CHAPTER 10 OF 11 · PREACHED NOVEMBER 1, 2026 · SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

# All Saints

*Conversion and the call to holiness*

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14 · Psalm 24:1-6 · 1 John 3:1-3 · Matthew 5:1-12a (the Beatitudes)

## I The Teaching

All Saints replaces the 31st Sunday this year. It is the hinge of the series: we have named what sin is and where it comes from; here is where it leads when grace wins.

### In the Readings: A Crowd No One Could Count

- John sees a multitude from every nation, robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb
- Every one of them was a sinner. The saints are not people who had no capital sins; they are people whose sins did not have the last word

> *"Who may go up the mountain of the Lord?... The clean of hand and pure of heart."* (Psalm 24:3-4)

### Nature

- Conversion (metanoia) is a radical reorientation of the whole life toward God: returning to Him with the whole heart, in hope of His mercy and trust in His grace (CCC 1431)
- It is not a one-time event at the start of the Christian life but a lifelong movement: the passage from vice to virtue is real but not immediate
- Tanquerey: perfection "consists essentially in union with God through love," and since God is holiness itself, we cannot be united to Him unless we are clean of heart, the psalm's language exactly
- Holiness is not reserved for a few. The universal call to holiness (Lumen Gentium, ch. 5) means everyone in the pews is being invited into that crowd

### Stages: Tanquerey's Three Ways

Tanquerey organizes the whole spiritual life into three stages. The capital sins belong especially to the first, but it helps to see the whole road.

- **The purgative way:** The way of beginners: purifying the soul of sin and its roots in view of union with God, atoning for the past and detaching from sin and its occasions. The struggle against the capital sins is the center of this stage.
- **The illuminative way:** The way of those advancing: with serious sin largely overcome, the soul grows positively in the virtues, imitating Christ more closely.
- **The unitive way:** The way of the mature: a simple, habitual union with God in love, where virtue has become second nature and prayer becomes restful.

### *In the Readings: The Beatitudes as the Capital Sins Reversed*

The tradition has long read the Beatitudes as a portrait of the soul healed of the capital sins. Here is the pairing:

- **Poor in spirit:** The cure of pride and avarice: owning nothing as one's own, before God or anyone.
- **The meek:** The cure of anger: strength governed by reason and charity.
- **Those who mourn:** Godly sorrow for sin, the opposite of sloth's worldly sorrow at spiritual good.
- **Hunger and thirst for righteousness:** The appetite of gluttony redirected toward the only food that satisfies.
- **The merciful:** The cure of envy: rejoicing in and serving another's good instead of grieving at it.
- **The clean of heart:** The cure of lust: the clear sight lust's "blindness of mind" destroys: "they will see God."
- **The peacemakers:** The undoing of pride's daughters: discord and contention.

## Effects: The Fruit of Conversion

- Freedom for excellence: good acts become easier, more joyful, more fully one's own, like a musician who no longer has to think about the scales
- Joy rather than pleasure: "the happy life is joy born of the truth" (Augustine); the Beatitudes literally promise blessedness, not ease
- 1 John: "Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure"; hope is not passive; it purifies

## Remedies: Tanquerey's Means of Sanctification

- Prayer: the first and chief means, since grace is what makes any of this possible
- Penance, Confession above all, "after prayer, the most effective means" for cleansing past faults and guarding against future ones
- Mortification: small, deliberate renunciations whose "chief purpose is to safeguard us against sin… by weakening in us the love of pleasure"
- The particular examen: attacking one's predominant fault, one capital sin at a time, rather than everything at once
- The Eucharist and the example of the saints: the Church proposes the saints, Tanquerey notes, precisely to provoke "a high and hallowed emulation"

### *Conversion as Healing*

- Conversion is not only turning from sin but being healed: "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" (Ps 147:3). "Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted" names grief brought to God rather than buried.
- The saints are not people without wounds, but people whose wounds were brought into Christ's and became places of grace.
- John Paul II on the destiny of the saints: the resurrection of the body and a communion of persons brought to fulfillment (TOB 64-72, on Mt 22:30). Holiness is not escape from the body but its redemption (Rom 8:23).

