



Feast of All Saints (Year A)



Matthew 5: 1 – 12a

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.”

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Reflection:

Following Jesus is compared to climbing a mountain. His disciples followed after him. Once they reach the top, he teaches them. Sometimes I wonder, “Why did some people climb the mountain when other people, from the crowd, did not?”. Jesus’ opening words to his disciples provide the answer. Only those with a genuine need or who are looking for that special something will go through the effort of doing so. In many of these cases, they will even go as far as to endure persecution to reach their goal.



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

Today's Gospel, celebrating the Feast of All Saints, compares following Jesus to the climbing of a mountain, "Looking at the lives of the Saints and your own effort to follow Jesus, how does it compare to the climbing of a mountain?"

Note: - You may want to use this passage and question as a reflection question in your personal journal (younger children may substitute writing with drawing to develop their thoughts).



Stain Glass Windows Project:

St. Paul tells us that we are called to be saints, but many of us have false ideas of what it means to be a Saint. Many people do not feel that they could ever qualify. When a young girl, sitting in a church, was once asked, "What is a Saint?" She looked towards the stain glasses windows and replied, "God's light shines through them."

Using: washable children's paint, a brush and some thin masking/painter's tape,

- Find a basic image of a Saint or symbols associated with a Saint on the internet.
- Make the initial image with strips of masking/ painter's tape on one of your windows.
- Help your child(ren) paint in the various sectors of the layout with different colours of paint.
- Allow it to dry.
- Remove the tape (or leave it on for stain glass effect).
- Clean it off whenever you grow tired of it.

Or

Using a sheet of construction paper, various colours of vellum/tissue paper, pencil, scissors and glue.

- Find a basic image of a Saint or symbols associated with a Saint on the internet.
- Cut it out and print the basic outline on a piece of construction paper.
- Draw a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch border around the picture, corresponding with the edges of the paper).
- Thicken the contour lines of the picture to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
- Be sure to provide several $\frac{1}{2}$ inch lines that connect the picture to the outside frame (just as stain glass windows do). Provide $\frac{1}{2}$ inch inner lines as needed (to distinguish head from body, body from arms, arms from hands, etc.)
- Cut out the portions that need colouring.
- Cut our vellum/tissue paper to the shape of each corresponding space
- Glue each piece in place (using the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch lines provided).

Prayer:

Lord God, as your light shines through the lives of the Saints, may your light shine in our hearts too. So that in all we are, say and do, your light may always shine thro



Song: This Little Light of Mine.

This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,
This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,
This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

God's light shines through me, I'm going to let it shine,
God's light shines through me, I'm going to let it shine,
God's light shines through me, I'm going to let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.



St. Therese of Lisieux: One of the patron saints of our diocese

Marie Francoise-Therese Martin wanted to become a saint, but no matter what she did, she always seemed to fall short of the mark.

In the story of her life, she writes how her father responded to her every mood and called her his little princess, and how she was doubly spoiled as a result.

In her little journal she speaks of how her mother died when she was 4 ½ and received her first years of schooling from her older sister, Pauline. She was only sent to school when Pauline left home to enter a Religious Convent. Therese writes about being bullied at school, preferring to look after the younger children over playing with her classmates.

Naturally interested in religion and in doing her best in response to God, Therese didn't make much progress until one Christmas Eve when she was ten. She was going upstairs, after placing her shoe by the fireplace in expectation of receiving some gifts, when she heard her dad say, "I wonder when my little princess will outgrow this." On running downstairs, that morning, and unwrapping her presents, she suddenly realized that, with Jesus, it's all about the giving and not the receiving. In her journal entry that day, she writes about how God cured her from looking only at herself, her difficulties, needs and feelings, and the joy she discovered in reaching out to others.

By the time she was 14 she wanted to dedicate her life to God in the same way as her older sister, Pauline. In telling her dad about it, in the garden, her father gently dug out a little flower, root and all, and began to compare her life to the lifecycle of the beautiful plant. The experience left her with a strong sense of being like a delicate flower in God's garden and the beautiful way he looks after us.

When she tried to join her sister Pauline in the convent, she was told she was too young. "Wait a couple of more years," the message said. "Then try again, if you are still interested."

Waiting two more years was out of the question. Therese was not used to being told, “No”. So, on the family’s trip to Rome and a general visit with the Pope, she surprised everyone by running up to him and asking him to intervene. The Pope smiled at her, recognizing her determination, and said, “You will enter, if it is God’s Will.”

During her month in Italy, she came in contact with many priests. Many of them were good men, but some of them seemed to struggle. “I will pray for priests,” she wrote in her journal, “so that they may not fall and lose heart.” And, from that moment, she included them in her daily prayers.

When she returned home to France, Therese received the news that she was welcome to join her sister Pauline in the convent. Therese writes about it as, “the happiest day of her life.” On meeting the other members of the community, she writes, “most are old... Some are odd and cranky... Others are sick and troubled... Some have lost focus on their prayers.”

When she entered the convent, Therese was asked to dedicate herself to the Child Jesus. Just as Jesus became small in becoming one of us, Therese was encouraged to reflect on her own youth and littleness in her mission to pray and be at the service of her fellow community members. From the beginning of her Religious Life, Therese is determined to love each member of the community, no matter how cranky or sick they may be. Focused on prayer and doing “the little things with love”, Therese began to grow in her call to follow Jesus.

Determined to become a Saint and, yet, unable to do the great things that the Saints had done, Therese continues to struggle. “My life seems so small and insignificant,” she complains. “How will I ever be recognized as a Saint?” Until, one day, she heard St. Paul say, “I will show you a still more excellent way.” St. Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians. St. Paul was speaking about “love”; that, without love, the greatest deed is of little use and the biggest sacrifice has no value.

“That’s it,” Therese writes in her journal, “I know how I will become a Saint. I will do even the smallest thing with love.” She also writes that, “just as God has bent down to me, the smallest flower in his field, to smell my sweet perfume, so too will I bend down to serve each one with love.”

Therese fell ill when she was 21 and would linger in bed for three more years. In her short life, she is remembered for the journal she wrote, her prayers for priests and missionaries and for doing the smallest thing with love. Many people recognize her as one of the greatest Saints that ever lived, not because she was famous or because she had done a spectacular thing, but because she offers hope to all of us, to do the smallest thing with love.

Reflection Question

St. Therese of Lisieux wanted to be a Saint; she did not know how to go about it. What about you?

If you would like to watch a video of the story of St. Therese, you can use this link.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM3jxJkmjug&list=RDCMUC63iYSE884kZoq6rfywsXDg&start_radio=1&t=73

Activity:

Begin a spiritual journal. Try to write in it, at least once a week.

- Write down your thoughts in regards to God, Christ's Love, your spiritual questions and journey, etc.
- Use it to reflect on the Sunday Readings (What strikes you? How does it challenge you? Etc.)

Song: (If you would like some music, use this link)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ri1UApNR9yY>

O, when the Saints go marching in. O, when the Saints go marching in.
O, Lord, I want to be in that number, when the Saints go marching in.

O, when the trumpet sounds its call. O, when the trumpet sounds its call.
O, Lord, I want to be in that number, When the trumpet sounds its call.