

The Rectorial Benefice of the East Vale
Morning Prayer
Sunday 1st November, 2020
All Saints Day

Hymn

For all the saints
who from their labors rest,
who thee by faith
before the world confessed,
thy name, O Jesus,
be forever blest.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou wast their rock,
their fortress, and their might;
thou, Lord, their captain
in the well-fought fight;
thou, in the darkness drear,
their one true light.

O blest communion!
fellowship divine!
we feebly struggle,
they in glory shine;
yet all are one in thee,
for all are thine.

But lo! there breaks
a yet more glorious day;
the saints triumphant
rise in bright array;
the King of glory
passes on his way.

From earth's wide bounds,
from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl
streams in the countless host,
singing to Father,
Son, and Holy Ghost,

Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Gloria

Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father.
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

We worship you,
glory in the highest,
give you thanks,
glory in the highest,
praise you for your glory.
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us,
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer,
receive our prayer.

Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.
**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God, the glory of God the Father.

**Glory to God, glory in the highest,
peace to his people, peace on earth.**

Amen. **Amen.**

The Collect

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that we may come to those inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen

First Reading

(Revelation 7.9-17)

A reading from the Revelation to John.

I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne

and worshipped God, singing, Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.' Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?' I said to him, Sir, you are the one that knows.' Then he said to me, these are they who have come out of the great or-deal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this rea-son they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm

(Psalm 34: 1-10)

R/ O taste and see that the Lord is gracious

I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall ever be in my mouth. My soul shall glory in the Lord: let the humble hear and be glad. **R:/**

O magnify the Lord with me: let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he answered me: and delivered me from all my fears. **R:/**

Look upon him and be radiant: and your faces shall not be ashamed. This poor soul cried, and the Lord heard me: and saved me from all my troubles. **R:/**

The angel of the Lord: encamps around those who fear him and delivers them. O taste and see that the Lord is gracious: blessed is the one who trusts in him.

Fear the Lord, all you his holy ones: for those who fear him lack nothing. Lions may lack and suffer hunger: but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good. **R:/**

Second Reading

(1st letter of John 3:1-3)

A reading from the 1st letter of John.

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Belovèd, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is re-vealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

This is the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

The Gospel

(Matthew 5: 1-12)

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Give praise to his name.

**Jesus is Lord of all the earth,
he is the king of creation.**

Alleluia! Alleluia!...

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Listen to the gospel of Christ

according to Saint Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Glory to you, O Lord. 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: 'Blessèd are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessèd are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessèd are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessèd are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessèd are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessèd are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessèd are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessèd are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessèd 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, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Spread the good news o'er all the earth,
Jesus has died and risen.**

Alleluia! Alleluia!...

The Homily

Rev Angela

This is the day that every year the Church recalls the examples of the witness and prayer of the Holy women and men who have been identified by the church as saints. The Saints aren't just role models for us to follow, but they are like family members with whom we continue a relationship in prayer that is why we use the term 'the communion of Saints'.

The definition of a saint in the dictionary is as follows –

- a. A person who as died and been officially recognised and honoured by the Christian church because his or her life was an excellent example of the ways Christians should live. OR
- b. A virtuous, kind and patient person.

If you take those definitions, we all have the ability to be saints in our time. When we are baptised, we become part of God's family and through the act of baptism we become children on God, brothers and sisters in Christ. When I conduct a baptism, I always use a line from my former Parish priest, who would say the candidate for baptism was "a saint in training...". What a lovely phrase to say – our whole journey of faith from baptism is our saintly training. As we develop our faith through reading scriptures, engaging in prayer and discerning God's call on our life, we ultimately aim is to grow more like Jesus in our words, our deeds and our actions. What better place to start our training to be a saint is to look at, understand and inwardly digest those wonderful words of the Beatitudes that we read in the gospel today. The words are familiar and beautiful but also challenges the way we live our lives.

The words themselves can make us sceptical about what they mean for us. In light of our own experience those who mourn are not always comforted and people who show mercy to others, sometimes get a mouthful of abuse, rather than mercy themselves. So, these words challenge us - what is Jesus actually saying? Are they a set of high standards to make us raise our game? Are they a new set of laws which are impossible to attain? It seems bewildering that this set of values seem to turn everything we know upside down, particularly if in some translation the word blessed is translated to happy. What we need to remember is that Jesus is putting before us the values of a new world, a new creation. He is not encouraging us to try harder, but he is telling us we should change our behaviours completely. In a way he wants us to fully embrace the words and to be born again into the new creation, to live in and bring in God's Kingdom here on earth.

