Solemnity of All Saints

(Rev. 7:2-4, 9-14; 1 Jn. 3:1-3; Mt. 5:1-12a)
Homily of Pope Francis - 01 November 2020
Modified by Father Charles Fillion
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Brothers and sisters, on this solemn Feast of All Saints, the Church invites us to reflect on the great hope, that is based on Christ's Resurrection: Christ is risen and we will also be with him. The Saints and Blesseds are the most influential witnesses of Christian hope, because they lived it fully in their lives, in joys and sufferings, putting into practice the Beatitudes that Jesus preached and which resound in the Liturgy today.

The Beatitudes, in fact, are the path to holiness. I will focus now on two Beatitudes, the second and the third. This is the second one: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (v. 4). These words seem contradictory because mourning is not a sign of joy and happiness. Death, illness, moral adversity, sin and mistakes are reasons for mourning and suffering: simply everyday life, fragile, weak and marked by difficulty, a life at times wounded and pained by ungratefulness and misunderstanding.

Jesus proclaims blessed those who mourn due to this reality, who trust in the Lord despite everything and put themselves under his shadow. They are not indifferent, nor do they harden their hearts in their suffering, but they patiently hope for God's comfort. And they experience this comfort already in this life.

In the third Beatitude, Jesus states: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (v. 5). Brothers and sisters, meekness! What is that? Humbleness is characteristic of Jesus, who said of himself: "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Mt 11:29). The meek are those who know how to control themselves, who leave space for others, who listen to them and respect their way of living, their needs and their requests. They do not intend to overwhelm or diminish the other, they do not want to tower over or dominate everything, nor impose their ideas or their own interests to the harm of others.

These people, unappreciated by the worldly mentality, are, instead, precious in the eyes of God who gives them the promised land as an inheritance, that is, eternal life. This beatitude too begins here below and will be fulfilled in Heaven, in Christ. Being humble. At this moment in life, even in the world, where there is much aggressiveness..., in everyday life as well, the first thing that comes out of us is aggression, defensiveness. We need meekness to move forward on the path of holiness. To listen, to respect, not to attack: Be humble.

Dear brothers and sisters, choosing purity, humbleness and mercy; choosing to entrust oneself to the Lord in poverty of spirit and in affliction; dedicating oneself to justice and peace — all this means going against the current in respect to this world's mindset, in respect to the culture of possession, of meaningless fun, of arrogance against the weakest.

This Gospel path was walked by the Saints and Blesseds. Today's solemnity that honours All Saints reminds us of the personal and universal vocation to holiness and proposes sure models for this journey that each person walks in a unique way, an unrepeatable way. It is enough to think of the inexhaustible variety of gifts and real-life stories there are among the saints: they are not all the same, each one has their own personality, and developed their own life of holiness according to their own personality.

Each one of us can do it, take this path: meekness, humbleness, please, and we will head toward holiness. This immense family of faithful disciples of Christ has a Mother, the Virgin Mary. We venerate her under the title Queen of All Saints; but she is first of all the Mother who teaches each one of us to welcome and follow her Son. May she help us nourish the desire for holiness, walking the way of the Beatitudes.