

Sunday 1 November 2026

All Saints Day

Collect:

God of holiness,
your glory is proclaimed in every age:
as we rejoice in the faith of your saints,
inspire us to follow their example
with boldness and joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for this week:

Revelation 7:9-17; Psalm 34:1-10; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12

Revelation 7:1-8 describes the finite number of Israelites who will be redeemed. In contrast verses 9-17 presents an innumerable host of Gentiles who will also receive this grace. What is most astonishing is the breadth of God's redemptive activity which encompasses every national, tribal, racial or linguistic grouping. It is a vision of inclusivity, which draws the faithful out of every walk of life and from every corner of society. Joyfully this great multitude will continuously worship God – although 'worship' is perhaps a weak rendering of the original text, which could more accurately be described as 'minister to'. The role the redeemed have before God is an active one, a complete involvement in the life of God's kingdom. Psalm 34 reiterates this pure-minded focus on, and trust in, God, describing the happiness that this brings.

The Epistle, while joyfully affirming that its readers are beloved children of God, gently asks them to consider how much more wonderful it will be when Christ returns and they share in his likeness. Meanwhile, our Gospel reading consists of the Beatitudes, the opening part of the Sermon on the Mount, which is a collection of Jesus' teachings concerning life under God's reign. These teachings are focussed on those who have become believing children of God, the community of Christ. The Beatitudes are blessings, but ones which reverse the values of many societies, they reiterate words said by God, by Isaiah, by other prophets throughout the Hebrew Scriptures and by Jesus, which proclaim that victims, those who mourn, those who turn the other cheek, those who love the enemy and work for peace, are all members of God's kingdom. The saints who we remember on this feast day are those who demonstrated in this world that God has not forgotten the persecuted, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the poor in spirit or the peacemakers. They are the ones who have continually and consistently put into action on earth the ministering that in our first reading was described as eternally ongoing in heaven.

God our Father,
God, the source of all holiness and giver of all good things:
may we who have shared at this table
as strangers and pilgrims here on earth
be welcomed with all your saints
to the heavenly feast on the day of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for next week:

Amos 5:18-24; Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

Remembrance Sunday