

First Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

⁹After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

¹³Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" ¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

¹⁵ "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence."

¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.

¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Epistle: 1 John 3:1-3

¹See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

¹Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

⁵"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

⁶"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

⁷"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

⁸"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

⁹"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

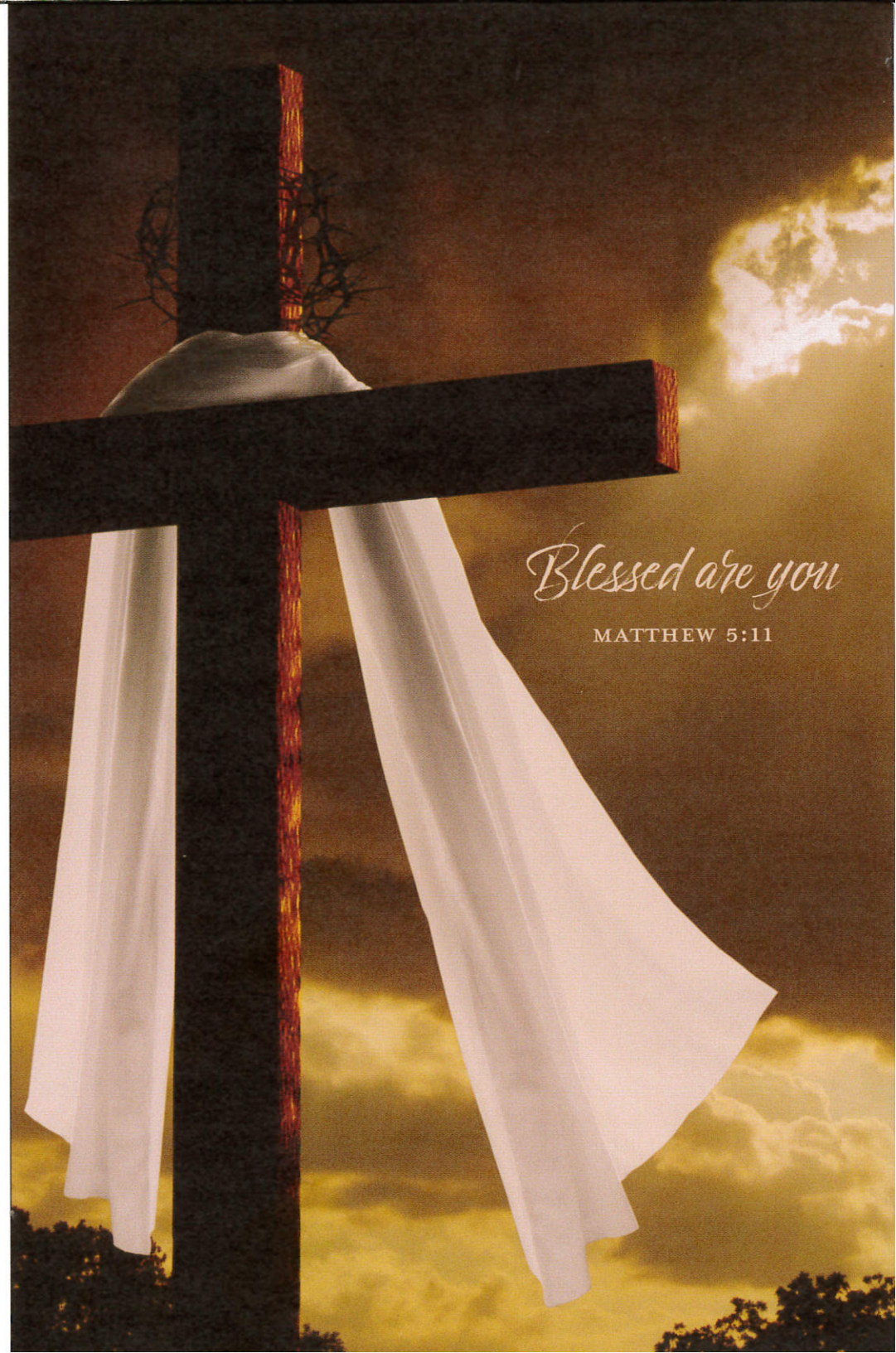
¹⁰"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

¹¹"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account."

¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."



About the Cover: At the conclusion of the Beatitudes, Jesus directly addresses His disciples, then and now, with the words of blessing during persecution. The key to understanding this is knowing who is with us in hardship. We are blessed because we are with Jesus. Jesus knows persecution firsthand as He faced the cross for us. But on the third day, He was raised. Being joined to Him means forgiveness and life. To be counted with Jesus is nothing but a blessing.



St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)
8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254
309-949-2516

November 5, 2023 All Saints' Day (observed)

Divine Service Setting Four (Lutheran Service Book, p. 203)

Hymn of Invocation 517 By All Your Saints in Warfare (vv. 1,4,3)

Invocation and Versicles (p. 203)

Psalm 149

¹Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the godly!

²**Let Israel be glad in his Maker;**
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

³Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!

⁴**For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;**
he adorns the humble with salvation.

⁵Let the godly exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their beds.

⁶**Let the high praises of God be in their throats**
and two-edged swords in their hands,

⁷to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishments on the peoples,

⁸**to bind their kings with chains**
and their nobles with fetters of iron,

⁹to execute on them the judgment written!
This is honor for all his godly ones. Praise the LORD!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Kyrie (p. 204)

Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 205)

[P] Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable

joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

[C] Amen.

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Gradual

Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Blessèd are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Alleluia and Verse (p. 205)

Nicene Creed (p. 206)

Hymn of the Day 667 Saints, See the Cloud of Witnesses

Sermon

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (insert)

Prayer of the Church

After each petition:

[P] Lord, in Your mercy,

[C] hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

[P] ...one God, now and forever.

[C] Amen.

Presentation of the Offering

Service of the Sacrament (p. 208)

(Please see the Communion statement in the pew pads for receiving the Sacrament at St. John's.)

Distribution Hymns

670 Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

678 We Sing for All the Unsung Saints

674 Jerusalem, O City Fair and High

Nunc Dimittis (p. 211)

Hymn to Depart 677 For All the Saints

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

P: Almighty God, in whose glorious presence live all who depart in the Lord, we give You hearty thanks for Your loving-kindness to all Your servants who have finished their course in faith and now rest from their labors. We humbly implore Your mercy that we, together with all who have departed in saving faith, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in both body and soul in Your eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: In gratitude for Your saving grace, O blessed Trinity, we offer to You our praise as we commemorate the entry of our brothers and sisters in Christ into the heavenly glory of Your Church Triumphant, including Lois Esterlein and all whom we remember in our hearts and minds who have died in saving faith, thereby entering into Your nearer presence through the blood of the Lamb, Christ Jesus our Lord.

May their life of faithfulness to Christ be an example to us, and may their entrance into heaven be a source of hope and joy for each of us as we continue our pilgrimage here through the valley of the shadow of death.

C: May it be so. Amen!

P: Let us pray.
Almighty God, we remember with thanksgiving those who loved and served You in Your Church Militant on earth and who now rest from their labors. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joy of Your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

P: Almighty God, in whose glorious presence live all who depart in the Lord, we give You hearty thanks for Your loving-kindness to all Your servants who have finished their course in faith and now rest from their labors. We humbly implore Your mercy that we, together with all who have departed in saving faith, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in both body and soul in Your eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: In gratitude for Your saving grace, O blessed Trinity, we offer to You our praise as we commemorate the entry of our brothers and sisters in Christ into the heavenly glory of Your Church Triumphant, including Lois Esterlein and all whom we remember in our hearts and minds who have died in saving faith, thereby entering into Your nearer presence through the blood of the Lamb, Christ Jesus our Lord.

May their life of faithfulness to Christ be an example to us, and may their entrance into heaven be a source of hope and joy for each of us as we continue our pilgrimage here through the valley of the shadow of death.

C: May it be so. Amen!

