

November 1st: All Saints

Gospel text (Mt 5,1-12a): When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up the mountain. He sat down and his disciples gathered around him. Then he spoke and began to teach them: «Fortunate are those who are poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Fortunate are those who mourn, they shall be comforted. Fortunate are the gentle, they shall possess the land. Fortunate are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied. Fortunate are the merciful, for they shall find mercy. Fortunate are those with a pure heart, for they shall see God. Fortunate are those who work for peace, they shall be called children of God. Fortunate are those who are persecuted for the cause of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. Be glad and joyful, for a great reward is kept for you in God. This is how this people persecuted the prophets who lived before you».

«Be glad and joyful»

Mons. F. Xavier CIURANETA i Aymí Emeritus Bishop of Lleida
(Lleida, Spain)

Today, we celebrate the reality of the Mystery of Salvation. A reality that we evince in the “Creed” and which is very soothing: «I believe in the communion of saints». All saints, who have already passed from death into eternal life, from the Virgin Mary on, form a wholeness: they represent the Church of the Blessed, whom Jesus congratulates: «Fortunate are those with a pure heart, for they shall see God!» (Mt 5:8). At the same time, they join us in communion, too. Because the saints already enjoy the eternal vision of God, they cannot be united to us through faith and hope; but, they can, instead, be united to us through charity. «So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love» (1Cor 13:13). Charity understood as

that kind of love that links us, through them, to the same Father, to the very same Christ Redeemer and to the same Holy Spirit. The kind of love that makes them solidary and solicitous with us. Therefore, it is not that we venerate the saints only because of their exemplarity. There is a stronger reason than that: to be united in Spirit with the whole Church invigorated by the practice of the fraternal charity.

Because of this deep and profound unity we must feel close to all those saints that, before us, have believed what we now believe, have waited for what we are now waiting and, mostly, have loved God Father and their brothers, men also seeking the imitation of Christ's love.

The saint apostles, the saint martyrs, the saint confessors, who have lived through history are, therefore, our brothers and our intercessors; on them, these prophetic words of Jesus have been fulfilled: «Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. Be glad and joyful, for a great reward is kept for you in God» (Mt 5:11-12). The treasures of their sanctity are like family assets, which we can rely upon. These are the treasures in heaven, which Jesus invites us to store up (cf. Mt 6:20). As the Vatican Council II asserts, «So by their fraternal concern is our weakness greatly helped» (Lumen gentium, 49). This solemnity brings some comforting news, which invite us to joyous festivities and celebrations.