Gospel and Sermon Transcript - All Saints’ Sunday After Pentecost - November 1, 2026

00:48
Welcome to worship on this All Saints Day,

00:52
fitting that we would start here.

00:55
Sometimes we think saints are only people

00:57
who've gone before us or we think, oh well those are the most elite of people.

01:05
Our tradition actually teaches that we're all saints, which maybe is why we

01:11
call the day what we call it. Today is actually part of a triptych. I don't know

01:16
if you know this, but there are three panels where we consider life and death

01:21
things. Of course, all Hallows Eve last night and maybe we observe that in ways

01:27
that are a little different now than they once were, but I think still

01:32
opportunity for us to reflect today being All Saints Day in some parts of

01:38
the world, also called Day of the Dead, and then tomorrow All Souls Day. So I think

01:43
that encompasses a great deal, doesn't it?

01:50
Today we will do some reflecting and some praying, remembering Saints who have

01:54
gone before us, particularly those that you will see listed in the bulletin insert today.

02:01
Thank you for those who have brought photographs, and I think we will try to create during the

02:07
homily some time for you to, if you'd like to come up and look at pictures to do that.

02:14
Alternatively, in this world in which we live, many of you have cell phones with pictures

02:20
on them and there may be people in there that you would like to just open your cell phone.

02:25
Is that allowed in church? I don't know. I didn't check with a bishop. But maybe you

02:31
would like to look in your cell phone if you have one with you at photographs of people

02:36
who have been saints to you. So we will do that a bit later in the service.

02:46
[music]

03:09
The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew the fifth chapter. Glory to you

03:16
O Lord.

03:20
When Jesus saw the crowds he went up the mountain and after he sat down his

03:25

disciples came to him and he began to speak and taught them saying blessed are

03:31
the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven blessed are those who

03:37
who mourn for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek for they will

03:43
inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for

03:50
they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful for they will receive mercy.

03:57
Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God. Blessed are the

04:03
peacemakers for they will be called children of God. Blessed are the

04:10
persecuted for the sake of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

04:17
And blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all

04:22
kinds of evil falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad for your reward is

04:29
great in heaven for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before

04:34
you the gospel of our Lord.

04:40
Won't you be seated.

04:52
grace and peace to you.

The Sermon

05:01
As I look at these pictures and maybe the ones that you have on your cell

05:05
phone, I have a hunch that these individuals would have been surprised to

05:12
be considered saints.

05:17
As Luther says, sometimes we are, sometimes we're not. It just sort of

05:21
depends on how a spirit moves in us.

05:31
It seems that maybe saints are actually syncopated people or at least have

05:37
syncopated moments.

05:40
Aha, the physician caught that reference. So while the rest of us are in 4/4 time,

05:48
Sometimes the saints are like Dave Rubek in 5/4. "Oh you need to go home and

05:57
listen to Take Five. Find it on YouTube. You'll thank me later."

06:06
But the rhythms of the world, well, they are not the same as the rhythms that

06:13
Jesus articulates in the Beatitudes. That's what I mean about syncopation.

06:20
They don't line up. In fact, you heard read today those words from Revelation.

06:27
In fact, they were words that we sang earlier. Those were a response to the

06:34

imperial cult of Rome. And it did become that by the time Revelation was written,

06:40
some hundred years after Jesus lived and some 60 or 70 years after Matthew penned the gospel

06:47
because there were claims that our lives were bound up for good and for less good with the

06:56
emperor. And so the Beatitudes insist something else as does that song from the book of Revelation.

07:07
something else is that syncopated life that I think makes up saintliness.

07:15
Now we know about famous saints who maybe don't even realize they were saints but

07:20
were living beatitude lives. Viola Desmond, hairdresser, just wanted to go to the

07:28
movies and sit where she wanted to sit because after all she paid the same

07:32
ticket price as everybody else.

07:37
I kind of like it that she's on the $5 bill.

07:43
Rosa Parks, her move was fairly strategic to decide one day as tired as her feet were

07:52
that yeah, it was time to sit in the front.

07:57
Folk who had decided that the rhythms just weren't right.

08:01

hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

08:05
I think that's what we're driving at with this saintly theme.

08:09
But we're not all Harriet Tubman.

08:12
We're not all Rosa Parks.

08:14
We're not all Viola Desmond.

08:20
But we have our moments.

08:23
Those moments when we yearn for something more,

08:27
something better than we see,

08:30
And maybe in small acts of kindness we lean into that and act and live in those beatitude

08:37
ways.

08:42
I think that's where this appreciation of saints comes from.

08:48
Sometimes we don't see it in ourselves but we see it in others.

08:51
who know there is this and other Kingdom, this other way of living. These

09:02
Beatitudes, they're not benign. They are resistance to the cult of Rome and to

09:09
whatever cult follows it. You may or may not have heard, but there are preachers

09:17
who have decided that the Beatitudes are entirely too woke and they shouldn't be

09:23
taught. They are woke and that's okay, yes. And that's why we're gonna keep

09:34
teaching them and keep preaching them because that is the real stuff. The rule

09:41
and realm of God, God's priority, God's agenda for a world. And if you look at

09:47
these beatitudes, these are not people who are lauded for talent or for

09:52
excellence in much of anything except that there are people who have some sort

09:57
of a compass within and they know what it is to feed the hungry, to care for the

10:04
sick, to tend the dying, and to speak out sometimes when a word needs to be spoken.

10:14
As I say, not all are famous. You've met some. And so with these next couple of

10:22
minutes I would invite you to do one of two things. You might like to come up and

10:27
have a look at pictures that are here and have a couple of minutes. If you have

10:32
pictures of loved ones that are on your cell phone, yeah I'm going to encourage

10:36
that, that you bring that out and have a look at those pictures. For those who

10:42
have vivid imaginations and maybe you don't want to use your phone, go there.

10:51
Remember, I think I'm going to get out of the way and just let that happen and I

10:55
will kind of rejoin us here in just a couple of minutes.

11:05
There is one more exercise. This is homework that I would invite you to do.

11:12
The next time you're near a mirror, have a look. You'll see a saint in there.

11:22
I say thanks be to God for syncopated living. But the rhythm is really the

11:30
of God that beats out the cadence of doing justice, of loving kindness, and

11:39
walking mindfully with our God. I think that's how saints rule.

11:46
Amen.