

Sermon - 2 November 2025

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Date: 02 November 2025

Preacher: Ife Ojetayo

[0:00] In all virtuous and godly living. That we may come to those unspeakable joys. Which you have prepared for them. That truly love you.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Please be seated. Beloved in Christ.

On this east. Of all saints. We gather. We gather together. With gratitude. And awe. Before the mystery of God's redeeming grace.

A grace that calls. A grace that sanctifies. And preserves his people in every age. I hope you've. Reflected on. This feast day. And look around. The saints around this room. But also look. Through time. And history.

[1:04] At God's. Ongoing faithfulness. Towards his people. To call. To sanctify. And to preserve. His people.

For us. For those of us. And the Anglican tradition. This day. This day. Carries. A tone. Both of joyful. And soberness. Joyful hearts.

And sober. And soberness. Joyful because we rejoice. In the triumph. Of Christ's grace. In his saints. Sober. Because we remember. That their holiness.

Was not their own achievement. But it's the fruit. Of divine mercy. We honor the saints. Not as intercessors.

Apart from Christ. We honor them. In fact. We honor Christ's goodness. Towards them. We honor them. As witnesses. Who direct our gaze. Towards.

[1:58] Jesus Christ. Our Lord himself. The reformers. Did not discard. The remembrance. Of the saints. Rather. They restored it. To its gospel center.

As the collect. This morning declares. God has knit together. His elect. In one communion. And fellowship. As you gather here.

This morning. You are gathered. Among. Numbered among God's elect. But it is a mystical union. That transcends.

Locality. And time. And space. Gathered. In worship. Of our triune God. Our believers. Even today. Across the town. There are some. Who are gathered. Across the globe. But there are. Some. Who are eternally. Gathered.

[2:55] Around the throne room. Of God. Joining us. In worship. Of our risen. And ascended king. And it is.

His work. Christ's work. Not ours. That binds. Us. As his people. Into this one. Mystical body. Of Christ. The saints.

Then. Are those. In whom. The life of Christ. Has taken root. And borne fruit. They are. Examples. Not. Not of human excellence.

But they are. Examples. Of grace. At work. In frail humanity. And their. Example. Calls us. To the same.

Pursuit. To follow. In their train. To a life. Of holiness. Not as a rare. Privilege. Of a few. But as the daily.

[3:50] Vocation. Of every believer. The walk. And the life. Of holiness. That God calls us to. Is not. Some other worldly. Act. But it is.

The daily. Faithfulness. Of those. Who belong. To Jesus Christ. Many of the saints. Of God. That we. Remember today. Many of them. Were not bishops. Many of them.

Were not even martyrs. But they were quiet. Men and women. Of faith. Faithful mothers. And fathers. Humble laborers. Steadfast. Parishioners.

Who lived. And died. In the hope. Of the resurrection. Their holiness. Was found. Not in the dramatic.

But in the ordinary. In prayer. In repentance. In endurance. And in love. In prayer.
 [4 : 50] That's what we do. In repentance. In repentance. That's what we are called to do as well.
 In endurance. And in love. And so.

In this age. That we live in. In an age. That prizes novelty. And noise. I think all saints. Dave calls us back. To the steady virtues. Of faithfulness.
 And perseverance. And perseverance. This is a reminder. To persevere. Brothers and sisters. It reminds us. That the Christian life. Is. As one writer puts it.
 A long obedience. In the same direction. As we do so. We are rooted. In word. And sacrament. Sustained by grace.
 And oriented. Towards glory. The glory. The glory. That now belongs. To the saints. Triumphant. That same glory. That same future.
 [5 : 47] Is ours. We are. Just called. To remain. Steadfast. In hope. And perseverance. So let's look.

Briefly. At. The. The. The. St. John's reading. From Revelation. This morning. We have this vision. That's given to us.
 In Revelation. Of the redeemed. In. Angleton burial service. We pray. One of the prayers. Is that God.
 Will shortly. Accomplish. The number. Of his elect. And that phrase. Echoes. The vision. Given to St. John. In the book of Revelation. Where heaven is opened.
 To reveal the redeemed. Of the world. John writes. Then I saw another angel. Ascending from the rising. Of the sun. With the seal.
 [6 : 43] Of the living God. And he called. With a loud voice. To the four angels. Who had been given power. To harm. Earth. And sea. Saying. Do not harm the earth. Or the sea.
 Or the trees. Until we have sealed. The servants of our God. On their foreheads. And I heard. The number of the sealed. One hundred and forty four thousand.
 Sealed. From every tribe. Of the sons of Israel. This passage. Humbles. And hauls us. It speaks of divine order. Divine mercy.
 And divine preservation. Those. That is exactly. What we are remembering. Today. On all saints day. God. Who.
 In his own. Mercy. And grace. And love. Calls. People. To himself. Ordering their lives. And his mercy. That invades.
 [7 : 39] And captures us. And brings us from death to life. And his sanctifying grace. That preserves us. In that calling. Each of God's redeemed.