### *Living It Out in Ordinary Life*

- "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thes 4:3). There is no "second-rate holiness": sanctity is the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity (Lumen Gentium 40; Forge 556).

- Holiness is within everyone's grasp, in the middle of daily circumstances (Friends of God 4; Christifideles Laici 17); the saints of ordinary life and little things (Friends of God 7-9).
- Hope: 1 John 3:2-3, this Sunday's second reading, is the recollection material's key text for hope: everyone who hopes in him "purifies himself as he is pure." Since God chose us (Eph 1:4), He will give us the means (Friends of God 213).
- Beginning again: holiness depends on always getting up again after a fall rather than on never sinning. The crowd in Revelation washed their robes; they did not arrive spotless.
- The Communion of Saints: sanctity reaches us through the Mystical Body, and our work, prayer, and sacrifice help all souls (Forge 846, 925, 982).
- A plan of life as the practical framework: specific norms of piety kept with constancy (Friends of God 149-151).

## Taking It Home

- "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed" (every saint in that crowd once stood exactly where we stand)
- Pick one capital sin from the series, your own predominant one, and one Beatitude to set against it this week.

## II Examination of Conscience

### Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit, help me to see my sins clearly, to be truly sorry for them, and to trust in your mercy. Amen.*

**How to read the ◆ GRAVE MATTER tag**

A question with this tag concerns a serious matter. A sin is mortal only when grave matter is chosen with full knowledge and deliberate consent (Catechism 1857), and fear, habit or other factors can lessen responsibility. If you are unsure about anything, bring it to Confession and ask the priest.

*This chapter's examination uses the Beatitudes as a mirror, then the means of holiness on which the saints relied. Look for your predominant fault: the one that trips you most.*

### Blessed are the poor in spirit (against pride and greed)

- ☐ Do I treat my gifts and possessions as my own, or as God's?
- ☐ Do I depend on God, or on myself?

### Blessed are they who mourn (against sloth)

- ☐ Am I sorry for my sins, or indifferent to them?
- ☐ Do I bring my grief to God, or bury it?

### Blessed are the meek (against anger)

- ☐ Do I keep my temper under the rule of charity?
- ☐ Am I gentle with those who irritate me?

### Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness (against gluttony)

- ☐ Do I hunger for God as much as I hunger for comfort?
- ☐ Do I care about justice for others?

### Blessed are the merciful (against envy)

- ☐ Do I show mercy to those who have wronged me?
- ☐ Do I rejoice in others' good?

### Blessed are the clean of heart (against lust)

- ☐ ◆ GRAVE MATTER Have I deliberately entertained impure thoughts, or looked at people as objects? (Matthew 5:28)
- ☐ Do I guard my eyes and my heart?

### Blessed are the peacemakers (against discord and contention)

- ☐ Do I bring peace into my family, work and parish, or stir up conflict?

- [ ] Have I tried to reconcile people who are divided?

### Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness

- [ ] Have I hidden my faith to avoid ridicule?
- [ ] Have I compromised what is right to be accepted?

### The means of holiness

- [ ] Prayer: do I pray every day, even briefly?
- [ ] ◆ GRAVE MATTER Do I keep Sunday and holy days of obligation by attending Mass? (CCC 2181)
- [ ] Confession: do I go regularly, or only rarely?
- [ ] Mortification: do I offer small sacrifices out of love?
- [ ] Particular examen: do I know my predominant fault, and work on it?
- [ ] Do I have a plan of life: set times for prayer, Scripture and the sacraments?
- [ ] Do I read the lives of the saints, or ask their help?

### Beginning again

- [ ] When I fall, do I get up quickly, or wallow in discouragement?
- [ ] Do I believe that holiness is for me, not only for a few?
- [ ] Do I pray for the faithful departed?

