

November 2nd 2025

St. John Nth Vancouver

The Feast of All Saints

Almighty God, whose people are knit together in one Holy Church,

the mystical Body of your Son,

grant us grace to follow your blessed Saints

in lives of faith and commitment,

and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared

for those who love you;

through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

As the collect for All Saints' Day reminds us, today we remember the saints and pray that God will grant each of us the *“grace to follow your blessed Saints in lives of faith and commitment.”*

When we think of that words Saint, Faith, & commitment – what comes to mind? Are there those who are considered “Saintlier” than others? Do we ponder why some have been named Saints, while others who have lived lives of faith and commitment have not? Do we ask why there are so many Saints who are male, and not as many are female? Do we ask who are the Saints in our World today? Do we ask

– aren't the "whole cloud of witnesses" past and present Saints? Do we ask where the intersection of faith and commitment is that results in Saints being named Saints?

For those Traditions who observe All Saints Day it is an opportunity to examine lives lived...theirs and ours...as a way of measuring not only how far we have come in our Holy Journey but also how far we have yet to grow and develop into the best, faith filled & committed Saints we can be, wherever we are in our lives.

For me All Saints Day is a day to remember all the Saints that have touched my life whether held within the pages of aged & yellowed photo albums, news clippings from days past, music that stirs a memory, conversations, and yes those whose lives have intersected my own and left an indelible mark even after they have left this earthly realm and continued their journey in the heavenly realm.

I think of The Reverend Vivian Seeger: a fierce warrior woman who fought the injustices, prejudices, victim blaming, and much more aimed at her 1st nations brothers and sisters. She was a tireless Healer and Spiritual Teacher who used her God Given Gifts to enhance the lives of so many. Her last fight was over the course of months as Covid ravaged her and it was a fight she would not win. This woman was a Saint.

There are so many living Saints in our world – Saints who choose to live, and breathe, and have their very being immersed in their commitment to the well-being of OTHERS and this world rather than for their own glorification. Those whose faith is lived out fully in love for all to see and experience.

Think of those in our world who have used their skills to bring love, joy, peace, and comfort to complete strangers, again not for glory but because there was a need and they responded to that need.

Our Gospel reading from today is one that we are very familiar with - The Beatitudes. I found an alternative interpretation of The Beatitudes and it is titled:

Beatitudes for today

Blessed are those who can laugh at themselves; they will have no end of fun.

Blessed are those who can tell a mountain from a molehill; they will be saved a lot of trouble.

Blessed are those who know how to relax without looking for excuses; they are on the way to becoming wise.

Blessed are those who know when to be quiet and listen; they will

learn a lot of new things.

Blessed are those who are sane enough not to take themselves too seriously; they will be valued by those around them.

Happy are those who can take small things seriously, and take serious things calmly; they will go far in life.

Happy are those who can be kind in understanding the attitudes of others; they may be taken for fools, but that is the price of charity.

Happy are those that can appreciate a smile, and forget a frown; they will walk in the sunshine.

Blessed are they who think before acting, and pray before thinking; they will avoid many blunders.

Blessed are they who recognize the Spirit in all whom they meet; the light of truth will shine in their lives.

Do we recognize ourselves in any of these? I have a few people that have crossed my path over the years.

- A group of women I regularly have coffee with. This group looks out for each other, they love to laugh, they support each other, they love each other - warts and all.

- Another group I meet with regularly - every Saturday morning! We are a diverse group and we are a patient and supportive group. We allow each the space to speak their truth and share their challenges. We laugh and we cry and we offer no judgment.
- I have a friend Mary. She grew up privileged and pampered but she hasn't let that privilege cloud her compassion for those who didn't have her head start in life. She has spent the majority of her adult life working around the world in places that are dangerous teaching women and children to read so would be prepared to find a job that would support them.
- There are those who travel to developing countries to bring medical care in many forms to those who have no stable access to even the most basic of treatments.
- There are individuals and groups who continue to work to ease the suffering and social alienation of the many who are unhoused, under housed, and live with a vast variety health challenges.
- The brave Saints of this world who continue to work for full inclusion of all who identify as LGBTQI+.
- Those who continue to fight for justice, fairness, and reconciliation for and with the first Peoples of Canada.
- Those who continue to advocate for those who can't advocate for themselves in our communities. They devote hours of precious time to aid in the ongoing reality there is a growing need for housing, health care, and nourishment that reaches

across a broad spectrum – singles, couples, the elderly, teens, children, and the working poor.

Psalm 149 reminds us to Sing praises, to rejoice, to dance, to be faithful, there is also a dark side to this Psalm - it speaks of vengeance, punishment, and judgement. There seems to be a lot of the latter in our world today and not much of the former.

So Who is a saint? A Saint is someone who can seem past the dark and embrace the light. A Saint does not live in fear they live in hope.

Saints are not just those who have suffered persecution for their beliefs and practices, Saints live among us and quietly, faithfully, and with commitment work toward being “the hands, the feet, the heart, and the eyes of God” in a world that is often cruel & heartless.

We pray this day for the Saints who have shone and continue to shine the light for us. We pray this day for the Saints who have taken up the standard and continue to show the way of goodness and mercy for those who will follow. We pray this day for each other that we will be empowered to embrace and commit fully to intercede for those who need us and what we can do.

A Prayer Meditation for All Saints Day (edited)

by Safiyah Fosua

We thank you, God, for hardworking saints;
Whether hard-hatted or steel-booted,
Head covered or uncovered,
Blue-collared or three-piece-suited
They left and continue to leave their mark on the earth for you, for us,
for our children to come.

Thank you, God, for the tremendous sacrifices made by those who
have gone before us and those who continue to sacrifice even today.
Bless the memories of all your saints, O God. Past, Present, & Future.

May we learn how to walk wisely from their examples of faith,
commitment, worship, and love.

Amen