Is known. That's one of the things. I want you to see. In this. Revelation passage. You read. It lists twelve thousand. Of each tribe of Israel.
 These are symbolic. Invigorative. Language. It's not an actual. One hundred forty four thousand. So be careful. When you're reading that. Passage of Revelation. It is meant to be symbolic. Of the people.
 Who are called. But. What I really want you to grasp. Is that. Those who are called. Are known. By God. They're sealed. By God. And they're made.
 To be secured. In God's calling. Not one heir. Of their head. Shall perish. And yet. Beyond this symbolic number. Twelve. Multiplied.
 [8 : 33] Upon twelve. Signifying completeness. That's what it actually signifies. It's meant to. It's meant to show. The completeness. Of God's intention. And God's work. Multiplied.

Upon this number. Comes the greater revelation. In Revelation. Verse 9. 7. Verse 9 to 10. John continues. After this I looked. And behold.
 A great multitude. That no one could number. From every nation. From all tribes. And languages. Standing where?
 Standing before the throne. And before the Lamb. Clothed. In white robes. With palm branches. In their hands.
 And crying out with a loud voice. Salvation. Belongs to our God. Which sits on the throne. And to the Lamb. This.
 [9 : 29] What John sees. In his revelation. Is the communion of saints. The redeemed. Of every time and place. Made pure. By the blood of the Lamb.

That's what he sees. Their robes are white. We're told. Not because. Not because they were flawless. Not because they were perfect. Their robes are white.
 Because they have been washed. In his sacrifice. Their palms are signs of victory. The palms are the way. Those are signs of victory.
 And it's not their victory. The victory belongs to the Lamb. They have overcome. Revelation tells us. They have overcome.
 Through. His blood. And though. There are many. Many of them. We're told from.
 [10 : 23] All nations. Tribes and languages. Though there are many. Their song is one. Salvation. Belongs to our God. They cry.
 And to the Lamb. You see here. All divisions of race. All divisions of nation. All divisions of generation.
 Vanish. For Christ has made his people one. And around this multitude. Stand the angels. As they join.
 In the great hymn of heaven. They respond. By saying. Amen. Blessing. And glory. And wisdom. And thanksgiving. And honor.
 And power. And might. Be to our God. Forever and ever. Amen. Now who can fail to be moved.
 [11 : 20] By such a vision. Brothers. Sisters. This. This. Is our inheritance. The fellowship of all. Who have trusted in Christ. That's our inheritance. Patriots. And prophets. Apostles. And martyrs. And the countless faithful.
 Unknowns of the world. Your believing grandmother. Was gone unto glory. She's part of this throne. Your parents. Who brought you to faith.
 They're part of this throne. Discommunion of saints.
 And yet. Dear friends. This vision. Is not something far away. It is the reality. Into which. We already belong. That's really important.
 [12 : 18] For us to know. It isn't some far away vision. It is a reality. To which. All of us. Who are in Christ. Belong. For the communion of saints. Is not merely.
 A doctrine. It is a living fellowship. It is a mystical union. To which. We are part of. Those who have gone before us.
 Are not lost to us. They are alive in Christ. The Bible tells us. They are alive in Christ. Who is Lord. Of both the living. And the dead.
 In fact. I should say. They belong to Christ. Who is Lord. Of both the living. And the living. Because they live. They. Are the great cloud of witnesses.
 That Hebrews. The author of Hebrews. Tells us around. Tells us about. They surround us. This great cloud of witness. They surround us. Urging us onward. In the race of faith.
 [13 : 18] Their love for us. Is now perfected. And as. Saint Bernard wrote. Here below. Friendship is uncertain. And frail. Yet even here.
 On this earth. How good and pleasant it is. For brethren. To dwell together in unity. But how much more sweeter. And more blessed. That union. Will be.
 In heaven. Where there is no suspicion. No cause of division. But perfect love. Binds all together. In bond forever. Their love is perfected.
 The saints are those. Who have reached. Safe arbor. And while we are still. Upon the sea. And sometimes. The sea is. Chubby. And turbulent.
 When they were. Part of the church militant. For many of them. Their seas were chirpy as well. But God. Brought them through.
 [14 : 20] And the same God. Who brought them through. Is with you. On the seas. And they look upon us. This great cloud of witness. That surrounds us.
 They look upon us. Not with pity. But with joy. For they know. The end of the journey. They know that all.
 Who belong to Christ. Will one day. Be gathered home. To him. And so. Their message to us. Is to persevere.
 To stand firm. To cling. To Jesus. Who is the author. And finisher of our faith.
 And so. The church on earth. And the church in heaven. Are not two separate churches. But one. And as the hymn declares. That we sang. At the beginning of our. Worship service this morning.
 [15 : 18] Oh blessed communion. Fellowship divine. We. On this earth. Feebly struggle. Day in glory shine.

