

All Saints Day



(image: Holy Trinity)

We take a breath and come into God's presence.

Holy Spirit draw us close and minister your grace to us. May we recognise your presence in our midst. **Amen.**

God of all, through all time and in all places, in each circumstance and season, You call us together in this place and welcome us with open arms as your beloved children. Each one of us is precious to you and called by you. In this time of great change and uncertainty, you are unchanging and ever faithful. Through this time together, let us feel you speaking to us, leading us, teaching us, Filling us with your spirit and strengthening us for the journey ahead. **Amen.**

Bible Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

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

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

¹¹ 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 worshipped God, ¹² singing,

'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honour
and power and might
be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

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

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat;

¹⁷ for the Lamb at the centre 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.'

Reflection

I wonder which saints inspire you?

St Peter – Who was the imperfect - perfect embodiment of a disciple!

St Tereasa – For her love and compassion to the homeless and destitute.

St Mary – The woman who bore and raised Jesus.

St Francis of Assisi – Who established the Franciscans and is patron saint of animals.

A relative, a friend, your Sunday school teacher - The person who encouraged you in your faith.

All Saints Day is a beautiful but poignant day in our church calendar.

It is a time when we remember all those faithful who have gone before us, both well known and lesser known saints of our faith.

All Saints Day reminds us that our separation from them is only temporal. It assures us that they are saints now in glory. Saints and by this we don't mean a lot of perfect, holy super heroes, rather fellow travellers in Christ. Regular people with gifts and faults, just like us, who walked with God. And one day we will as saints, however implausible that sounds, join with them.

Trying to grasp this spiritual realm is difficult. As hard as we might search it remains a great mystery of our faith. Hebrews (12:1) which I always associate with All Saints Day, talks of being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, and just as we might depending on our tradition, ask Jesus, or Mary, or the apostles to pray for us, to intercede for us at the throne of God, we might then also conceive that those everyday saints, family, friends, past members of our churches, may too now be sustaining us with their prayers and interceding for us at the very throne of God. How beautiful is that.

That full assembly of those who have gone before and which we will one day be part, reminds us that we are part of something so much more than ourselves. We can feel it sometimes in the reverence of our churches – the prayers of generations. Our reading records a great culturally diverse assembly, a 'multitude of nations', languages, tribes all beautifully at one together. God's vision of a better reality.

So on this day we give thanks for those who have gone before, and take encouragement from the example of faith and good and Godly living that they have shown us. Their memory surrounds us, and should inspire us to surround one another with the same faithfulness of example and care too. We are one body past, present and future.

As people of faith we have our hope not on things on this earth which are but fleeting, but in the power of the cross of Christ and his resurrection. Jesus' words of John 11:25 are the resounding gospel note that we proclaim this day **"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live."** And I always note with this verse that it doesn't say 'those who don't believe in me won't live' rather it is a reassurance and trust for those who do.

The reading points us to these eternal mysteries. The pledge of our eternal inheritance, something that we can't quite grasp - as it is so much higher than we can ever imagine or hope for. But from what we can comprehend we can take reassurance that there is a place of no more pain or tears, that there is more than this life, there is more than earthly death, majestically more!

Praise be to God. **Amen.**

Worship Music

For all the Saints with lyrics - Choir of Kings:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OaBgaMcOvM&ab_channel=JacobLupfer

I danced in the morning– Lucy Gibson (attached)

Oh when the saints go marching in – Woody Wright, Ivan Parker

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1v3xNnPOK9o&ab_channel=GaitherVEVO

Amazing grace (my chains are gone) with lyrics – Christ Tomlin

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbe7OruLk8I&ab_channel=alwaysforgiven821

Intercessions for All Saints Day

Heavenly Trinity of God, we praise you for your eternal love and faithfulness to us. We thank you for those who have gone before, the special and the reassuringly

ordinary. Help us to follow the example of your blessed saints in our daily dedications, actions, words and prayers.

We thank you for calling us your saints. In spite of our unholy lives at times you look at us and see Jesus' perfect life and death covering ours. Thank you for this grace.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our praise.**

Thank you for every individual who has helped us on our journey and encouraged us to keep believing when we have felt like giving up. Thank you for all those who taught us the faith and to love ever more inclusively and generously.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

We pray for your church and its leaders, its worshippers and parishioners. We pray especially for those facing persecution for their faith, for those whose lives are threatened in the stand for peace and justice.

We pray for the healing of your world from the pandemic, for overwhelmed medical and mental health services and personnel. For wise and compassionate decision making. For the people of Turkey and Greece and the rescue workers.

Bring peace to those nations in conflict and where there is political instability.

Protect and provide for those who are vulnerable, poor and hungry.

Move those with plenty to share with those who have little.

Help all people to love their global neighbour as themselves.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

We pray for one another, for our families and friends and those we care for.

For those who have no one to pray for them.

For all who are struggling in body, mind and spirit.

We name before you those on our prayer lists and all for whom we pray ...

Help us with the uncertainty and fear, and speak peace into our hearts.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your safe eternal keeping all those who have died ...

And all whom we have loved

Bring lasting comfort and eternal hope to those who grieve.

Lord in your mercy: **Bring us peace.**

In this moment of stillness we lift before God the prayers of our own hearts

God of life, we give thanks for the love you have shown to the world through all your saints, and we celebrate our continuing communion with them whenever we worship. We look forward to being part of the crowd around your throne in heaven. In the meantime keep us looking to Jesus and help us to keep giving a clear witness to him, living the holy lives you have called us to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus holy name we pray. **Amen.** (Taken from the Australian Lutheran Prayer Book).

Blessing

May God,
who kindled the fire of her love in the hearts of the saints,
pour upon you the riches of his grace.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Following God's saints, go in the peace and joy of Christ.

In the name of God. Amen.