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Solemnity of All Saints

Date: Saturday, November 1, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Revelation 7:2–4, 9–14
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 24:1b–4b, 5–6 | **Response:** Psalm 24:6
Gospel Acclamation: Matthew 11:28
Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:1–12a
Preached at: the Chapel of Emmaus House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

The readings today are about the shape of holiness, the surprise of grace, and the closeness of the saints. They remind us that sainthood is not just for a few, but for all of us. It's not about being perfect. It's about staying close to God and living with love.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the Solemnity of All Saints is not only about well-known saints like St Francis or St Teresa. It's a celebration of all those who lived with faith and love—people who prayed, forgave, served, and trusted God, even in silence. Some are already with God. Others are still among us.

Many of them we do not know by name. From the early days of the Church, Christians remembered not only the martyrs and famous saints, but also the countless faithful people whose names were known only to God. Pope Gregory III chose 1 November to honour them all. Today is their feast too.

The Second Vatican Council reminded us that all the faithful, no matter their situation in life, are called by God to be holy. Holiness is not a special task for priests or religious. It is for parents and farmers, teachers and shopkeepers, children and elders—for all who live with faith.

Psalm 24 today asks, "Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?" And it answers: those who have clean hands and pure hearts. Holiness is not about being famous or strong. It is about being honest, kind, just, and faithful.

The first reading gives us a picture of a great crowd—so many people no one can count—from every nation and language, all standing before God. They have come through hard times. They suffered, but they remained faithful. Their

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clothes are white because they were washed in the blood of the Lamb. That is the Bible's way of saying: they trusted in Christ and were saved by His love.

Pope Benedict once said that this crowd includes people from every time and place—most of them unknown to us. But God knows each one. And we see people like them in our own lives.

Here in Zimbabwe, we see people who show us what holiness looks like. The grandmother who shares her last cup of mealie meal. The nurse who shows care even when the clinic has no medicine. The young man who tells the truth, even when it costs him. The teacher who stays in the classroom, even when her salary is not enough. These are lives of quiet goodness, of courage, and of love.

The second reading tells us who we really are: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are." This is where holiness begins. God loves us. God calls us His children. And that's not just a title. It's who we are.

John goes on to say, "What we will be has not yet been revealed." That means God is still working in us. We are still learning, still growing. The saints didn't have easy lives. But they trusted God, and that made them strong.

In the Gospel Jesus gives us the Beatitudes. He tells us who is truly blessed: the poor in spirit, the gentle, those who mourn, those who seek what is right, those who show mercy, those who make peace, and those who suffer for doing good. These words are not about the world's idea of success. They are about living with love and trust.

The Beatitudes are the way Jesus invites us to live. They are the path of the saints. Pope Francis calls them our Christian ID card. They show us what matters most to God. And they are not only for people in Bible stories. They are for us. Here and now.

And Jesus understands our struggles. That's why, in the Gospel Acclamation today, He says, "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

This morning, the Church also declares St John Henry Newman a Doctor of the Church. Newman reminds us that holiness is not just found in grand actions, but in the deep and thoughtful faithfulness of daily life. He once wrote, "God has

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created me to do Him some definite service… I have my mission." His life and writings continue to help people listen for the quiet voice of God in their own lives. Today, as we celebrate the great crowd of saints, we also give thanks for Newman's witness—a reminder that faith seeks understanding, and that every person has a part to play in God's work. The saints didn't live easy lives. But they lived with Christ. And so can we.

As we celebrate this feast, we give thanks for the saints whose names we know, and for the many more whose names we do not. We are part of the same family, the same Body of Christ. As Revelation 21 says, a day is coming when God will wipe away every tear. There will be no more mourning, no more pain. Only peace.

And so, as we return to our ordinary days, I invite you to ask:

- Which of the Beatitudes speaks to my life today?
- Where is Jesus calling me to live with more faith and love?
- Who are the people around me who show me what holiness looks like?

Let us pray:

Lord, through the prayers of all the saints—both known and unknown—help us to live with trust, with love, and with hope. Teach us to follow the path of the Beatitudes. Make us more like Christ.

Amen.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.

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