

## Saints

November is already upon us! November 1st is the Feast of All Saints' Day. And the Prayer Book allows us to move the celebration of that day to the following Sunday. This year, All Saints' Sunday will take place on November 7th!

But what is that day all about? I mean what is a Saint? What image does that word (Saint) summon up in your mind? Do you picture someone with a halo around their head? Maybe your thoughts turn to someone who lived a nearly sinless life, a life that was untouched by the world. Or, perhaps you think of the Apostles and the martyrs. The image is different for each of us.

The Orthodox and Roman Church has bestowed sainthood upon individuals throughout history and continues even today. The Episcopal Church has its own book of those we have recognized. We don't bestow sainthood, but we do commemorate certain individuals who offered their life in devotion to loving God and loving others. The name of the book has changed over the years and is currently entitled "Lesser Feasts and Fasts" (lesser because the greater feasts are already recognized in the BCP).

To be honest, I like the way the New Testament uses the word Saint. Time and time again, throughout the New Testament we read about those who are called to be saints, those saints who live in this city or that town, the saints have been ministered to, the saints and all the faithful people, and the inheritance of the saints. You can start reading about saints in the book of Acts and continue to see them referenced all the way to the book of Revelation.

According to the New Testament, the manner in which Luke, and Paul, and Jude and others use the term, a saint is really someone who loves God and loves others. Think about it...how much holier can each of us get when you consider you are already created in the image and likeness of God!

CS Lewis wrote "Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses." (From his book *The Weight of Glory*). That's because each of us is created in the image of the Divine, the image of God. We are told in scripture that our very bodies are the tabernacle of the Holy Spirit!

So...we are all Saints! Heavy stuff to live into, eh? Well, relax, we are Saints because God has already done the work - God created us in His image and likeness...and poured His love into our hearts. All we need to do is get about the blessing of giving that love away. Let's get to work Saints!