### For particular states of life

#### Married

- [ ] Do I see my marriage as my path to holiness and my spouse's?

#### Parents

- [ ] Do I believe my children are called to be saints, and form them for it?

#### Single adults

- [ ] Do I see my present life as a real place to become holy, not a waiting room?

#### Young people

- [ ] Do I think holiness is for "other people," not for someone my age?

#### At work

- [ ] Do I offer my work to God and do it well, as a way to holiness?

### Beneath the surface

*These are not accusations but invitations to let Christ heal what lies underneath.*

- [ ] Do I think my wounds disqualify me from holiness?
- [ ] Is there a grief I have never brought to God?
- [ ] Which saint's story gives me hope that grace can heal my particular wound?
- [ ] Can I hear Jesus say, "Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Matthew 5:4)?

### Act of Contrition

*O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.*

## III Meditation: A Crowd No One Could Count

With the Gospel of the day, Matthew 5:1-12a

Find a quiet place. Maybe it's the evening of All Saints Day, or the quiet after a Sunday dinner. Take a slow breath.

You are not praying alone. The Lord is here with you, and around you is "a great cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1): the saints, who are praying for you.

When you are ready, picture the scene St. John saw: "a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people and tongue," dressed in white. Then hear the elder's answer about who they are: "They have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb." Washed, not born white.

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Look closely at the crowd. Somewhere in it is a grandmother who prayed her rosary every night. A soldier with a shattered leg. A young woman who loved too many things before she loved God. People who had tempers, who held grudges, who fought the same battles you fight. Every one of them was a sinner who, after every fall, got up again.

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Now hear Jesus on the mountain. Let the Beatitudes come one at a time, slowly. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." "Blessed are they who mourn." "Blessed are the meek." "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness." "Blessed are the merciful." "Blessed are the clean of heart." "Blessed are the peacemakers." Which one catches in your heart? That is probably where He wants to work.

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Think back over this fall. Which of the capital sins trips you most? Anger, envy, pride, greed, gluttony, sloth, lust? Name it simply before God. This is not to discourage you. Every saint had one.

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Now hear the truth: your wounds don't disqualify you from holiness. They are where He wants to meet you. Think of St. Ignatius, laid up for months with a broken leg, his pride and his plans in pieces. That is where God found him.

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Bring to mind someone you love who has died. A parent. A spouse. A friend. A child. Pray for them by name. Ask them, if they are with God, to pray for you.

Close with this prayer: “All holy men and women, saints of God, pray for us. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.” Then choose one Beatitude to carry into this week.

# How to Use This Guide

### The Teaching

Each chapter begins with the outline of that Sunday's homily: the readings, what the sin is, the sins it gives rise to (its "daughters"), what it does to us, and its remedies. Read it slowly. Look up the references that catch your attention.

### Examination of Conscience

Use it before Confession, or as a nightly examen. You don't have to answer every question at once; let the Holy Spirit show you what matters. Each examination ends with questions for particular states of life and a few questions about the wounds beneath our sins.

### Meditation

A guided prayer with that Sunday's Gospel. Find a quiet place and read it slowly. Where you see a pause, stop and stay with the Lord for a while.

Questions tagged ◆ GRAVE MATTER concern serious matters. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must all be present together: grave matter, full knowledge, and deliberate consent (Catechism 1857). Fear, habit, ignorance, immaturity and other factors can lessen responsibility (Catechism 1735, 2352). The tag does not mean you have committed a mortal sin. It means the question deserves special care.

Mortal sins should be confessed, in kind and number as best you can recall, before receiving Holy Communion (Catechism 1385, 1456-1457). If you are unsure about anything, bring it to Confession and ask the priest. That is why he is there.

# Come to Confession

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| **Saturday** | 7:30 AM and 3:30 PM |
| **Sunday** | 7:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM (Spanish) and 5:00 PM |
| **Monday–Friday** | 5:30 AM and 8:15 AM |
| **Wednesday** | also 5:00 PM |

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