

Homily: All Saints Day 2024: Rev 7:2-4, 9-14; Ps. 24; 1Jn 3:1-3; Mt. 5:8-10

“All of Us are Called to Become Saints by Our Baptism into the Life of the Trinity”

1. This feast celebrates all the known and unknown saints who are now in Heaven. We remember their heroic lives at this Mass to have the inspiration to follow the Lord in a heroic way ourselves. We are all called to become saints by virtue of **our Baptism** and as the great Catholic writer Leon Bloy said *“the only real tragedy in life is if we do not become a saint!”* Something to ponder! There are saints for every vocation and for every personality. We need to study their lives and encourage our children to do the same. Do we do that? With the access of the internet there are so many good resources on the lives of the saints, which if we don’t take advantage of it, we are missing out on making the Gospel real. **That’s the genius of the saints: they take what at times seems like the abstract teachings of our Faith and the Gospel and they bring it to life in the concrete.** Think of all the different saints: Jerome, Padre Pio, Paul, Augustine, Monica, Mary Magdalene, Josephine Bakita, Catherine of Siena, Therese, Gianna, and Benedict Joseph Labre among others. These are human beings like you and me, but what set them apart is they allowed the Holy Spirit to transform them into the image of Christ in all areas of their lives over a lifetime. They offered their lives *as a living sacrifice* (Rom12:1-2) to the Lord, and they show us that He chooses the weak and makes them strong in Jesus Christ our Lord (Preface of Martyrs).
2. The lives of the saints should fill us with hope. After all, if God could win the victory over satan, sin and death by rooting their lives fully in Jesus, He can do the same for us - if only we let Him! It is a call to be **generous** with the Lord: to give Him our all instead of our scraps. **When you study the lives of the many saints of our Church, it should encourage us because they overcame many obstacles with God’s grace = so can we!** *The battle to pray, to be charitable, to forgive, to be chaste, to mortify and deny our sinful nature so that the higher life of Jesus can shine through, to deal with many pains & earthly trials, to frequently make a honest confession of our weakness and sins in the Sacrament of confession for healing, to enter into the mystery of the Holy Mass, to live out the spirit of the*

*10 Commandments & Beatitudes is not always an easy thing. **There is always, in fact, the temptation in our hearts and lives to take the easy way out:** the path of least resistance and selfishness, but in the end that brings **no peace and many regrets.** The saints teach us that sanctity is within everyone's reach. It's there for the taking if we are willing to be generous with God; He is NEVER outdone in generosity and in fact wants us all to be saints. All He asks of us is to let Him in fully! It is such a beautiful and noble adventure. Not easy - as life IS NOT EASY as we well know, but it is the way of ultimate meaning and purpose. **The path of sin leads to sadness and death. The path of sanctity leads to the foot of the Cross, but it is there we find true joy & the peace that the world cannot give.***

3. To become a saint means that our lives have become completely rooted in Christ's love. Sanctity means heroic goodness, not perfection, for in this life we are never perfect or fully free from all taint of sin, but a saint can say truly as St. Paul powerfully states it: *"it is no longer I who live but Christ lives within me."* Each saint shows the face of Christ in a unique way based on their personality and personal gifts to the world. Think of a stained-glass window in a Church when the sun shines through it. The glass is still there, even with some small imperfections, but when the sun hits it, we notice the sun shining through and how it makes the glass fully beautiful, despite any flaws. That is what happens to us when we grow in sanctity: the light of Christ shines through us, despite our frailty. Also, the sanctity to which we are called is not for ourselves alone, but rather as members of the Mystical Body of the Church it is a gift to help others achieve sanctity as well, by our holy witness. We are all in this together. What a noble call: *not simply to know our Catholic Faith, but to HEROICALLY LIVE it in all the varied aspects of our life. Sanctity is the road to Heaven.* May the saints intercede for each of us, so that at the end of our life we too may enter the perfect life with them in the Presence of the Most Holy Trinity in Heaven. Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive joy/happiness. Don't settle for the passing vain things of this life, but realize we all were made by God for greatness - to become His new saints. God bless you. ✠