P: Let us pray.
Almighty God, we remember with thanksgiving those who loved and served You in Your Church Militant on earth and who now rest from their labors. Keep us in fellowship with all Your saints, and bring us at last to the joy of Your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS

churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
Website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
<https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo>

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

Rev. Timothy Nerud **Pastor**
309-949-2516 (Office), 612-940-8138 (Cell), 309-949-2517 (Home)

Elder: Carl Freeman

Organist: Gail Tutt

Greeter: Janet Bertso

Videographers: Joel Werling, Nicole Nerud, or Heidi Nerud

WE PRAY: Gracious Father, who in Jesus Christ, Your Son, have opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believe, we are indebted to You beyond words for Your grace and mercy in Jesus Christ, our Lord, under whom our loved ones whom You have taken to Yourself lived and through whom they have been given eternal life in the mansions You have made ready for Your holy people; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit are one God with dominion over us forever. Amen

WELCOME TO ALL!

We are anxious to share with you the Christ-centered ministry at St. John's. Our Liturgy follows closely the pattern of Word and Lord's Supper handed down from the ancient Church. It is our hope that you will make the Church's life of prayer your own. If you have difficulty following our order of service, please ask someone sitting near you for assistance. We pray that you will receive rich spiritual blessings from your presence here. May the peace and power of our risen Christ be yours always.

IF YOU DESIRE, a visit or call from Pastor Nerud, please contact the church office (309-949-2516).

OFFICE HOURS

Terri's hours (Monday—Friday) 8 am—12 pm
Pastor's hours (Monday, Pastor's day off)
(Tuesday—Friday) please call ahead

STREAM SERVICES <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> and on the website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org.

DAILY DEVOTIONS FROM LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES - use this website (www.lhm.org) to have daily devotions sent to your email or phone. You never have to be without God's word.

All bulletin announcements need to be in the Office by Wednesday mornings.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

Sunday school—5 Adult Bible Class—24 Worship—45

OFFERING

Offering last Sunday	\$2,385.00
Weekly income needed per 2023 Budget	\$4,212.60
Dollar for Missions for October	\$ 104.00
Gift for ILC	\$ 525.00

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S

Today	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Holy Communion
		All Saints Day
	11:30 pm	Elders' meeting
Wednesday	5:00 pm	Confirmation class
Next Sunday	8:45 am	SS, Adult/Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."
Psalms 122:1

MATTHEW 5:7 – "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

This is one of many Bible passages that remind us that we reap what we sow. Likewise, what God puts into us (His own love, mercy, kindness and generosity) — flows back out of us. It all starts with His self-giving.

ATTENDANCE BOOK—We ask everyone attending this morning to sign the red attendance book found at the end of each pew, then pass it back.

ALTAR FLOWERS have been given in memory of John Wildermuth. We thank God for giving John eternal life through Jesus. We pray we may walk in the faith as John faithfully did.

THANKSGIVING BASKETS—We are asking the congregation to bring pantry items for the baskets (ex: cereal, Kleenex, toilet paper, paper towels, soups, crackers, cookies, fruit juice, pasta, spaghetti sauce, canned fruits/vegetables, peanut butter, snack items, canned meats, etc.). Place them in the box in front of the Office no later than November 19th. Monetary gifts are also accepted. Please give them to Terri Hock (checks made out to St. John's, memo line-Thanksgiving Baskets). A Thrivent Action Plan has been obtained to provide fresh items for the baskets.

UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION—Please review the model directory found on the table next to the coat room. Make any corrections or additions to your contact information and that of family members not regularly attending. We appreciate addresses, land line phone numbers, cell numbers, and emails. Also if there are changes to the people in the household please note that as well.

LOST AND FOUND—Our box of items is full. Please check if anything might be yours. Thank You!

CHRISTIAN LIVING—**Matthew 23:1-12:** The Pharisees had the seat of Moses and the authority to teach, but their words and actions did not match. The world is watching, if the words of Jesus have any authority in our daily lives. If our actions do not match the words we share on Sunday or in our Bible Study, then they can do more harm than good. Our Christian faith needs to carry on into our back yard while we are mowing, and while we are watching sports, and in our conversations at the mall. Our Lord promises to exalt those who humbly serve Him for His sake at all times. This may be our most powerful witness: serving Him at all times and in all places. Pray for the Holy Spirit to bless our witness while the world is constantly watching as we serve Christ.

