

The Sunday of All Saints
Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first. (KJV)

Today the Holy Orthodox Church remembers and celebrates the saints down through the ages. This is a joyous day focusing on the saints having lived and died in the Lord.

The saints' lives vary in a range of differences yet share a commonality pleasing to the Lord. The range of differences include male and female saints, living in different centuries and with different ethnic backgrounds.

Age differences exist among the saints from the very young to the very old. Some have lived saintly lives for all of their lives and others turn to Christ at the last moments of life.

Believers today enrich their lives by learning from the countless saints. Praying to the saints as intercessors is always beneficial. Remembering that the saints were common people living fully in the Lord inspires efforts to follow them.

Each moment is an opportunity in life to pray to the saints as intercessors. The time of life is well invested in learning about the various saints. Certain saints are known to be beneficial for individuals with certain conditions and issues.

Saints such as St. George the Greatmartyr, St. Lazarus of Kosovo and the Holy Deacon Avaacum offer examples of courage. Martyrs St. Budimir Sokokovic and St. Momcilo Grugrevich are related to clergy families in this Diocese.

The Serbian saints St. Sebastian, St. Nicholai, St. Mardarije and St. Varnava have lived on this continent and memories of them are well-preserved. Each person has the opportunity to learn from these saints and their love of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ notices the value each person places on living in Christ and in confessing Christ in daily life. Confessing Christ is an act of love. Confessing Christ is demonstrated in personal relationships.

Love, peace, and forgiveness are ways to confess Christ in personal relationships. Keeping the mind, heart and soul focused on Christ demonstrates Christ is first and foremost in life.

Being responsible in handling the crosses of daily life is way to prove love of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ established the perfect and lasting example of how to face the Cross in personal life.

Jesus did not draw back from going to the Cross. He endured the Cross with forgiveness and with care of those near and dear to Him. Individuals and families of all generations do well to follow Christ's example.

The words used in daily life, the time spent in daily life and the thoughts dominating the mind reveal whether Christ is loved completely. The soul's is best nourished in Christ.

The saints show and tells us how to find and follow Christ. The choices we make determine whether we join the ranks of the saints or are condemned. Mediocrity in faith is perilous.

At Baptism our full beings are dedicated to Christ. The remaining time of life after Baptism is to be fully lived in Christ. Life reaches fullness in Christ through the choice and nourishment experienced each day.

Church worship, prayer, fasting and almsgiving facilitate and enrich the believer in Christ. Partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ unite the believer with Christ.

Sacrifice, love and forgiveness in personal relationships are confessions in the way of Christ. Repentance is always possible when we realize we have lived far from Christ.

Everyday offers the opportunity to learn from the saints and to follow them to the Kingdom of God. Thank God and God's Holy Church for having the saints as examples and intercessors.

Thank God for the example, witness and sacrifice of the saints. The remaining time of our lives remains known only to God. The saints show the path to follow to God's Kingdom and eternal life.

Choices made at each moment determine the extent we live in Christ. Saints are proof that living fully in Christ is possible and beneficial. We do well to follow in the paths the saints have chosen.

God's Holy Church teaches us about the saints and the paths they have taken. Thank God for the learning opportunities in God's Holy Church. Be grateful for the love of God and examples manifested in the lives of the saints.

The Sunday of All Saints. Venerable Bessarion the Wonderworker, Venerable Hilarion the New. June 6/19, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic