

## **Bulletin Article #8 = The Saints (and angels!) at Mass w/us**

Happy Solemnity of All Saints Day!! We know that Jesus becomes fully present in the Eucharist, and we just reflected this past Sunday on how Jesus is always present to us in the Scriptures during the Mass as well (He is also present through the prayers and the songs and the words of the Priest too!...among many other ways He is present to us during the Mass). My point is that if Jesus is fully present to us during the Mass, and heaven is a state of being in perfect relationship with Jesus and the Trinity, then it would make sense that all the angels and Saints who are with Jesus in heaven become present to us in a special way each Mass as well! On this Solemnity of All Saints, it is very important to remember this belief, and it can help us every time we come to Mass because we can bring to mind the presence of the Saints and their prayers and encouragement for us to strive for heaven and for holiness. We hear in the New Testament in the letter to the Hebrews that all of us are “surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,” which is referring to all the Saints in heaven that went before us. St. Paul argues that because of their witness and their prayers for us, we can be encouraged to “persevere in running the race that lies before us” and also to “rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us”...“while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith” (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Over and over again you will hear the Saints referenced during the Mass, that we praise God with all the “angels and Saints,” that we rely on their intercession (their prayers), that we are inspired by their example and witness, and that we are encouraged by their presence with us. Therefore, if you ever wondered why Catholic Churches have so many statues, paintings, or stain glass windows with images of Saints within the church building itself, this is the reason. It is to lift our minds to heavenly things and to the reality of what we believe. The Saints are present to us at every Mass through Jesus; they are praying for you and encouraging you to follow Jesus and to join them in heaven for all eternity in perfect happiness. Amen.