



The Holy See

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS POPE FRANCIS ANGELUS Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 1 November 2019 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today's solemnity of All Saints reminds us that we are all called to holiness. The Saints of all times, whom today we celebrate all together, are not simply symbols, distant, unreachable human beings. On the contrary, they are people who lived with their feet on the ground; they experienced the daily toil of existence with its successes and failures, finding in the Lord the strength to rise again and again, and to continue on their journey. From this we can understand that holiness is a goal that cannot be achieved only through one's own strengths, but rather it is the fruit of God's grace and of our free response to it. Therefore, holiness is *a gift* and *a calling*.

Inasmuch as it is a grace of God, that is a gift of His, it is something we cannot buy or barter, but that we receive, thus participating in the same divine life through the Holy Spirit Who has dwelt in us since the day of our Baptism. The seed of holiness is indeed Baptism. It is a matter of increasingly maturing the awareness that we are grafted onto Christ, as the branch is united to the vine, and therefore we can and must live with Him and in Him as children of God. So, holiness is living in full communion with God, now already, during this earthly pilgrimage.

But holiness, besides being a gift, is also a *calling*: it is a vocation common to all of us Christians, to Christ's disciples; it is the path of fullness that every Christian is called to follow in faith, proceeding towards the final goal of definitive communion with God in eternal life. Holiness thus becomes a response to God's gift, since it manifests itself as an assumption of responsibility. From this perspective, it is important to make a daily commitment to sanctification in the conditions, duties and circumstances of our lives, trying to live everything with love, with charity.

The saints we celebrate today in the liturgy are brothers and sisters who admitted in their lives that they needed this divine light, abandoning themselves to it with confidence. And now, before the throne of God (cf. *Rev 7: 15*), they sing His glory for ever. They constitute the "holy city" to which we look with hope, as our definitive goal, while we are pilgrims in this "earthly city". Let us walk

towards that “holy city” where these holy brothers and sisters await us. It is true, we are wearied by the harshness of the road, but hope gives us the strength to move forward. Looking at their lives, we are encouraged to imitate them. Among them are many witnesses to a holiness “found in our next-door neighbours, those who, living in our midst, reflect God’s presence” (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*, 7).

Brothers and sisters, the memory of the Saints leads us to raise our eyes to Heaven: not to forget the realities of the earth, but to face them with greater courage, with more hope. May Mary, our most holy Mother, accompany us with her maternal intercession, as a sign of consolation and sure hope.

After the Angelus, the Pope continued:

Dear brothers and sisters,

I greet you all with affection, pilgrims from Italy and various countries; in particular the children of Catholic Action; here with their educators from many Italian dioceses, on the fiftieth anniversary of the ACR. One, two, three... [the boys in the square sing]. I greet the young people of the Deanery of Mauges, France; and young people from Carugate. Milan.

I greet the athletes who took part in the *Corsa dei Santi* (The Saints Race), organized by the “Missioni Don Bosco” Foundation to emphasize, even in a form of popular celebration, the religious value of the feast of All Saints. I thank you and all those in the parishes and communities who are promoting prayer initiatives in these days to celebrate All Saints and to commemorate the dead. These two Christian feasts remind us of the bond that exists between the Church of the earth – us – and that of heaven, between us and our loved ones who have passed away.

Tomorrow afternoon I will celebrate the Eucharist in the Catacombs of Priscilla, one of the burial places of the first Christians of Rome. In these days, in which, unfortunately, there are also negative cultural messages regarding death and the dead, I invite you not to neglect, if possible, a visit to and a prayer at the cemetery. It will be an act of faith.

I wish you all a happy feast in the spiritual company of the Saints. Please do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and *arrivederci!*
