

Read



Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

Psalm 24:1bc-2, 3-4ab,
5-6

1 John 3:1-3

Matthew 5:1-12a

LIVING THE WORD

Solemnity of All Saints

November 1, 2018



REFLECTION

Praying with the saints can often give us perspective and firm footing. Athletes might look to St. Sebastian for strength at a match or game while singers may look to St. Cecilia for inspiration. The road to sainthood is not easy yet those who receive such status can inspire and encourage others to live the Beatitudes out loud as presented in today's Gospel. The word *Beatitude* means "supreme blessedness." Recently canonized, St. Teresa of Calcutta (known in life as Mother Theresa) knew the sacrifice of giving up the comforts of society in order to offer dignity to those dying on the streets, to orphans, and to severely disabled children and adults. Volunteers and sisters living with the Missionaries of Charity spend their days bathing those close to death and offering them a clean bed to spend the rest of their lives. Could there be a more humble service than to put the needs of the dying and destitute before your own? Each of us is called to the communion of saints. We are connected to Catholics both living and dead. This means we have a mandate to respond to Jesus in a very real and authentic way. The world needs us too.



ACTION

For the Solemnity of All Saints, look up your name-sake among one of the more than thousand saints officially named by the Catholic Church. Read a biography of your favorite saint and consider the "supreme blessedness" by which they lived their life. Many saints have been martyred, or killed, for living their faith out loud. Jesus offers us comfort in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Say a prayer of thanksgiving for those who have gone before you and make a plan of action to serve someone in need.

This website will be helpful
when researching saints:



www.catholic.org/saints/



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Which Beatitude is the hardest for you to accept?
- ❖ How do you feel called to live your gifts out as a member of the communion of saints?



November 1, 2018

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

LECTIONARY #667

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6

1 John 3:1-3

Matthew 5:1-12a

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Today's readings are rich in content with each line of the Beatitudes providing abundant food for thought. Additionally, the Solemnity of All Saints today and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day) tomorrow celebrate an important component of Catholic theology: the communion of saints. Finally, some teens may have recently lost a grandparent or someone close, and will want to remember that person in a special way on this feast. Place your emphasis on the area most pertinent for your group this week.

Q FOCUS: *To understand our call to holiness.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

November 3 is the optional Memorial of St. Martin de Porres. He is the patron of interracial harmony, being known for treating people of all colors and races with dignity. His initial work involved caring for physical wounds, and he carried this love for the sick throughout his life. After many years dedicating himself to God and the poor, he became a Dominican, and his works flourished. A spiritual director who worked in the kitchen and cared for orphans, slaves, and stray animals, Martin de Porres is a man from whom we can all learn.

Church Teaching Connections

"The Church is a 'communion of saints': this expression refers first to the 'holy things' (*sancta*), above all the Eucharist, by which 'the unity of believers, who form one body in Christ, is both represented and brought about' (*Lumen gentium*, 3)" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 960).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 5-12a

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: / "Blessed are the poor in spirit, / for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. / Blessed are they who mourn, / for they will be comforted. / Blessed are the meek, / for they will inherit the land. / Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, / for they will be satisfied. / Blessed are the merciful, / for they will be shown mercy. / Blessed are the clean of heart, / for they will see God. / Blessed are the peacemakers, / for they will be called children of God. / Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, / for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. / Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely

because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.”

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

Jesus sits down in today's passage to deliver important teachings. These verses, which the Church calls the Beatitudes, invite Christians to an intentional way of living: holiness. When we hear these words, we naturally think of saints and holy men and women, past and present. They lived these teachings to their fullest, some being known for a particular charisma or gift. We know the stories of the saints because they have been lifted up by the Church for special recognition. However, each of us is called to live according to these same principles. Jesus' words are for all of us, not just for special people. If this is true, we better understand the words. Some of them are used differently from how we might think at first.

► What do you think “poor in spirit” means?

It includes those who have little money or possessions, as well as those who choose to live simply and don't make wealth a priority. God cares for them in a special way.

► Whom do you think Jesus means by “they who mourn”?

Those who have lost a loved one and those who have to leave their homeland, jobs, and anything that gives their life meaning, make up this group.

► What do you think meek means?

It doesn't mean “mousy,” which we might guess. Meek is another word for gentle.

► Who do you think are among those who “hunger and thirst for righteousness”?

People who work for justice, who long to see everyone treated equally, who cry out against war, and who hope for a better world, comprise this category.

► Who do you think are the merciful?

Those who forgive easily.

► Who do you think are the clean of heart?

Those who have a deep desire to see goodness and justice triumph.

► Who do you think are the peacemakers?

The last verses acknowledge that if you live by these words you will most likely be made fun of, talked about, and even treated badly. That's a tall order, and we know up front that we're not going to be popular for living it. However, we are also told to rejoice. If we live this way, we will continue to live, forever, in the Kingdom of God. In fact, we see through the examples of the saints, that the more they lived this way, the greater peace and contentment they had, even in this life. This is where faith comes in. We may not relish the thought of being so different, we may not know how we will ever live up to these ideals, but we move forward, inspired by the saints, and trusting that God's grace will work in us.

► How does your faith help you stand your ground against adversity and being different for acting as a Christian?

If you have lost someone you loved, or if you know someone else who has, or if you are aware of some type of tragedy or loss in the world right now, you may find comfort in understanding the communion of saints. As a Church, we don't just live in communion with the other members of the Church here on earth, we also live in communion with all of the faithful who have gone before us and now reside with God in heaven. Along with God, those who have gone before us hear our prayers.

► Do you feel the presence of those who have died around you? Do you sense they hear your prayers?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 58.

How do the saints inspire you or strengthen your faith?

In what ways can you make the saints part of your everyday life?

How do my actions at school show my faith in God?

Do you feel blessed? Do you act like someone who has been blessed?

Act on the Word

Catholic Champions

You may want to have empty cereal boxes in order to lead this activity. You can also do this with full, unopened cereal boxes that can later be donated to a food pantry. You will need paper, coloring materials, scissors, and glue. You might also want to have books about saints' lives.

Wheaties cereal is known as the "breakfast of champions," and the cereal boxes often feature pictures of sports heroes. Saints are the champions of our faith. Distribute cereal boxes (either empty or full and unopened) and allow the teens to cover them with paper and decorate them in honor of a favorite saint. They should put a picture of a saint on the front, along with the saint's name. On the back, they might create a game or puzzle based on information about the saint or information about how to become a saint. When they are finished, invite them to share their work. If they decorated empty cereal boxes, see if you can find a place in the parish where they can be displayed for a while. If they decorated full cereal boxes, tell them that you are going to donate them to a food pantry. Not only will they provide sustenance to the recipients, they will also bring a special message of hope.

Closing Prayer

Father,
all-powerful and ever-living God,
we give you thanks
for the blessing of all the saints who have
inspired us
by their holy way of life.
Like them, we are called to holiness.
Guide us on our way,
and may all that we do
serve as a blessing upon this world.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.