2024 Wall Calendars—Hillcrest Home would be very happy to receive your extra 2024 wall calendars to hang in their patients' rooms. Please place them in the tray on the table by the coat room. Thank you!

DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS: A Dollar for Missions gathers many small gifts – one dollar at a time! – to add up to a big impact for the spread of the saving Gospel of Christ. The current Dollars for Missions Project is to raise \$20k for stipends to pastors to begin visiting four new prisons or jails in 2024.

ALTAR FLOWERS—**The 2023 Flower Chart is now on the bulletin board next to the restrooms.** Cost for weekly flowers are \$30 for two arrangements. We greatly appreciate those who help with providing flowers for Sunday worship services. **Please sign up for a Sunday.**

PRAYER MINISTRY

Give thanks as you pray:

MISSION—*Thank God for His Kingdom.* Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would provide workers for the harvest field.

ST JOHN'S—**Ms. Bridgette Smith**—We offer before You our common request for the well-being of Your church throughout the world that it may be so guided and governed by Your good Spirit that all who profess themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. Specifically, we pray for Bridgette and ask Your blessings upon her.

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy to Your servants:

Elizabeth Bjork	Betty Firch	Wanda Rahn
Paula Chapa	Arlyn Helke	Drew Schillinger
Jim Dahl	Lynne Johnson	Marilyn Woods
Jessica Johnson	Aaron Raschke	Carolyn Werner

Anthony/Sami Sedotto (2022/2023 Adopted seminary student)

Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal Potts, former St. John Laborer for Christ)

Bruce & Debbie Bley (sister & brother-in-law of Cathy Schillinger)

Laurie Sanford (sister of Jan Dahl)

Mike Erdman (nephew of Bob Erdman)

Shandel Loenser (wife of Gabe Loenser)

Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)

Jim DeFauw (son of Joyce DeFauw)

MILITARY—We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/son-in-law of Linda Aper)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

“Our comfort and motivation do not derive from laws. We neither live only according to the body nor labor for this world alone. No matter who holds office or how they decide and lead, the Lord our God reigns.” *Pastor Michael Salemink, Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

All Saints' Day (observed)

November 5, 2023

Text: 1 John 3:1-3 (Epistle)

Other Texts: Revelation 7:9-17 (First Reading); Matthew 5:1-12 (Gospel Reading)

“When the Saints Go Marching In”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

“O Lord, I want to be in that number when the saints go marching in.” Yes I do. And so do you. For that number is the “great multitude that no one could number,”ⁱ the saints who come “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,”ⁱⁱ “the ones coming out of the great tribulation,”ⁱⁱⁱ that is, they were members of the Church Militant here on earth who were finally brought into the Lord’s presence in the glorious Church Triumphant. It is of them that the psalmist writes, “Let the godly exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds.”^{iv}

It is the saints who persevered, who have passed through this vale of tears and valley of sorrows and have taken their last earthly breath in saving faith in Christ Jesus, whom we commemorate today. Yes, today we honor the innumerable saints throughout time and space of whom we not only do not their names, we don’t even know of them at all, even as we remember those relatively few saints whom we do know, loved ones, family and friends, who died confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior, and so now rest in His nearer presence.

All of these saints we celebrate today, saddened that death has separated us, yet thankful that they are still with us. Yes, in our blessed memories, but especially as members of the great cloud of witnesses who surround us, for along with the angels and archangels, these saints compose “all the company of heaven” who once again today join with us here on earth as we, all together, “laud and magnify God’s glorious name.”^v Yes, we want to be a part of that number, those who, like them, after closing our eyes in death will be brought to Abraham’s bosom by the holy angels and, ultimately, open our eyes once again at the resurrection of the body, raised in glory to live eternally in the new heavens and earth.

But how shall we be brought into that heavenly glory? For Scripture says in no uncertain terms that without holiness we cannot see God,^{vi} but we are so heavily burdened by the corruption of sin, our thoughts and desires contaminated with iniquity, our righteous deeds little more than filthy rags. And so grace comes into play as the Father gives His only-begotten Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. Christ Jesus, out of pure love for His Father and for us sinners rendered, as true man, perfect obedience to His Father through full obedience to the Law in heart and mind as well as body so that, as true God, His perfect righteous and full obedience would be given to us. And so, even as God made us in our mother’s womb, so He remakes us into saints. In His blessed washing of Holy Baptism we are washed clean by the Lamb’s blood even as His holiness covers us, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”^{vii} So while only the holy will enter God’s presence, all who are in Christ Jesus by baptism and faith have the holiness that God demands, the perfect righteousness of Christ Jesus.

