



The Holy See

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

PAPA FRANCESCO

ANGELUS

*Saint Peter's Square
Thursday, 1 November 2018*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning and happy Feast Day!

Today's first reading, from the Book of Revelation, speaks to us about heaven and sets before us "a great multitude", innumerable, "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues" (Rev 7:9). They are the saints. What do they do up there in heaven? They sing together, they joyfully praise God. It would be beautiful to hear their song.... But we can imagine it: do you know when? During Mass, when we sing "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...". It is a hymn, the Bible says, which comes from heaven, which is sung there (cf. Is 6:3; Rev 4:8), a hymn of praise. Thus, by singing the *Sanctus*, not only do we think of the saints, but we do as they do: at that moment, in the Mass, we are united with them more than ever.

And we are united with *all* the saints: not only the most well known, from the calendar, but also those "next door", our family members and acquaintances who are now part of that great multitude. Therefore, today is a *family celebration*. The saints are close to us, indeed they are our truest brothers and sisters. They understand us, love us, know what is truly good for us, help us and await us. They are happy and want us to be happy with them in paradise.

Thus they invite us on the path of happiness, indicated by today's beautiful and well-known Gospel passage: "Blessed are the poor in spirit.... Blessed are the meek.... Blessed are the pure in heart..." (cf. Mt 5:3-8). But how? The Gospel says blessed are the poor, while the world says

blessed are the rich. The Gospel says blessed are the meek, while the world says blessed are the overbearing. The Gospel says blessed are the pure, while the world says blessed are the cunning and the pleasure-seekers. This way of the Beatitudes, of holiness, seems to always lead to defeat. Yet — the first reading also reminds us — the Saints hold “palm branches in their hands” (Rev 7:9), which is a symbol of victory. They have prevailed, not the world. And they exhort us to choose their side, that of God who is Holy.

Let us ask ourselves which side we are on: that of heaven or that of earth? Do we live for the Lord or for ourselves, for eternal happiness or for some immediate gratification? Let us ask ourselves: do we truly want holiness? Or are we content with being Christians without infamy and without praise, who believe in God and esteem their neighbour, but without overemphasizing. “The Lord asks everything of us, and in return he offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created” (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 1). Thus, either holiness or nothing! It is good for us to let ourselves be spurred by the saints, who did not use half-measures here, and are ‘cheering us on’ from there, so that we may choose God, humility, meekness, mercy, purity, so that we may be impassioned by heaven rather than earth.

Today our brothers and sisters do not ask us to listen to another fine Gospel passage, but to put it into practice, to set out on the way of the Beatitudes. It is not a matter of doing extraordinary things, but of following, each day, this way that leads us to heaven, leads us to family, leads us home. Thus today we glimpse our future and we celebrate what we were born for: we were born so as to die no more; we were born to enjoy God’s happiness! The Lord encourages us and says to those setting out on the path of the Beatitudes: “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven” (Mt 5:12). May the Holy Mother of God, Queen of Saints, help us to decisively follow the road to holiness; may she, who is the Gate of Heaven, introduce our departed loved ones into the heavenly family.

After the Marian prayer, the Holy Father greeted the many faithful gathered in Saint Peter’s Square, and directly addressed participants in the ‘Race of Saints’, whose proceeds will be allocated to works of charity.

Dear brothers and sisters, I warmly greet you all, pilgrims from Italy and other countries, families, parish groups, associations and school groups.

I address a special greeting to the participants in the *Corsa dei Santi* (“Race of Saints”) sponsored by the Missions of Don Bosco in order to experience All Saints Day in a dimension of popular celebration. Thank you for your fine initiative and for being here!

Tomorrow afternoon I will visit Rome’s Laurentino Cemetery: I invite you to accompany me with prayer on this day of suffrage for those who have gone before us in the sign of faith and who rest

in peaceful slumber.

I wish you all a happy Feast Day in the spiritual company of the Saints. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch! *Arrivederci!*

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