All Saints' Day – 2026
Revelation 7:2-17
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12

Do you want to know who you are? All Saints' Day tells you. Do you want to know what you're like? It's not the mirror that'll tell you. It's not a personality inventory or a spiritual gifts questionnaire, or a Sigmund Frued type examination of your childhood. All Saints' Day tells you *exactly* who you are, if you care. Some people don't care. Some people like autonomy, pure autonomy, highly personalized autonomy. What about you? Do you want to know what the Communion of Saints means? Do you want to know who the beatitudes refer to? Do you want to know the connection between the church triumphant and the church militant? Do you know who you are?

The Sermon on the Mount is the longest single teaching of our Lord recorded in Holy Scripture. It is priceless. Christ introduces Himself to you in the Sermon on the Mount. Christ introduces you to what life in Him looks like. We are very fond of a particular phrase here at Christ the King Lutheran Church. All theology is Christology – that's the phrase. The beatitudes, the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, amplify that phrase with poetic beauty. Who Jesus is tells you who you are. Do you believe that? St. Paul believed it. He wrote this: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Galatians 2:20). Christology (the person and work of the Son of God) informs (shapes, determines) Ecclesiology (the reality of the church, what the church is). I know who you are. You are the blessed.

Blessed – it is an interested word. What comes to mind when you hear that word? Oh, that dude has it all together, a cleft chin, all the comforts, and a max following on Instagram – he's blessed. Wow, that lady has great skin, her husband is jacked and her kids are adorable – she's blessed. If our culture is breeding anything, it's breeding shallowness. People showcase their fancy vacation and put "hashtag – blessed" after it. Is that how you roll? That's not how the Lord Christ rolls. Christ's church is not built on anything so shallow, and this remarkable word should not be used in such a superficial way. Blessed – it means to be spiritually powerful (alive with humility and grace), it means to be spiritually masterful (joyfully prepared to serve the least and the lowly), it means dignified (knowing that Christ's character is what defines us). Blessed – being what God intended us to be. Blessed – beyond the reach of the enemy, in harmony with God. Blessed – a sinner's life that has been restored by blood and cross and resurrection. Blessedness is never a human achievement nor is it a reward for one's good works. The justified are blessed. The redeemed are blessed. Those in Christ are blessed. Who Jesus was showed. Who Jesus is shows. Who you are will show. You are a saint.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). The poor in spirit are the opposite of those who think that they have it all together, those who go it alone, those who need nothing from our Father. The poor in spirit beg everything from God, depend on Him day and night, and draw their strength from Him. The poor in spirit eagerly serve others. The poor in spirit put others' interests above their own. That is our Lord and that is you. The Kingdom of heaven is yours. Christ's death and resurrection is that Kingdom. The Kingdom

belongs to the saints, the communion of saints. That is life in Christ's church. Christ's kingdom binds us together. Those who are connected to Christ through the ages are one, holy, Christian and apostolic church. Some have gone before us. We feebly struggle, they in glory shine, but we are one.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matthew 5:4). We all bear a cross. Difficulty, pain, sorrow, loss – these are regularly occurrences in a broken creation. We mourn our sin. We mourn the pain that our loved ones endure. We mourn the death of those we love. We know that God does not give us more than we can bear but our hearts still break. We know that God works all things together for good, but the pain of loneliness is real. You're a saint. You are blessed. How does it show? It shows by how you continue to cling to Christ in your distress. You harbor no resentment to the Lord of the cross. You search His face for comfort and you find it. Others see your faith, especially in difficulty. I don't know everyone's struggles, but I know enough. I see those who come to me for aid. I see them; day by day, in my prayers, I see them. Our Lord is so much more. His comfort is love everlasting. His comfort is the Holy Spirit, alive in you. His comfort is the altar, the body and blood of our Savior who extends His grace to those who mourn. You are blessed.

The merciful; the power to improve this world lies with the merciful. This poor world needs men and women who have tasted mercy and give it freely to those estranged from goodness. Merciful; the blessed are merciful. The blessed stand in contrast to the selfishness, the greed, and the injustice of this age. Mercy is Christ's love given to me. Mercy is Christ's love in your spirit. Mercy is God sharing His holiness with us. Your blessedness can be abused. You can act in a way that is contrary to mercy, contrary to blessedness. Many do. It should pain you to act in this way. It should alarm and distress and convict you to be merciless, to intentionally hurt others, to besmirch Christ's name by such foul behavior. You hurt yourself when you act mercilessly. Freely you have received; freely give. Mercy blooms in Christ's church. It is to show.

This war-weary world needs peacemakers. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God (Matthew 5:9). Christ's blood is peace. Jesus' wounds are the basis for what was fractured to be restored. Christ's wounds restore you to our Father. Look at Christ on His cross and you see the Peace-Maker. His blood was in the water of baptism – peace is in your soul. You have been washed by the Peace-Maker and you bear His Spirit. You are blessed and that blessedness shows in how you restore your relationships, how you bring healing where there was a wound. We don't compromise with evil. We don't make peace with the unbelieving world by adopting their principles. We pursue those who are astray, those who have never encountered a gentle soul. We bring words of peace to those who sit in the darkness of conflict with the Light. Blessed you – you are a peacemaker. It's who you've been bred to be.

All Saints' Day tells you who you are. There are those who have gone before us. There are those who died in Christ and even now await to be clothed with their resurrected bodies. They have preceded us. Their names are sweet to us. They are gathered around the Lamb that was slain. They have finished their race. The crown of life is theirs. They walked by faith in this life. One day, our race will be over. One day, we will lay down our burdens and be joined to the church triumphant. Now, we live by the Gospel. We are strong by the Gospel. We become who

we are by the Gospel. Confident, humble, devout, courageous, faithful, true and bold – we are blessed. Grace surrounds us, love surrounds us – we are blessed. The blessed are united to Christ and to one another. The communion of saints is very much alive, very much here. We are blessed.