And so the apostle John, who saw the heavenly vision of the saints in glory, wrote in his first epistle, “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.”^{viii} The love of the Father is amazing beyond our wildest imaginations. It sent His Son to save us who deserved condemnation, opening heaven to those on the quick road to hell. The love of the Father is amazing because we, who are united to His Son Jesus in Baptism, are nothing less than His *children*. Not a patronizing word, but the greatest term of endearment. For truly, the heavenly Father calling us His children rightly makes us feel loved, important, and secure. It fills us with confidence, with absolute certainty of protection now and salvation forever, because how could the perfect Father do anything less than bring His children home to Him! The home that the saints whom we commemorate today have entered. The heavenly home that we, God’s pilgrim children, long for more and more every day on this dying, decaying world filled with enemies.

For right now we certainly do not seem to be children of God and heirs of heaven. The poor, weak, mocked little flock of Christ is like a hounded by the devil and his hordes of demons and unbelievers who attack inner and outer being. Sometimes the attacks are harsh, as with persecution. Quite often they are soft temptations to doubt the Bible by which we would fall into unbelief, to self-righteousness by which we would deny God’s grace, to filthy sin by which we would abuse and so lose God’s grace.

The world does not know us as God’s children because it does not know God, knowing only idols, false belief, false worship, and sinful lives, whether of hypocrisy or evil. So the people of the world treats us as fools, yes, enemies who challenge their gods, their beliefs, their works and ways. The devil, who is the prince of this world, the god of this doomed world who keeps the minds of the unbelievers in darkness that they would be doomed along with it and him, he *does* know us as God’s children. And so he uses his demons and human dupes against us with full force, pushing right to the limits God puts in place, for he knows that this short time on earth is his only chance to destroy our faith, lest for should we die believing in Christ and so enter the fullness of the glory of the children of God, the glory he was banished from, to witness us in that glory even as he endures the flames of hell which burn fallen angels as much as sinners.

But wait! Are we not sinners? And if hell is for sinners, then we must be sent there, right? Wrong! For it is one thing to honestly confess that we are still sinners, having the sinful nature through which the devil and world would work great evil in us. As St. John wrote earlier in his epistle, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us...If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”^{ix} To believe we have no more sin, that we have it licked, is to deny the ongoing reality of our sinful nature and so to deny our Savior, losing both the forgiveness He has won and His perfect righteousness which covers us.

But while it is one thing to confess that we are still sinners, a true confession indeed, it is quite another to confess that we are only sinners, a very false one indeed. In Jesus, we are new creations as well!^x As Jesus is both God and man in one person, so we are both sinner and saint in one person. More, as it is God Himself, the Holy Spirit who indwells within us, empowering our new life, we recognize that while the sinful nature still exists, it is *not* what primarily defines us. Thus St. John writes, “Everyone who thus hopes in [Christ] purifies himself as he is pure.”^{xi}

Truly we are saints in two ways. First, through faith in Christ Jesus we are sinless, pure, and perfect saints in God's eyes, justified, declared righteous and holy because of Jesus whose blood washes us and whose life covers us. This is where our confidence of entering glory with the rest of God's saints is founded. But we are also saints through the indwelling Holy Spirit. While this holiness is not yet perfect, for the sinful nature corrupts everything we think, say and do, at the same time the Holy Spirit is greater than the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, and so is cleaning us up increasingly every day.

As God's saints, we do not believe in cheap grace as it cost Jesus' life. We receive it freely, but we will not abuse it. Sin is evil. Therefore, saints will sin in weakness, but they will repent, receive forgiveness, and struggle anew. Even more, saints will not let sin rule, having its way, for such grieves the Holy Spirit, shipwrecks our faith, causing us to lose God's grace. Instead, we honor God by turning from sin and growing in good works in obedience to the Law and Christian love and by letting the Beatitudes define our lives instead of earthly thinking. After all, saints are holy. So let us live as such showing we are the holy God's holy children.

