

All Saints Day, we celebrate the fullness of Christ -who embraced our flesh that we might be embraced by His divinity. This glorious communion we know here on earth sacramentally; **therefore with angels and archangels, with all the company of heaven...** The pinnacle, apex of holy, sacred tradition -the Eucharist, Supper, in this moment in time, eternity is present. You, His saints, gather with the saints in heaven here.

Saint. A holy one. Foremost saint means: belongs to God, it is His, what He has made. As Scripture commends us, we rightly honor the saints who have gone before us, those in glory now before His throne.

We celebrate as they have been brought out of this tribulation we live, out of this war with satan, this battlefield; who are washed in the blood of the Lamb. We give thanks for God's faithfulness to them, we imitate their faith, examples of God's grace and how He kept His promises.

Note John's vision, the first reading, they are distinct, of tribes, languages, peoples. They retain their distinctiveness they had on earth. You will recognize your loved ones, and those you never met. Of course Charlton Heston and Moses may look like twins. That the good things you remember of grandma, mom, the way they laughed, all the things that were good, that you loved about them, are still there only more, greater without the baggage of sin. See each person as they were meant to be -without sin

Note John's vision, he cannot count them all. But the Lord knows each one uniquely by name, every time they laughed and scrapped their knee and shed a tear, even counts the hairs upon their head. Your Lord endears you no less. Each one matters to Him.

You see the fate of your loved one who has departed in the faith and you learn, see your destiny, the place of your reunion and communion.

Note John's vision, they have palm branches in hand, a sign of life, of our Lord's passion, and victory. We rejoiced with them. Scripture even says the saints in heaven pray for you.

When a child, grandchild does something adorable and you think, I wish dad were here to see this. When we have accomplishments, life changing events, I wish grandma, grandpa could see this; I wish my spouse was here to experience this with me, I wish my child was alive to be with me. I wish my loved one were here to see this.

Who says they aren't? I find comfort in that. St. Paul says, **We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.** their presence is meant to encourage us **to lay aside every weight**, and sin, help us to run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. This implies

they are witnessing our failures and temptations, not just our joys. Consider too when Jesus speaks of Lazarus and the rich man.

When Christians suffer physical death their bodies sleep to be resurrected on the last- while their souls, their personality, their character, are with the Father in perfect bliss and joy. The state in which they now wait. Even if they watch, if they pay attention to the details of your life, they are not sad and you are not disappointing them. Because they are perfectly at one with the will of the Father. They have a better perspective than we do. They see how God is guiding you, using suffering, hardship to lead and train you. They rejoice in how He loves you and sees you through. So your pain, if they're aware of it, doesn't bother them. They see the end. They trust God to be good, to work everything together for good.

It is not unlike a mother watching a child struggle to learn to read. The child might find it frustrating, even painful, but the mother isn't bothered by it. She wants the child to grow, learn. She knows the pain is temporary and not quite as significant as it seems at the moment. Or like a mother reading letter from a son at military bootcamp. The son complains and part of him wants to quit. But she knows that when it is over, that he will be proud of what he has done. No soldier, after the fact, says, "I wish it had been easier." Rather that hardship formed them and they're proud of it. That's how our loved ones, perfected in the faith, look at us, see more deeply than we do.

The words of the Beatitudes. So often misunderstood, mistaught as law, what you must do in order to.... Matthew 5, beatitudes are of purest gospel for you, it is what Christ has done for you; the life you now have under Him, description of your life in His work. And blessed are those who mourn, who are persecuted, for you are and will always be comforted and cared for.

All Saints Day, we come, perhaps tears over those who died in Christ and who live lonely lives without our loved ones. Rejoice and be glad. Remember the saints of old and follow their example of faithfulness. **See what kind of love the Father has given, that you should be called children of God; so you are.** Scripture means something. What we do here is the most real thing in our lives. And with tentative faith, feeble voices, we acknowledge what eye cannot see, mind cannot imagine, the heart cannot hope. What has been prepared in Christ for those who love His appearing. Though now separated by time, soon, soon to be reunited together forever.