

The Sunday Missive – November 1, 2020 -- All Saint's Day



astronomical clock -- prague

Remember! Daylight Savings Time Ends Today

Greetings, one and all, and welcome home to St. Peter's by the Sea. Mary Sue Gee, Nancy Castle, Thelma Huchthausen, Diane and Roger Ludin and I bring you this service of prayer, scripture and song with love. If you go to our facebook page, you can watch and participate from home: [facebook.com/StPetersMorroBay](https://www.facebook.com/StPetersMorroBay) Scroll down until you see today's Sunday Missive, anytime after 1 P.M. on Sunday, November 1. No facebook account is needed! Please direct any questions or comments to your rector, The Rev. Sidney Symington via: (203) 209-2339 or: sssymington@gmail.com. **And so we begin:**

Grace and peace to you from God; may God fill you with truth and joy. May the Lord bless you and keep you this day, for this is the day which the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may more truly love you and more worthily praise your holy name; through Christ our Saviour, *Amen*.

Know what is the hope to which God has called you, what are the riches of the glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of God's power in us who believe.

Hymn 287 – For All the Saints

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blessed. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou wast their rock, their fortress and their might;
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
Thou, in the darkness drear, the one true Light. Alleluia, Alleluia!

O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine.
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine. Alleluia, Alleluia!

But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;
The King of glory passes on his way. Alleluia, Alleluia!

A Reading from the Book of Revelation -- Chapter 7

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 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, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory

and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?” 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. 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. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; 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.” This is the Word of the Lord.

Psalm 34

I will bless the Lord at all times* God’s praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul makes its boast in the Lord* Let the humble hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me* And let us exalt God’s name together.

I sought the Lord, who answered me* And delivered me from all my fears.

Look to God and be radiant* So your face shall never be ashamed.

O taste and see that the Lord is good* Happy are those who take refuge in God.

The young lions suffer want and hunger* But those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Which of you desires life, and longs for many days to enjoy good?* Depart from all evil; seek peace, and pursue it.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous* But the Lord rescues them from them all.

A Reading from the First Letter of John – Chapter 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. 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. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

Hymn 293 – I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

I sing a song of the saints of God, patient and brave and true,
Who toiled and fought and lived and died for the Lord they loved and knew.
 And one was a doctor, and one was a queen,
 And one was a shepherdess on the green:
They were all of them saints of God--and I mean, God helping, to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, and his love made them strong;
And they followed the right, for Jesus' sake, the whole of their good lives long.
 And one was a soldier, and one was a priest,
 And one was slain by a fierce wild beast:
And there's not any reason, no, not the least why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past, there are hundreds of thousands still;
The world is bright with the joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will.
 You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea,
 An church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea;
For the saints of God are just folk like me, and I mean to be one too.

A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew – Chapter 5

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. “Blessed are the merciful, for they will

receive mercy. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

This is an action-packed weekend churchwise, with All-Hallows’ Eve (that is Halloween), All Saints Day, and All Souls Day lined up on Saturday, Sunday and Monday the way they are. Of course they’re always lined up, but when they coincide with the weekend this way, it’s easier to observe the progression – from the outer limits to the up close and personal – that will afford us a true and satisfying sense of how precious each of us is in the sight of God. On Halloween, the costumes and images and decorations are all about legendary or outrageous characters from our cultural history – The Mummy, The Phantom, The Creature from the Black Lagoon. On All Saints Day, the Church officially celebrates the figures from religious history, people who actually lived, but who lived extraordinarily. The saints are those whose lives stand as examples for the rest of us, examples of how we might try to live ourselves if we dare. And tomorrow, All Souls Day, *el Dia des Muertos*, belongs to all who have passed through this life, each and every soul; various and sundry; exemplary and uninspiring, the only requirement being that somebody cares to remember them. We have moved in the direction Jesus is always trying to get his disciples to go: from the mythological to the historical to the personal; from the theory of Creation to the saga of a people to the story of one child whose kin each of us could be.

Doing a little light reading this week: flipping through the Roman Catholic Office for the Dead, and came upon the phrase, “*Timor Mortis Conturbat Me:*” “Fear of death disturbs me.” How indeed can we hope to create enough space in our lives for goodness and godliness when time grows ever shorter? We simply must acknowledge, accept and avail ourselves of power beyond ourselves, power that flows beyond the banks of earthly life, power that was and is and is to come. As the great thinker Blaise Pascal put it, “Happiness is neither inside us nor outside us, it is in God.”

“The Lord is my light and my help. Whom then shall I fear?
I long to live in the house of the Lord, for there I am safe in the day of evil
and now my head shall be raised!” cries the psalmist.

And Isaiah: “O Lord, my God you have done wonderful things. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled. On this mountain you make for all peoples a feast of rich food, of well-aged wines strained clear. You destroy the sheet that is spread over all nations, and wipe away the tears from all faces ; you swallow up the appalling shroud of death forever.”

This is the immortality of which Paul speaks when he says: “Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. Then the saying will be fulfilled: ‘Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?’ Death has been swallowed up in victory. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

What a preacher! For us, an attitudinal change brings about a cosmic change. In the ways of the Lord, we are already a success; we are already fulfilled. Our thoughts and energies move from Stuff to People to Ideas – the move is from status-granting acquisitions to inner circlings to unconditional love and gratitude for love’s employment. From personalities to principles. We acquire what Paul Tillich called the ‘Courage to Be.’

But we have to lift our fingers if these things are to come about. Thor Halvorssen, observes, “People say the truth will win out, but it’s hard for the truth to win out when on the other side there is an enormous machinery of propaganda and lawyers threatening it. Truth will win out, but it needs a little help.”

Today – this weekend *des muertos* we can spend a few minutes dreaming of our own paths to whatever form of sainthood a d truth life has in store for us. And we can spend a few minutes in realistic observance of the obstacles that might stand in our way – falsehood, greed, ignorance, violence, even death itself – and shake our heads in wonder that no such obstacle need ever hold us back from the ground of our simple and loving being.

Prayers

Almighty God, your saints are one with you in the mystical body of Christ; give us grace to follow them in all virtue and holiness until we come to

those inexpressible joys which you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

I ask your prayers for those who are far off and those who are near, especially Jim Harker, John Powell, Lynn Enns, Janelle Muff, and those we name now – silently or aloud -- beloved of this community who are sick, injured, undergoing medical or in recovery, and all who are in any need or trouble this day. **Amen**

Loving God, hope of the poor and source of all health: Look with compassion upon your creatures who suffer under the weight of the current pandemic. Fill us with love toward our neighbors; deliver us from partisan motives as we strive for the common good; and strengthen those who labor for our health. We ask this through the healer of your creation, Jesus Christ, our health and our salvation. **Amen.**

Eternal God, you have always taken men and women of every nation, age and colour and made them saints; like them, transformed, like them, baptised in Jesus' name, take us to share your glory; where you reign one God for ever. **Amen.**

Hymn 450 – All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

All hail the power of Jesus' Name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all!

Ye heirs of Israel's chosen race, ye ransomed of the fall,
Hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all!

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget the wormwood and the gall,
Go, spread your trophies at his feet, and crown him Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe, on this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all!

And now, may the peace that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and Christ. And may the blessing of the Creator, the Redeemer; the sustaining Spirit be with you this day and remain with you always. Let us go in peace to love and serve The Lord.

Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia!