

## **ALL SAINTS DAY**

Every year the Church recalls the example, witness, and prayer of the holy women and men who have been identified by the Church as Saints. These saints are more than just role models; they are family members with whom we continue to share relation, in a bond of prayer, called the Communion of Saints. Every year when we celebrate this day, the Gospel we proclaim recalls for us Jesus' teaching about happiness, the Beatitudes. We quickly note in this reading that none of those Jesus names as "blessed" or "happy" are expected . . . the poor in spirit, the meek, the persecuted. Jesus' blueprint for happiness reflects little of what the world might call happiness.

What does Jesus mean when he uses the word "blessed?" This word is sometimes translated as "happy" or "fortunate" or "favored." In other words, Jesus is saying that divine favor is upon those who are poor, who mourn, who are persecuted. This might have been welcome and surprising news to the crowds who heard Jesus that day.

The Beatitudes can be understood as a framework for Christian living. Because of this, it is natural that we proclaim this Gospel on the Feast of All Saints. Saints are people who lived the spirit of the Beatitudes as Jesus lived. On this day, we too are challenged to model our lives on the spirit and promises of the Beatitudes.