Sometimes when we look at the world around us, especially when there are conflicts, arguments and selfishness amongst people and nations, we are not be able to see the signs of the new creation or the values expressed in the Beatitudes. However, I believe that especially during this time of isolation we have seen glimpses of the signs of this new creation breaking through the darkness of the pandemic. We have seen astonishing acts of forgiveness, gifts of generosity, selfless caring for others, a commitment to justice and equality, love of our neighbour and of our enemy, we have seen people go the extra mile for their communities. With these things we have seen a light in that darkness and that shows us that Jesus' is new world can breakthrough within our communities. To be a saint in training in our time we need to live in the spirit of the beatitudes recognising and accepting those who are blessed in our society.

Although on All Saints day we remember and give thanks for those who have done mighty deeds and inspired others over the ages we should not forget those who

have inspired us and turned the teaching of Christ into reality for us. So, it gives us a question to take away from today who are the people you would call a hero or a heroine of the faith? Who would be included as Saints in your personal calendar?

Those questions cause us to reflection on who those people might be. - Who are the people you know who depend on God alone and give top priority to spiritual goals? Who are the people you know who turn the other cheek? Who are the people who work for justice and strive for truth? Who are the people who create peace and reconciliation? Who are those who are persecuted for the cause of right? Who are the people you know who take up the cross of Christ and turn it into glory?

These are the people God calls blessed and they should be on our list of Saints. These are the people who show us in their lives what this teaching of Jesus means for all of us. We must strive to live in and bring in God's Kingdom, as we continue our saintly training.

Hymn

**The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation
by water and the Word:
from heav'n he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.**

**Elect from ev'ry nation,
yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation
one Lord, one faith, one birth;
one holy name she blesses,
partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses,
with ev'ry grace endued.**

**'Mid toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation
of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest.**

**Yet she on earth hath union
with the God the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion
with those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we,
like them, the meek and lowly,
on high may dwell with thee.**

The Intercessions

Let us pray to God, whose saints have shown his glory in the church and in the world.

Sacred God, you are the Holy One, the source of life and fountain of our hope. Pour out your Spirit on your Church; breathe into it the fire of your love. We pray for June our Bishop and for the church congregations in our Benefice that your spirit and love may guide us, as we seek to do your work in our communities.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all the saints throughout the ages; for the lives of men and women sanctified by the power of your presence. We pray for the saints of the churches in the Benefice, for all whose lives proclaim the wonders of your love. Bless and guide your children that we may be built into living temples of your peace.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We hold before your throne of grace those whom we elect to lead and govern. We pray for justice and peace; for healing of conflicts and hatred that can cause division; for a just and fair sharing of the earth's resources. Give to us humble hearts that our way living may show our trust in your care and the glory of your kingdom

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

With a voice of praise and thanksgiving we place out trust in your unfailing love. We pray for all in any kind of need this day..... may all in need feel you loving presence and healing touch.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your mercy all who have died this week... In our cycle of prayer with the parish of Lagunda, we pray and give thanks at this time for all who have died in faith of Christ, in the Lagunda parish and in our Benefice our loved ones departed and all whose anniversary of death occurs at this time. Bless all who mourn, that they shall be comforted and let us rejoice and be glad in your salvation

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

In a moment of silence, let us offer our own prayers and petitions to the Father who promises to hear us when we pray in faith.....

Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

Rejoicing in the great cloud of witnesses that surround us, we commit ourselves and all creation to your eternal protection.

**Merciful Father
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

Hymn (requested by Jan Parry and Suzie Morel)

**O Lord, my God,
when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works
thy hands have made,
I see the stars,
I hear the mighty thunder,
thy pow'r throughout
the universe displayed**

*Then sings my soul,
my Saviour God, to thee:
how great thou art, how great thou art.
Then sings my soul,
my Saviour God, to thee;
how great thou art, how great thou art*

**And when I think that God,
his Son not sparing,
sent Him to die,
I scarce can take it in
that on the cross,
my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died
to take away my sin.**

Then sings my soul.....

**When Christ shall come
with shout of acclamation
and take me home,
what joy shall fill my heart;
when I shall bow
in humble adoration
and then proclaim:
my God, how great thou art**

Then sings my soul,