

Sunday Readings

3 November 2024

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
by whose gift we venerate in one celebration
the merits of all the Saints,
bestow on us, we pray,
through the prayers of so many intercessors,
an abundance of the reconciliation with you
for which we earnestly long.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse
7:2-4,9-14

I, John, saw another angel rising where the sun rises, carrying the seal of the living God; he called in a powerful voice to the four angels whose duty was to devastate land and sea, 'Wait before you do any damage on land or at sea or to the trees, until we have put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.' Then I heard how many were sealed: a hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel.

After that I saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted aloud, 'Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels who were standing in a circle round the throne, surrounding the elders and the four animals, prostrated themselves before the throne, and touched the ground with their foreheads, worshipping God with these words, 'Amen. Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'

One of the elders then spoke, and asked me, 'Do you know who these people are, dressed in white robes, and where they have come from?' I answered him, 'You can tell me, my lord.' Then he said, 'These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb.'

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 23:1-6. R/. cf. v.6

R/. Such are the men who seek your face, O Lord.

The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the waters he made it firm. **R/.**

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,
who desires not worthless things. **R/.**

He shall receive blessings from the Lord
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,
seek the face of the God of Jacob. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St John 3:1-3

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us. My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is. Surely everyone who entertains this hope must purify himself, must try to be as pure as Christ.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel Acclamation

Mt 11:28

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest, says the Lord.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 5:1-12

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny

against you on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord,

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Solemnity of All Saints

Lectionary Year B

The Word of God

Saints of the Week

Sunday 3 November 2024

Our Eucharistic celebration begins with the exhortation: "Let us all rejoice in the Lord". The liturgy invites us to share in the heavenly jubilation of the Saints, to taste their joy. The Saints are not a small caste of chosen souls but an innumerable crowd to which the liturgy urges us to raise our eyes. This multitude not only includes the officially recognized Saints, but the baptized of every epoch and nation who sought to carry out the divine will faithfully and lovingly. We are unacquainted with the faces and even the names of many of them, but with the eyes of faith we see them shine in God's firmament like glorious stars.

But "why should our praise and glorification, or even the celebration of this Solemnity, mean anything to the Saints?". A famous homily of St Bernard for All Saints' Day begins with this question. It could equally well be asked today. And the response the Saint offers us is also timely: "The Saints", he says, "have no need of honour from us; neither does our devotion add the slightest thing to what is theirs.... But I tell you, when I think of them, I feel myself inflamed by a tremendous yearning".

This, then, is the meaning of today's Solemnity: looking at the shining example of the Saints to reawaken within us the great longing to be like them; happy to live near God, in his light, in the great family of God's friends. Being a Saint means living close to God, to live in his family. And this is the vocation of us all and solemnly proposed today for our attention.

The Beatitudes show us the spiritual features of Jesus and thus express his mystery, the mystery of his death and Resurrection, of his passion and of the joy of his Resurrection. This mystery, which is the mystery of true blessedness, invites us to follow Jesus and thus to walk toward it. To the extent that we accept his proposal and set out to follow him - each one in his own circumstances - we too can participate in his blessedness. With him, the impossible becomes possible; with his help, only with his help, can we become perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect.

In the Preface we will proclaim that the Saints are friends and models of life for us. Let us invoke them so that they may help us to imitate them and strive to respond generously, as they did, to the divine call.

In particular, let us invoke Mary, Mother of the Lord and mirror of all holiness. May she, the All Holy, make us faithful disciples of her Son Jesus Christ! Amen.

**From a Homily for All Saints' Day 2006 by
His Holiness Benedict XVI**

**Saint Martin de Porres
(1579 - 1639)**

He was born in Lima in Peru, the illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman and a black ex-slave. His mother gave him a Christian education and he became a pharmacist and a nurse. Despite his father's opposition he entered the Dominican Order as a lay brother in 1603 and spent his life working for the sick and the poor. Many people of all ranks would come to him for advice. He had a great devotion to the Holy Eucharist. He has been named as a patron saint of those of mixed race.

St Winefride



Very little is known about her except that she lived in the 6th or 7th century near Treffynon (Holywell) in Clwyd in Wales. Various miraculous stories are told about her, and her cult has been widespread since the Middle Ages. Its main centres were Shrewsbury, where her remains were enshrined in 1138, and the well at Holywell that sprang up where, according to one version of her life, she was beheaded and then restored to life by her uncle, St Beuno. The well has remained a place of healing and pilgrimage through the Reformation to the present day.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer for Holiness

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love only what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy.
Guard me so, O Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy.
Amen.