Yet. All are one. In Christ. For all are his. And so. All Saints Day.

Is not only a day of remembrance. It is a call. It is a call. To holiness. The Beatitudes. In Matthew's gospel. Shows us that.

They reveal the character. Of those who belong. To Christ's kingdom. And they reveal. The pattern of holiness. That marks. The saints. Jesus says.

Blessed are the poor. In spirit. For theirs. Is the kingdom of heaven. Here begins. The way of sanctity. Sanctification. The way of sanctification.

[16 : 21] Is the way of humility. Christ. Who was rich. Is a great example. Of this for us. Christ. Who was rich. Became poor. For our sake. And so.

The poor in spirit. Depend. Wholly. Completely. On Christ. That is what. What it means to be poor in spirit. Knowing that we have nothing. Of our own.

To boast in. We boast in his righteousness. And Jesus continues. Blessed are those who mourn. For they shall be comforted.

This kind of mourning. Is not despair. Or repentance. That's what this mourning is. It's a grief. For sin. And the brokenness.

Of the world around us. That draws us. Closer. To the man of sorrows. Jesus Christ. Who is the comforter himself. Who is with us.

[17 : 20] In our travails. He is near. To the broken hearted. Scripture tells us. Jesus continues. Blessed are the meek. For they shall inherit the earth.

Now. To be meek. Is not the same as to be weak. The meek are those who rest. In God's strength. Content. With his will. That is what meekness. According to. Jesus means. It is to be content. With God's will.

It is to be like Christ. Even in the moment. Of travail. To say. Not my will. But yours be done. As he says it to his father. Before he goes to the cross.

On our behalf. To rest in God's strength. And to trust. In his salvation. That's what it means. To be meek. To know that.

[18 : 20] Our inheritance. Is not in this. Fallen earth. But our. Inheritance. Is stored up for us. In the land of the living. In God's eternal kingdom.

Jesus continues. He says. Blessed are those who hunger. And thirst for righteousness. For they shall be filled. Those who long for righteousness.

Finds their satisfaction. Where? In Christ. Who is our righteousness. In Christ. Upside down kingdom. Those who hunger.

Are filled. Those who are humble. Are exalted. Those who are poor. Are made rich. And so Jesus says.

Blessed are those who. Have our hunger. For righteousness. For they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful.

[19 : 23] For they shall receive mercy. Those who show mercy. Mirror the heart of God himself. Who delight in compassion.

The merciful reveal Christ to the world. For as you did it to one of the least of my bread. And Jesus tells us. You did it to me. And so those who have received mercy.

Prove. That they are indeed recipients of God's mercy. By in turn. Being merciful. Jesus continues. Blessed are the pure in heart. For they shall see God. This is the goal of holiness. This is the goal to which we are called. To behold God face to face.

The beatific vision. That's now. The privilege of those. Who are part of the church triumphant. And that's our future as well.

[20 : 21] This is our goal. To behold God face to face. And Jesus says that. Everyone who has this hope. Purifies himself. Actually St. John says that. Even as he is pure.

So. Jesus continues. He says. Blessed are the peacemakers. For they shall be called sons of God. What does it mean to be a peacemaker? It is. Those who are reconciled to God. Through Christ. Because God. The Prince of Peace. Have made peace with you. And made peace with God on your behalf. He's reconciled you to God.

Through his work. Accomplished on the cross. And because you have peace with God. You are to bear the likeness.

Of your God. And your father. And bear the image of his son. By being a peacemaker as well. Jesus says. Blessed are those who are persecuted.

