

## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

## Ephesians 1:11-23

<sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

<sup>15</sup>I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup>so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>20</sup>God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. <sup>22</sup>And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

## Luke 6:20-31

<sup>20</sup>Then [Jesus] looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup>“Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup>“Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup>Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

<sup>24</sup>“But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

<sup>25</sup>“Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup>“Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

<sup>27</sup>“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

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Grace, mercy, and peace be yours, dear people of God, from God our creator, through the Lord Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

If we hear the scripture appointed for All Saints Day, two of which were read just now, it becomes clear that being a saint is not about perfection.

Being a saint is not about performance.

In fact, as it turns out, being a saint is not really about us.

Being a saint is about God and God's imprint on us.

According to these scriptures, to be a saint is to be an inheritor of the free gifts of forgiveness and healing, hope and community that make up the new abundant and lasting life in Jesus, crucified and risen. To be a saint is to be filled with the riches of this glorious inheritance, this immeasurable greatness of God's power in our lives.

To be a saint is to die and rise with Christ. It is to be washed in water and Word, etched indelibly with the mark of the Spirit of Jesus, and empowered by that same Spirit to live to the praise of God's glory by sharing the riches of this inheritance with others.

On All Saints Day, All Saints Sunday, our tradition is to remember and give thanks for those who have gone before us and who are no longer with us. We give thanks for the ways in which they shared the riches of God's grace with us, the ways that we saw the Spirit of Jesus in them.

Perhaps some of those saints come to mind for you right now...

On All Saints, we also take a moment to look around the room, look around the congregation, look around the community, to see the communion of saints of which we are a part right now. We give thanks, as Paul did, for their witness to the Spirit of Christ.

And we are mindful that they are very likely giving thanks for us and the ways that we have lived to the praise of God's glory by sharing the treasure of God's goodness and grace with others.

Perhaps as you look around the room, look around your congregation, look around your community, there are some saints who come to mind right now for whom you can give thanks...

Of course, dear child of God, to be a saint is also to be a sinner.

After all, we do not always live to the praise of God's glory. In fact, very often we live more toward the praise of our own glory. All too often, rather than blessing those who are poor, hungry, grieving, or hurt or persecuted, we hoard our riches, we settle into our own satiated lives, and we laugh only with those who are like us.

*Simul justus et peccator* we are; at the same time justified and sinning; simultaneously saint and sinner.

Which is why we return over and over again to the source of our sainthood. Over and over again, we return to the font of our inheritance. We return to the One who has marked us with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit forever.

At the font, at the table, in the fellowship of all the saints...over and again, we confess our sinnerhood and entrust ourselves to the pledge of forgiveness and the power at work in Christ, in us, to raise us again and again from the dead.

Over and again, we are raised in and by the crucified and risen Christ to live into the gift of our sainthood, to share the riches of God's grace and God's blessing with all those who so desperately seek it to the praise of God's glory.

For this reason, dear child of God, I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know Christ and live into your sainthood, so that with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which God has called you, what are the riches of Christ's glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of God's power for all who believe according to the working of the Spirit's great power.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

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### **Prayers of Intercession<sup>i</sup>**

United with your saints across time and place, we pray for our shared world.

*A brief silence.*

Holy One, your church rests on the faithful who came before us. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders the will to carry the church forward and discern your will for the future. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy One, the earth is yours and all that dwells within it. Care for places ravaged by natural disasters. Quell raging fires and halt destruction caused by flooding. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy One, you raise up leaders to guide your people. Kindle in them a passion to care for others, a desire to seek the common good, and the courage to love their enemies. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Holy One, you bless those who are poor, hungry, and reviled. Provide food, housing, and security to all who are vulnerable or in crisis. May those who have more than enough give generously. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Holy One, hold us in community with one another. Nurture a spirit of abundant hospitality and intentional inclusion among us, welcoming the gifts of adults and children. Inspire creative visions for our life together. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Holy One, we remember in thanksgiving all those who have died. (*Here the names of those who have died in the previous year may be spoken or read.*) Wipe away our tears and comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Accept these prayers, gracious God, and those known only to you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
**Amen.**

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<sup>i</sup> Scripture reprinted and prayers adapted from Sundays and Seasons (<https://www.sundaysandseasons.com>)