

01. November 2020

,,Feast of All Saints,,

Rev 7-2-4, 9-14

Then I saw another angel rising where the sun rises, carrying the seal of the living God; he called in a powerful voice to the four angels whose duty was to devastate land and sea, 'Wait before you do any damage on land or at sea or to the trees, until we have put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.' And I heard how many had been sealed: a hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel. After that I saw that there was a huge number, impossible for anyone to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted in a loud voice, 'Salvation to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels who were standing in a circle round the throne, surrounding the elders and the four living creatures, prostrated themselves before the throne, and touched the ground with their foreheads, worshipping God with these words: Amen. Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour and power and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen. One of the elders then spoke and asked me, 'Who are these people, dressed in white robes, and where have they come from?' I answered him, 'You can tell me, sir.' Then he said, 'These are the people who have been through the great trial; they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb.

Today we think of all the Saints who lived a holy life, often unknown, along with those we know by name, because the Church maintains the memory of them and we can honor them as Saints of the Church!

It must be emphasized time that we Catholics pay great veneration to the Saints - and especially to the Mother of the Lord - but never worship them! Some cult-forms in some countries may not make this distinction very clear to outsiders, but every Catholic knows that we only can worship the Lord.

Honoring the Saints, even those we do not know, makes deep sense! Today's text refers to those saints who have remained faithful to the Lord "*through the great trial*" and who have suffered much or even martyrdom for the sake of faith. They make a wonderful confession before the Lord and come from all nations!

We worship in them the glory of God, which is reflected in their lives, in their great confession!

“You are glorious, O God, in the life of your saints!” (see “Mirabilis Deus in sanctis suis” – Offertory Verse of the Feast of All Saints)

In them God has found that answer to his love, which fills man completely with Gods presence and strengthens him to give life in following his Son!

But we also honor man who, in his freedom, responded so much to the love of God, to prefer nothing more than to love God until the surrender of the own life!

This harmony of the grace of God with the corresponding response of man gives the great light emanating from the saints! This is not only limited to the witness of martyrdom, but this light spreads whenever man responds to the love of God and struggles to fully conform to the will of God!

That is why the Church rightly thinks of those saints who are not known to us, of all those who have faithfully and with full devotion served the Lord and thus realized their vocation! They are the light of the world, as Jesus said to his disciples (*cf. Mt 5:14*)!

If you want to express it poetically, they are the stars of a new heaven and a new earth, the oil lamps shining before the Lord of heaven and earth! Through them the Lord will renew His Church, for the Saints are the fire of love, in which God is present and known in a special way!

These simple reflections are now addressed to us concretely with all the Saints, for we Christians are called to the path of sanctification! We can have all our guilt forgiven in the blood of the Lamb, and the light of the Holy Spirit purifies our shadows.

It is precisely the Feast of All Saints that reminds us that everyone can follow this path according to his vocation. This way can be hidden from many people, but not from God! Not only the wonderful martyrdom for Christ shines in the darkness of this world, also every hidden act of love, our self-overcoming for Christ's sake, our loving service to one's neighbor, our fulfilling the duties connected with the Lord, every intimate prayer and every apostolic ministry!

The holiness that we can realize is not as difficult as many people might fear!

Since it consists in growing in the love of God, this path is even easier! It is love that inspires us and allows us to do even the most difficult things!

“Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke (...) my burden is light.” (Mt 11,28-30)

Let us therefore take upon us the yoke of Jesus and follow the way of holiness! The Lord will carry us and help us grow in His love in all situations. Then we can realize our vocation as a light in this world that bears witness to the infinite goodness of God!

“Nothing is hard when you love God”, said Saint Anna de Guigné! She is right!