

“Who are these wearing white robes, and where did they come from?” ... He said to me, “These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.” Indeed, “Salvation comes from our God, who is seated on the throne, and from the Lamb.”

The above words from our First Reading ([Rev 7:2-4, 9-14](#)), usher us joyfully into this year’s All Saints Day Celebration: the great feast of the Church triumphant (the choirs of angels and saints in heaven) – a great multitude, which no one can count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue. They stand before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands, singing and praying to God: “Amen. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, power, and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”

For them, these words are fulfilled: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel” (Heb 12:22-24). Or again, “They shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign forever and ever” (Rev 22:4-5).

Today’s celebration is reassuring: it is saying, ‘Yes! Some people who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith are already there, enjoying NOT the ‘HOPE’, but the ‘REALITY’ of God’s Everlasting Presence. Mary the Mother of God is there; the Archangels and the angels are there; the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - Luke 20:37-38) are there; Moses and Elijah (Luke 9:30-31) are there; all the apostles and martyrs are there. Even the repentant thief that Christ told, “Today, you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:42) is there. Actually, we know that there are saints whose feast days we celebrate in the course of the Liturgical Year. But today we mark the feast of all saints, canonized by the Church or not; all saints truly known to God alone.

The blessings Christ speaks about in today’s gospel ([Matt 5:1-12a](#)) are already theirs. They have inherited heaven; they have been shown mercy; they have been satisfied; they have been gladdened; they have been rewarded with ever-

lasting dwelling; above all, they see God face to face – that is, they have a full experience of God in the best possible way. We cannot even figure out the extent of the joys of heaven; but Scriptures tells us that it is simply indescribable: “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him” (1Cor 2:9). All the joys of this world summed together are nothing compared to what each of them is experiencing.

Today’s celebration shows us the reality of the mystery of the Communion of Saints. These saints pray for us. They are already reigning with Christ and are able to make powerful intercessions for us. The Author of the Letter to the Hebrews says, “We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...” (Heb 12:1). Let us always intensify our devotions to the saints and let their examples of virtue inspire us in our own journey to eternal blessedness.

Dear friends, the honor to saints does it amount to worshipping of the saints? Certainly Not! Rather it contributes to the worship of God. Our virgin mother Mary teaches us this when she says, “Henceforth all generations will call me blessed”. Why? “Because he that is mighty

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has done great things for me and holy is his name”. So God is the one glorified in the saints. We see this again during the divine praises at the end of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament when the Church prays: “Blessed be God... his holy name... Jesus, true God and true man.... Blessed be God in his angels and in his saints. So it is God that we praise and bless in our devotion to saints. God is faithful; he does not fail.

Finally, beloved, the good news is that there is a place for us too – a place for you and me – if we persevere in faith, hope and love. Christ promised, “The one who perseveres to the end will be saved”. Some people think that heaven is already full. Do not despair; for Jesus says, “In my Father’s house, there are many rooms.” St John reassures us in the Second Reading ([1John 3:1-3](#)), “See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may (even in the here and now) be called the children of God. So we are... Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” We shall see God as he really is – face to face? What a blessed hope! To God be the glory forever and ever. Amen!

“O when the saints go marching in (X2);  
Lord I want to be in that number, when the  
saints go marching in.”