

# Read

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

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

1 John 3:1-3

Matthew 5:1-12a



## Solemnity of All Saints

November 1, 2024

LECTIONARY #667  
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### REFLECTION

On social media, #blessed has been used to acknowledge being in a fortunate, privileged position, envied by others. If you take that way of thinking about what it means to be blessed and apply it to the Beatitudes, it can be confusing. It is hard for us to think about mourning or being persecuted as something others would find desirable, particularly in a world that values money, status, power, fame, and influence. Our confusion reflects how deeply entrenched we are in the standards of secular culture.

In describing the kingdom of God, Jesus presents a complete reversal of worldly values. God is especially present to people who live in a uniquely countercultural way because *this* is the way of Christian discipleship. Society tends to look down upon people who are lacking in material possessions or social status. Yet it is the poor in spirit who rely completely on God. It is the humility of the meek, the desire for righteousness, the practice of mercy, and the commitment to peace that leads us to God. It is not easy to live out the Beatitudes in our world today, but the everlasting reward in heaven is great.

### ACTION

In honor of the Church's celebration of All Saints, choose any saint of the Catholic tradition and research his or her background this month. One of the reasons we read this Gospel passage on this solemnity is because of the clear and consistent connections between the lives of the saints and the Beatitudes. Identify which Beatitudes your chosen saint most exemplifies and put them into practice in your own life.



Check out how today's Gospel reading was depicted in this scene from *The Chosen*.

<https://youtu.be/o5OnF3sg0cY>



### QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Which of the Beatitudes do you find most reassuring? Are there any you find particularly challenging to live out?
- ❖ Who are the people in your own life that provide a good example of living out the Beatitudes?



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## 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 we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. In every age, holy men and women have lived heroic lives of virtue, generous service, and great love. Their approaches are as varied as their cultures and backgrounds, but one thing is consistent: every saint has a heart for God. The Church marks a day to remember all of the saints, named and unnamed, some famous and others forgotten by history but known to the Lord. It is appropriate on this day that our Gospel reading is the Beatitudes. Jesus offers a pathway to eternal happiness, to blessedness, to sainthood. The road to sainthood is not the easiest path. The Beatitudes are not easy teachings. In each one we discover Jesus as the model, the way, and the goal.

**Q FOCUS:** Each of us are called to be saints and to live the Beatitudes.

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

Every year on November 1, the Church celebrates All Saints Day. This holyday of obligation reminds us of those who have gone before us in the faith and have lived their lives for God. Overshadowed in the culture by Halloween, All Saints Day stands as a contrast to dressing up in scary or scandalous costumes. It is a day to honor the great men and women of our faith whose lives are a testament to God's love in every age and in all circumstances. The saints give us examples of how to live our faith in our daily

lives, to have confidence in God's love and plan, and to share the fire of God's love with the world.

### Church Teaching Connection

"Jesus begins with the word 'Blessed' (Mt 5:3). It is the main proclamation, that of an unprecedented happiness. Beatitude, holiness, is not a life plan made up only of effort and renunciation, but is above all the joyful discovery of being God's beloved children. And this fills you with joy. It is not a human achievement, it is a gift we receive: we are holy because God, who is the Holy One, comes to dwell in our lives. It is he who gives holiness to us. This is why we are blessed!" (Pope Francis, Angelus Message, November 1, 2021).

## 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 5:1-12a

**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:*

Scientists have researched and debated the effects of smiling, trying to find out if smiling, even fake smiling, makes you happier. A quick browse of online articles on the subject will show both views. Smiling, even fake smiling makes you happier. Fake smiling will not make you happier and may even cause problems. Smiling releases dopamine. Smiling doesn't release dopamine.

► **We can even try it here. Everyone start with a neutral face. Now give a fake smile. Now try a real smile. How does that feel? Does anyone feel happier?**

We want to feel happy and content. Maybe smiling is one technique we can use to help us feel that way, even if it is just for a little bit. But there is a deeper, eternal happiness that we all are longing for and it can only be found in God. Jesus talks about this in today's reading as he shares the Beatitudes with the crowd.

The word *beatitudo* comes from the Latin *beatus* and is often translated into the word “blessed.” It can also be translated as “happy.” So, when we consider today's reading, let's think about it in those terms.

When Jesus taught the crowds on the mountain, he saw in them that deep human desire for eternal happiness. It is an experience every person wants, no matter their race, culture, economic status, or education. God created all people to find their ultimate happiness in himself, yet not all of us realize that or know him and know how to encounter that happiness.

► **What are some ways society says we can be happy? How about what your peers say?**

As he shares his teaching, Jesus shows the people the path to happiness, and it isn't through fake smiling. It is through truly living. The Beatitudes challenge our perceptions of what can actually make us feel satisfied. Nowhere in the teaching does it say “Blessed are those who are popular and rich.” Jesus knows that those experiences are fleeting and ultimately don't lead to lasting happiness. Instead, happiness comes to the merciful. It comes to those who are wrapped in grief. Those who seek peace will find true happiness. To discover this type of blessedness means that people must authentically live and love, like Jesus did. They must rest in God and trust in his goodness, even in bad situations.

► **How have you experienced a happiness like that described in the Beatitudes?**

We know it is possible. The saints showed us the way. Each saint, in his or her own way, gave witness to this truth. Following God is not just about giving things up or following strict rules. Rather, it is about discovering with joy that we are the beloved sons and daughters of God. It is a gift. Like the presents at Christmas, the gift of being loved in a stunning and absolute way fills our hearts with joy. And that joy accompanies us in our victories and failures. It filled the saints with courage to live for the Lord and to die for the Lord. It is a joy that empowers us to give witness to our own faith in our daily lives.

## 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.

We want to be happy, but we might not know how to achieve that.

The Beatitudes offer a way to be truly happy, to experience the fullness of eternal happiness in God.

The saints are filled with the joy of knowing they are children of God.

## Act on the Word

### Name that Saint!

For this activity, you will need prizes for members of the winning team and books on the saints or access to the internet to research saints.

The goal of this activity is to have fun learning about the saints of the Church. A quiz show style game will be played and then teens will have an opportunity to learn more about the saints by doing some research. Before the game begins, you will need to prepare trivia questions on the saints. Sample questions are included below for you to use. These also provide a model for you to create your own additional questions.

For the game, divide the young people into two teams. Each team will take turns trying to guess the correct saint based on the clues given in the question. When a team gets the correct answer, they receive one point. The team with the most points wins.

Sample questions:

\* Q: The quote, "Christ has no body now but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours," is attributed to this sixteenth-century Spanish Carmelite nun.

\* A: Teresa of Avila

\* Q: This apostle was crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy of dying in the same way as Jesus.

\* A: Peter

\* Q: She is the patron saint of missionaries and is known as the "Little Flower."

\* A: Therese of Lisieux

\* Q: He was the founder of the Jesuits.

\* A: Ignatius of Loyola

\* Q: She is known as the "Lily of the Mohawks" and is the first Native American saint.

\* A: Kateri Tekakwitha

After the game is finished, divide the teens into small groups or pairs. Have them research a saint or a person on the road to sainthood that interests them. This can be done by topic, culture, patronage, or spirituality. Then have the groups present their findings about the saint and why they chose that particular person.

## Closing Prayer

*Mighty God,*

*as we celebrate the solemnity of All Saints,*

*we pray that our lives and our love*

*will lead us to our final place of peace, mercy,*

*and love*

*resting secure in your presence as we experience*

*eternal happiness in you.*

*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](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.