

HOMILY

Solemnity of All Saints - 11-1- 2019

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Today's Solemnity of All Saints is the day we celebrate all those who Saint John describes in our first reading from Revelation, "... a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue ...". This **multitude** ... represents all of **our** brothers and sisters in Christ, known and unknown, who have moved on to their eternal reward. So, what kind of people were these saints we honor today? I think sometimes we tend to think of them as larger than life and possessing a holiness we could **never** hope to achieve.

What sort of people were the saints? We could look at St. Augustine. During his early years of fast and loose living he took a mistress. He quipped: "God grant me chastity ... but not yet"! He once said to his mother, St. Monica, that there would be no problems between them ... if she just gave up her faith! But after his conversion ... he became a priest and then a bishop. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church there are more quotations from St. Augustine than from any other writer.

We could also look at St. Thomas More who came from a Catholic family, but no more or less Catholic than those around him. In his early career as a lawyer, Thomas was known to be quite duplicitous. Then something happened that transformed More from a somewhat mediocre Christian of his day to a saint for the ages, or if you prefer, **a man for all seasons**. More was forced to choose between his conscience and his king, his faith and his social position and ... **ultimately** ... between his life and his death. After much agonizing and equivocating ... Thomas More chose to be faithful to his Faith even at the cost of his life.

Recalling the Old Testament we see that Moses even committed murder ... before his call by God. And David consumed by lust ... committed adultery **and** murder ... before repenting. Even St. Teresa of Avila ... in a moment of extreme frustration ... was heard to declare "that if this is how God treats his friends, it's no wonder He has so few."

So just what sort of people are the saints? They were ordinary people just like you and me ... they were imperfect sinners who chose to respond to God's grace.

So, this great Solemnity also serves to remind us of that great tenant of our Faith ... the Communion of Saints ... which also includes us and also those the Church commemorates tomorrow ... the Souls in Purgatory ... because their salvation also ... is assured!

This solemnity ... then ... reminds us that we are **all** saints. As members of the Communion of Saints ... sainthood is ours to lose. When we received the Sacrament of Baptism, we were admitted into the Body of Christ. We were cleansed of all sins. Now we have but to do those things our Savior asks of us in. Our Second Reading from St. John assures us of God's love ... indeed ... assures us that we are God's children. Let me repeat that ...**WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD!** ... what greater love ... what greater gift could God ever give us! If God waited for us to become perfect ... so that He could love us ... He **never** would. No! ... To be loved by our God we need do nothing ... absolutely nothing!