**

Second Reading: 1 John 3:1-3

A saint is one who has been set apart by God for God’s purposes. God, out of divine love, set us apart to be the children of God. Our holy hope is that we shall see God as God really is.

¹See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

In the Beatitudes, Jesus provides a unique description of those who are blessed with God’s favor. His teaching is surprising and shocking to those who seek wealth, fame, and control over others.

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Upcoming Commemorations

All Saints Day

Sunday, November 1, 2020

The custom of commemorating all of the saints of the church on a single day goes back at least to the third century. All Saints Day celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who make up the body of Christ. On this day or the following Sunday, many congregations will remember the faithful who have died during the past year.

Martín de Porres, renewer of society, died 1639

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

Martín was the son of a Spanish knight and a freed black slave from Panama. As a lay brother in the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), he engaged in many charitable works in Lima, Peru. He founded an orphanage, a hospital, and a clinic for cats and dogs.

John Christian Frederick Heyer, died 1873; Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, died 1719; Ludwig Nommensen, died 1918; missionaries

Saturday, November 7, 2020

Heyer was the first missionary sent out by American Lutherans. After teaching at Gettysburg College and Seminary he was assigned to the Andhra region of India. A worker among the Tamil people on the southeast coast of India, Ziegenbalg was opposed both by local Hindus and by Danish authorities who favored a different missionary style. He was known for caring about the welfare of the whole person. Nommensen was born in northern Germany and was sent to Sumatra as a Lutheran missionary. Working among the Batak people, he translated the scriptures into their language, and honored their native culture.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.