The cloud of witnesses surrounds us. The grace they received, their sins forgiven, their lives of holiness and faithful service in their callings, the crosses they bore, the suffering they endured, the afflictions and trials they faced, all these yet holding onto Christ, encourages us, makes our steps stronger, our love for God and others greater. Joining them in glory fills us with hope that keeps us going when we would otherwise give up. So yes, we thank the Lord for all the saints and their godly examples for us to imitate. And we thank the Lord that He who has brought them into glory has promised to do the same for us.

God grant us to emulate the saints before us in persevering faith and holiness of life and so, when He calls, go marching in to join that great number in our Father's home, the Church Triumphant, the kingdom of never-ending glory. Amen!

ⁱ Revelation 7:9. All quotes are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version* (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Revelation 7:14.

^{iv} Psalm 149:5. Psalm 149 is the appointed psalm for All Saints' Day.

^v Proper Preface.

^{vi} Hebrews 12:14.

^{vii} Galatians 3:27.

^{viii} 1 John 3:1a.

^{ix} 1 John 1:8, 10.

^x 2 Corinthians 5:17.

^{xi} 1 John 3:3.

All Saints' Day

1 November 2023 (observed 5 November 2023)

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Prayer of the Church—Responsive Form

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

O Lord, faithful God, we commend ourselves, our bodies and souls, and all things into Your keeping. Deliver us in Your righteousness from all that would harm the body or assault the soul. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, send Your Spirit to the ministers of the Church who bring the Good News of Christ's death and resurrection, that they may work through the preaching of this Gospel to gather the lost, kindle faith in those who do not yet believe and sustain us all to the day of Christ's coming. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, though we are by nature sinful and unclean, in Your grace You have washed us in the blood of Christ making us pure. Give to us the fullness of Your Spirit that He would continue His sanctifying work within us so that we, in His power, would continue to daily purify ourselves from all sin, selfishness, covetousness, idolatry, and evil. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gentle Lord, visit the homes of Your people, that they may be places where faith is nurtured and where we learn to live our new lives in holiness and righteousness. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are You, O God, and blessed are the persecuted, who suffer for Your sake and whose witness calls all to faithfulness. Bring peace to the nations; make our leaders wise, just and honorable; and deliver us from terror, violence and oppression. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, comfort us by Your abiding presence and satisfy all who call on You in need, especially Elizabeth, Bruce, Debbie, Paula, Jim, Jim, Don, Michael, Betty, Arlyn, Jessica, Lynne, Shandel, Jodi, Marilyn, Wanda, Aaron, Laurie, Drew, Carolyn, Paul, Carolyn, Scott, and Marilyn. Grant them patience in the midst of suffering and, according to Your will, release them from their afflictions. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly King, remember Bridgette Smith. Bless her in body and soul with all things needful for this life and eternity. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, be with Your Church and all her members who belong to You by Baptism and faith. At the bidding of the Lamb, our Shepherd, give us ears to hear Your Word and faith to receive His blessed Sacrament for the forgiveness of sins and, as branches connected to the true Vine, be nourished by His body and blood as good spiritual sap to increase in our lives a sincere delight in God's holy Law and devoted love for one another. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, grant that we may be brought to everlasting life with the faithful who have gone before us who now rest from their labors. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty Father, we give You thanks that You have washed us in the blood of the Lamb, written our names in the Book of Life, and made us a royal priesthood and heirs of an eternal inheritance. Though we are unworthy of Your saving grace, we pray You to hear us in the name of Jesus Christ, in whom, with whom and through whom all honor and glory is Yours, heavenly Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Presentation of the Offering

Lord, help us believe Your Word, which promises to reward our giving with blessings that overflow. In Your mercy, forgive us for not trusting You as we should which causes us to fail to give what we truly are able. Fill us with Your grace that our giving will demonstrate the love we profess for Christ Jesus, who loved us and gave Himself unto death for our sins that we might be declared righteous and so be counted as saints now and forever. In His precious name we pray. Amen.