

Sermon Notes All Saints Sunday [Revelation 7:9-17](#) [1 John 3:1-3](#) [Matthew 5:1-12](#)

This Sunday we celebrate All Saints Day, when we remember all people we have lost to death and at the same time confess that “life is changed, not ended” in the power of God’s Love in the Resurrection. In the tradition there are actually 3 days: All Hallow’s Eve, All Saints Day, and All Souls Day, also known as the Day of the Day in the Mexican tradition of remembering loved ones who have died. On All Saints Day we gather together as faithful people believing that the communion of saints gather with us. Perhaps we don’t talk about it very much, but we pray for those we have lost to death but not



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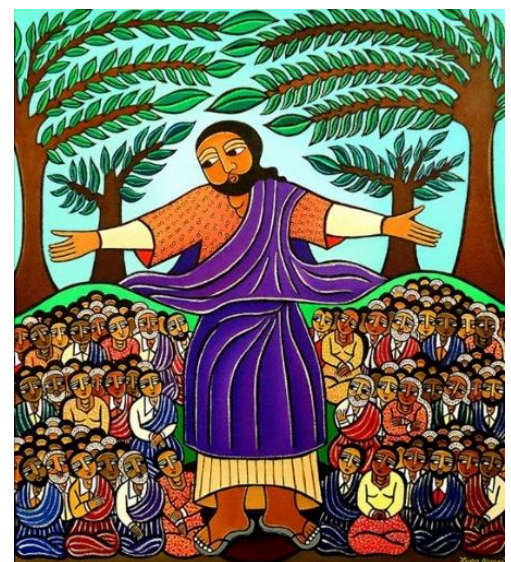
lost in Love. Today we remember that sometimes in this mystical communion of the saints, they seem near to us. By the power of the Good Shepherd we are gathered together knowing the joy that is known in being in the presence of God. This is a mystery of faith, captured in hope, music, song and rituals of light, remembrance, and communion.

“for the Lamb at the center 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.**”

Today we hear the beatitudes, words spoken to the grieving, the hurting, the hungry, and the persecuted—they are words of promise and hope—not commandments. Looked at this way, the beatitudes can point toward saints we know—people who have endured and seen God’s promise of what it means to be a peace maker, how a life of faith is changed when hunger becomes abundance so full that it can be shared with others. We can point to the lives of everyday people that became extraordinary--Martin Luther King Jr., Saint Francis of Assisi, Harriet Tubman, Florence Nightengale, John Muir, and Hildegard of Bingen, and respond to God’s love.

“Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. (1 John 3:2)” Being beloved is not something we can seek out, it is something freely given to us. We receive this blessing because we are beloved . We are accompanied by the Love of God where ever we go—however alone we feel, or betrayed, or angry, or bereft. We receive God’s blessing because we are God’s children now. We do not earn this blessing because of what we do or do not do—it is a gift. Our response to blessing is gratitude; and if we have no response, God offers the certainty of promise and hope. God is with us.

The everyday saints in our lives are the people who showed us love we cannot explain in words. The saints who point us to the Love of God in their acts of compassion are still with us in that mystical communion of saints who are with us and in the nearer presence of God.



Laura James, Sermon on the Mount, 2010