

## Sermon for All Saints Day 2025

### Ephesians 1, 11-end

<sup>11</sup>In him we were also chosen,<sup>[a]</sup> having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup>in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup>who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

### Thanksgiving and Prayer

<sup>15</sup>For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, <sup>16</sup>I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup>I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit<sup>[f]</sup> of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup>I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup>and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup>he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup>And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

### Luke 6, 20-31

### Blessings and Woes

<sup>20</sup>Looking at his disciples, Jesus said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup>Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup>Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.

<sup>23</sup>“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. <sup>24</sup>“But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. <sup>25</sup>Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. <sup>26</sup>Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

### Love for Enemies

<sup>27</sup>“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. <sup>29</sup>If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. <sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you.

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### “Saints Among Us”

This morning we are celebrating All Saints’ Day. From its earliest times the Church has recognised as its foundation stones those heroes of the faith whose lives have excited others to holiness. But we gather today not only to remember those who have gone before us in faith, but to recognize the saints who walk among us still—those whose lives reflect the light of Christ in quiet, courageous, and often unnoticed ways.

### So, who are the Saints?

When we hear the word “saint,” we might picture stained glass windows, golden halos, or ancient martyrs whose stories echo through the centuries exciting others to holiness. But All Saints’ Day is not only about the past. It is about the present. It is about the living. It is about us.

Saints are not solo heroes—they are part of a community, a cloud of witnesses.

They are people who live faithfully in the midst of imperfection. People who hunger for justice, who mourn with compassion, who love when it is costly. People who, as Ephesians says, have had “the eyes of their hearts enlightened” to see hope even in despair.

In Luke’s Gospel, Jesus turns to his disciples and says, “Blessed are you who are poor... who hunger... who weep... who are hated.” AND LOOK CLOSELY AT THE WORDS: These are not FUTURE promises—they are PRESENT blessings.

**Jesus is not romanticizing suffering.**

**He is revealing where God’s heart dwells.**

The saints among us are often those the world overlooks. A grandmother who prays daily for her community.

A teenager who stands up to bullying.

A nurse who holds the hand of the dying.

A neighbour who shares their last loaf of bread.

**These are the blessed ones. These are the saints.**

And then Jesus goes further:

*“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you.”*

This is not easy. It is radical. It is saintly.

**Saints are those who choose mercy over revenge, generosity over greed, love over fear.**

Paul writes to the Ephesians, *“In Christ we have obtained an inheritance.”* This inheritance is not wealth or status—it is belonging. It is being sealed with the Holy Spirit. It is being part of a story that stretches from creation to new creation.

Paul prays that we might know *“the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.”* Not just the saints of old—but the saints of now. The saints in your pew. The saints in your family. The saints in your street.

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To be a saint is to live in hope. To believe that God's power is at work in the world, even when the headlines say otherwise. To trust that love is stronger than death. To live as if the kingdom of God is already breaking in.

Saints are those who live in hope, even when the world feels hopeless.

So today, let us name the saints. Not just Augustine, Francis, Anthony, Lucia, Mary, Mother Teresa and Oscar Romero—but the saints we know. The ones who have shaped our faith. The ones who have held us in grief. The ones who have shown us what love looks like.

**ACTION: Take a moment. Who are the saints in your life? Who has blessed you with kindness, challenged you with truth, walked with you in sorrow?**

Perhaps you are thinking of a teacher, a friend, a parent, a stranger. Perhaps you are thinking of someone who never made the news but changed your life. These are the saints among us.

And perhaps, just perhaps, someone is thinking of you.

### **A Call to Action: Be a Saint**

The call of All Saints' Day is not only to remember—it is to respond. To live as saints. To embody the Beatitudes. To love extravagantly. To forgive freely. To hope fiercely.

Jesus says, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." This is the ethic of sainthood. Not perfection, but participation. Not isolation, but communion.

So, when we leave here and return to our homes, maybe light a candle, say a name out loud or sing a song for the saint that you are celebrating and then let us all go out and try to live like saints.

### **A Closing Prayer**

Let us pray:

Holy God, we thank you for the saints who have gone before us, and for the saints who walk beside us. Open our eyes to see your glory in the lives of those around us. Strengthen us to live with mercy, courage, and hope. Make us part of your communion of saints, that we may shine with your light in the world. In Jesus' name, **Amen.**