

## November 5, 2023: All Saints Sunday

**Main Idea: When Jesus tells his disciples that their reward will be great in heaven, he means it—God’s promises of replenishment, blessing, and presence are not limited to this life.**

All Saints Sunday is when we honor the people who have been named holy and canonized throughout history. We glean wisdom from their stories, we take inspiration from their lives and we give thanks that they now serve as part of our heavenly cloud of witnesses—the people of faith who we turn to for guidance. All Souls Day—the day following All Saints Sunday—is when we remember and pray for all of the people of faith in our own lives and our own communities who have passed away. We profess that they have also joined that heavenly cloud of witnesses.

The Beatitudes already popped up in our liturgy once this year—on the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany. There, they were paired with Micah and 1 Corinthians to drive home the point that God replenishes, blesses, and accompanies us on our faith journeys. Here, the Beatitudes are paired with a passage from Revelation that adds both breadth and depth to that promise by assuring us that God replenishes, blesses, and accompanies us on the other side of this life, as well.

Our promise on this All Saints Sunday is that what we strive for and experience in moments in this life becomes our entire reality in the next—a wiping away of tears. An end of suffering and an eternity of rejoicing. Our passage from 1 John sums it up well: what we will be has not been revealed. However, what we are now is children of God, named and claimed by Jesus, himself. Others just like us have crossed the threshold into the eternal life that God promises—the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, those hungry and thirsty for justice, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the righteous—and they have been blessed. They now play an active role in what will be revealed to us. So today, when we connect with the people we have lost—when we venerate their stories and pray for them—we connect more deeply with God, as well. We grow in our confidence that blessing and an end to suffering is coming our way.

### Scripture Summary

On this day when we remember all the saints of Christ—those who have passed and all of us who live in Christ—we are reminded of the promise that our reward will be great in heaven, thus we are invited to rejoice and be glad here and now.



# GOD'S WORD for Today

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## First Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

<sup>9</sup>After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup>They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup>And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup>singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." <sup>13</sup>Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" <sup>14</sup>I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup>For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. <sup>16</sup>They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; <sup>17</sup>for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

## Psalm: Psalm 34:1-10, 22

## Second Reading: 1 John 3:1-3

**3** See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

## Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

**5** When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: <sup>3</sup>"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup>"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup>"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup>"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. <sup>8</sup>"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup>"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. <sup>10</sup>"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup>"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.