

ALL SAINTS

YEAR B

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The feast of All Saints focuses attention on two of our fundamental beliefs as Christians: we are baptized into a community and we will live forever. We celebrate today our union with all those believers, children of God, who have been “rewarded in heaven,” and now see God.

The first reading focuses on our life as Christians here and now. *We are children of God now!* As such, we must try to be good and pure as we wait for the day when Jesus will come again and we will see him as he is and be like him. And so, the reading also pulls us into the future. We live a life of “already/not yet.” We are *already* children of God, but we are *not yet* perfected as Jesus is.

The Gospel too focuses on the already/not yet, but with an emphasis on the future. We are assured of reward in heaven, the blessing to come, when we live the life of Jesus. It is this assurance of seeing God and eternal life of blessing that motivates us to live the beatitudes here and now. Combined, these readings present the Christian view of both present and future.

The saints are those children of God who have lived the Beatitudes.

FIRST READING: 1 John 3:1-3

This is a reading from the first letter of John.

Brothers and sisters,

See how much God loves us!

We are called the children of God.

And we really are God’s children.

We know that when Jesus comes again, we will be like him,

because we will see him as he really is.

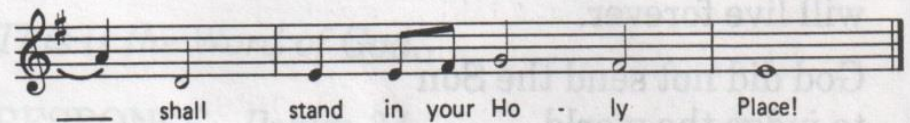
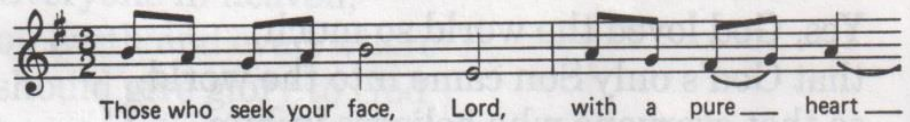
Everyone who believes this

tries to be good and pure,

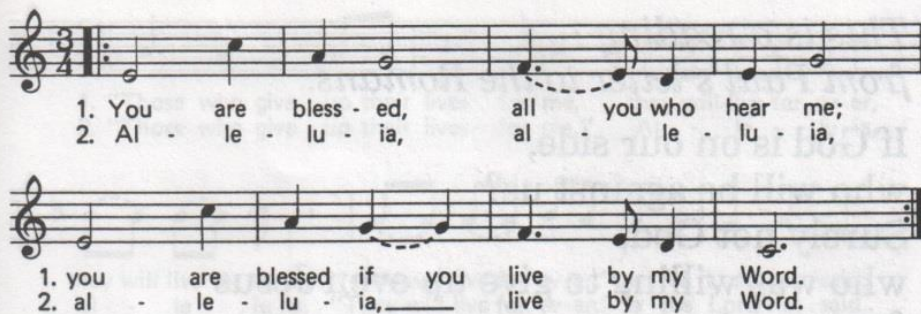
just as Jesus is good and pure.

This is the Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Psalm 15



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



1. You are bless - ed, all you who hear me;
2. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

1. you are blessed if you live by my Word.
2. al - le - lu - ia, live by my Word.

GOSPEL: *Matthew 5:1-12*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus and his disciples went up on a mountain,
and they sat down so Jesus could teach them.

Jesus said to his disciples,

Blessed are people who know they need God,
for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them.

Blessed are people who are sad now,
for later God will comfort them.

Blessed are people who are humble,
for God will give them everything.

Blessed are people who work for justice,
for God will give them all they need.

Blessed are people who give mercy to others,
for God will have mercy on them.

Blessed are people
who have hearts that are pure,
for they will see God.

Blessed are people who make peace,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are people who suffer
for doing what is right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them.

And you are blessed when people hurt you
and say bad things about you
because you believe in me.

Be happy and glad,
for God will reward you in heaven.

This is the Good News of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

We want to emphasize with the children that we live the Beatitudes because we are children of God. The Beatitudes are, for Christians, a way of life. We do not need to earn our relationship with God by living the Beatitudes, we are already children of God.

You might compare this to family relationships. Members of a loving family do not need to earn the love of one another by being good and kind. They are good and kind because they already love one another.

We belong to the family of God. We are truly God's children and so we live as children of God. We know that we are not perfect, but one day we will see Jesus, our brother, as he really is and we will be like him. The Beatitudes tell us how we should live until that day.

The saints are people who did that. They live forever with God. Today would be an ideal time to share the lives of some saints who are special to your parish or city.