

## **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

**November 6, 2022**

**ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

**Saints Named and Unnamed**

On All Saints Day, many congregations read aloud the names of loved ones who have died in the last year. We don't call them saints because they were perfect but because they were loved by us and by God. We acknowledge that all people, being simultaneously sinners and saints, lead complex lives full of both bad and good. We rest in the sure promise that at the end of their lives, God has welcomed our loved ones to their eternal home.

In this passage from Luke, Jesus' words remind us that there are more saints than we could ever list in our litanies. There are many saints whose names we do not even know. Those whom God calls "blessed" are often marginalized and forgotten: the hungry, poor, suffering, and rejected. Yet, these unlikely saints are the ones Jesus calls us to emulate. We are to live with our hearts fixed not on the rewards of the world, but on the treasures found in God's unending presence.

So today, as we honor the saints we knew personally by speaking their names, we can also honor the saints we have never known, those who have been forgotten by humans but remain favored by God. We might imagine adding their names to our never-ending litany, an ongoing celebration of all the faithful who have gone before us.

We might even imagine our own names being added to that list. After all, we too are made saints, not by our own merit but by God's gracious transformation that begins at our baptism. When we reach the end of our own complex lives, we will join the lineage of saints, both named and unnamed, who have gone before us. Until then, we can still live into our sainthood, just as Jesus recommends, by living each day with radical generosity and love.

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