

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 // Written by The Rev. Ben Robertson

All Saints Day is many things. All Saints is a celebration of all the capital S saints who appear in stained glass or mosaics with shimmering golden halos. One of my favorite scriptures to read on All Saints' day is chapter 44 of the Book of Sirach, also known as the Hymn in Honor of Our Ancestors. Look it up - it includes some rousing verses!

We also recall the no less holy, but lesser known saints who we encounter on our Christian walk. I remember Miss Shirley who brewed a notorious hot sauce, almost as sharp as her wit, which she jarred and sold to raise money for the Church. She called it "Bottled Hell." I have the recipe if you need it - excellent on a burger or red beans and rice.

All Saints is many things at All Saints parish. We will celebrate the day with the 8:00, as usual, and an especially festive 10:30, with Holy Baptism, special music, and a reading of the Necrology (don't know what that means? Join us on Sunday!). Following worship, our celebrations continue with a lunch in Thornton Hall (there is a link to RSVP elsewhere in the Dove) and special activities for Children, including a petting zoo! And finally at 5:00, we will enjoy Evensong, including Gabriel Fauré's "Requiem," followed by a delicious Community Supper.

And on All Saints, we remember a fundamental characteristic of Communion, something we celebrate every Sunday. For the Holy Eucharist is also many things, including a bridge between the saints who preceded us and the saints who will follow. My dear friend Stephen, who is the Rector of St. Mark's in Gulfport, MS recently wrote, "Eucharist is the mystical joining together of past present and future, because God's love is more powerful than time! So our loved ones eat with us, our great grandparents and our grandkids we have never met." At that table, we receive a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and feasting with us are the big Saints, the small saints, the unheralded saints, and those whose sainthood is dear to our hearts.

On All Saints we do and recall many things. It is a busy day. But perhaps most importantly, we are aware of our connections with the saints: a connection forged by God's love and can never be severed. May we celebrate these saints today, Sunday, and for all time.