

# This week's Scripture - Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November – All Saints

## Revelation 7.9-17: Psalm 34.1-10, 22; 1 John 3.1-3; Matthew 5.1-12

**Revelation 7.9-17:** The Readings for All Saints Day begin with John of Patmos' vision of heaven in. John saw a multitude from every nation that no one could count, of all tribes and languages, praising and glorifying God. All the angels worshiped God. One of the elders speaks to John, telling him that these are the ones who have come through the great ordeal, they have washed their robes in the blood of the lamb to be pure, and now worship God day and night. God is their shelter, and they will hunger and thirst no more, and God will wipe away all their tears.

**Psalm 34.1-10, 22** begins as a call to the people to worship. The psalmist testifies how God has delivered them, and how God delivers those who are close to God from evil. God answered the psalmist's prayers, and the psalmist calls upon the people to turn to God without shame. The psalmist invites the reader/listener to "taste and see that the Lord is good." To use all our senses and know that God is with us. Those who know God have nothing to fear, and those who turn to God will have no condemnation.

**1 John 3.1-3** writes that all who are God's beloved are children of God and become like God. The world did not know God, so the world does not know the faithful. Those who know God still do not know the fullness of God or who they will become, but right now, we are all children of God. Those who have this hope will purify themselves to be ready before God, for God is pure.

**Matthew 5.1-12:** Jesus shared the Beatitudes, or Blessings, in the sermon on the mount. He taught that those who mourn, those who are poor in spirit, those who are children, those who are peacemakers, those who are persecuted—all the people on the margins, forgotten, or looked down upon will be blessed, will inherit, will proclaim the reign of God, now and always. Jesus called upon them to rejoice, for their reward would be great in heaven.

### Reflection

On this All Saints Day, we pause and remember our loved ones who have gone before us.

We remember those who faithfully lived in God's ways. We look to them, to our ancestors, for guidance. We are reminded of the faithfulness of our ancestors, who crossed the Red Sea and the Jordan, when water was a barrier between oppression and liberation, between the past and the future with hope.

We also remember the prophets, who spoke and prayed during times of drought and hardship where there was no water, and God provided the wellsprings to rise up. We remember how the prophets spoke against those who took advantage of others for political gain and wealth—a warning that we had well heed today.

We remember that God is with us in all seasons, during times of flood and drought, during times of life and death, during times of hopelessness and times of blessing. God calls us blessed when we are downtrodden and poor in spirit, when we are meek, when we are feeling rejected and persecuted and have given up. God does not give up on us, but is in the journey with us, and will see us through.

## Praying with others...

**Call to Worship** – From Matthew 5.3-9

**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 you, children of God, for yours is the reign of God.**

## Prayer of Brokenness / Confession

Ancient of Days, we have failed to learn the lessons of our ancestors.

We have failed to follow their footsteps in faith.

Instead of gaining wisdom, we often repeat their folly.

We tune out the teachings of old, thinking we know better,  
but fall into the same traps of worldly fame and success.

Call out to us, O God, through the prophets of old who spoke truth to power.

Call out to us, O God, through the wisdom of the sages that continues to tug at our hearts.

Call out to us, O God, in the needs of our neighbours,

reminding us that when we love one another, we love You best.

In the name of Christ, who came not to abolish the law but to fulfil it,  
who came to show us how to live into Your ways, we pray. Amen.

## Assurance of Forgiveness / Blessing

Wisdom continues to call to us, to lead us back to God.

Listen to the voice of wisdom from our ancestors in the faith.

Understand the ways of the saints who lived their lives as examples for us.

Follow Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life,

and know that you are forgiven, loved, and restored. Continue to seek God's ways.

Incline your heart to wisdom and justice, and live into God's righteousness and peace. Amen.

## Prayer

Holy One, there is a time for every season, and every purpose under heaven.

You brought forth humanity from the earth, and You return us to the earth.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made,

and our days on this earth are short, though You are eternal.

May we make each moment count.

May we spend our time wisely with those we love,

and honour their memories when they are gone.

On this All Saints Day, we give thanks for the saints in our lives,

the ones we have known, and the ones who have inspired us.

May we live our lives into the best of their ways.

May we continue to learn from them.

May we continue to shape the world into Your reign, on earth as it is in heaven,  
to leave it a little better than we found it. Amen and Amen.