



# Celebrate

All Saints Sunday  
November 7, 2021

*Of all three years of the lectionary cycle, this year's All Saints readings have the most tears. Isaiah and Revelation look forward to the day when God will wipe away all tears; in John's gospel, Jesus weeps along with Mary and all the gathered mourners before he demonstrates his power over death. On All Saints Day we celebrate the victory won for all the faithful dead, but we grieve for our beloved dead as well, knowing that God honors our tears. We bring our grief to the table and find there a foretaste of Isaiah's feast to come.*

## Prayer of the Day

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Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading

Isaiah 25:6-9

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*Isaiah sees a vision of the end of days, when God will gather all people on God's holy mountain and will prepare for them a rich feast. At this banquet God will wipe the tears from all eyes. And there will be no more sorrow, for God will destroy death itself.*

On this mountain the LORD of hosts  
will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-  
aged wines,  
of rich food filled with marrow,  
of well-aged wines strained  
clear.

<sup>7</sup>And he will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all  
peoples,  
the sheet that is spread over all  
nations;

<sup>8</sup>he will swallow up death forever.  
Then the Lord GOD will wipe away

the tears from all faces,  
and the disgrace of his people  
he will take away from all  
the earth,

for the LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup>It will be said on that day,  
Lo, this is our God; we have  
waited for him, so that he  
might save us.

This is the LORD for whom we  
have waited;

let us be glad and rejoice in his  
salvation.

**or Wisdom 3:1-9 [not printed]**

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*Writing shortly before the time of Jesus, the author of this highly respected wisdom book offers a glorious vision of the righteous resting and at peace in the hand of God.*

They shall re - ceive a bless - ing from the  
 God of their sal - va - tion.

The earth is the LORD's and all <sup>1</sup> that is in it,  
 the world and those who <sup>1</sup> dwell therein.

<sup>2</sup>For the LORD has founded it up- <sup>1</sup> on the seas  
 and established it up- <sup>1</sup> on the rivers. **R**

<sup>3</sup>Who may ascend the mountain <sup>1</sup> of the LORD,  
 and who may stand in God's <sup>1</sup> holy place?

<sup>4</sup>Those of innocent hands and puri- <sup>1</sup> ty of heart,  
 who do not swear on God's being,  
 nor do they pledge by <sup>1</sup> what is false.

<sup>5</sup>They shall receive blessing <sup>1</sup> from the LORD  
 and righteousness from the God of <sup>1</sup> their salvation.

<sup>6</sup>Such is the generation of those who seek <sup>1</sup> you, O LORD,  
 of those who seek your face, O <sup>1</sup> God of Jacob. **R**

<sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O ever- <sup>1</sup> lasting doors,  
 that the King of glory <sup>1</sup> may come in.

<sup>8</sup>Who is this <sup>1</sup> King of glory?

**The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, might- <sup>1</sup> y in battle!**

<sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O ever- <sup>1</sup> lasting doors,  
 that the King of glory <sup>1</sup> may come in.

<sup>10</sup>Who is this <sup>1</sup> King of glory?

**Truly, the LORD of hosts is the <sup>1</sup> King of glory. **R****

*Here is a vision of the new heaven and new earth in which God resides fully with God's people so that mourning, despair, and pain have been eradicated. These renewing words from the God who spans all of time are trustworthy and true.*

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;  
they will be his peoples,  
and God himself will be with  
them;

<sup>4</sup>he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and pain  
will be no more,  
for the first things have passed  
away."

<sup>5</sup>And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." <sup>6</sup>Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."

## Gospel

## John 11:32-44

*Through the raising of Lazarus, Jesus offers the world a vision of the life to come, when death and weeping will be no more.*

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." <sup>33</sup>When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. <sup>34</sup>He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." <sup>35</sup>Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup>So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" <sup>37</sup>But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

<sup>38</sup>Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, "Take away the stone."

Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." <sup>40</sup>Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" <sup>41</sup>So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup>I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." <sup>43</sup>When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" <sup>44</sup>The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Eternal God, you hold firm amid the changes of this world. Hear us now as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

Merciful God, we give thanks for all missionaries who have brought your message of hope to new communities and wiped tears away (*especially John Christian Frederick Heyer, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, Ludwig Nommensen whom we commemorate today*): Continue to raise up courageous missionaries to share your gospel of hope. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

Creating God, we praise you for abundant harvests and the goodness of creation. Create communities of care for your earth so that all land, water, and soil will be celebrated and cherished by future generations of saints. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

God of peace, we give you thanks for nations of peace that serve as a refuge for all whose homelands are afflicted with violence. Strengthen those who continue to work for peace and support all veterans who carry the scars of war. Hear us, O God.  
**Your mercy is great.**

## Preparing for Next Week

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**Monday** Psalm 94. **Tuesday** 1 Timothy 5:9-16. **Wednesday** Luke 4:16-30. **Thursday** (commemoration of Martin, Bishop of Tours, 397; Søren Aabye Kirkegaard, teacher, 1855) Psalm 16. **Friday** Daniel 4:19-27. **Saturday** Mark 12:1-12. **25th Sunday after Pentecost** Daniel 12:1-3; Psalm 16; Hebrews 10:11-14 [15-18] 19-25; Mark 13:1-8.

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God of healing, we give you thanks for health care workers who labor around the clock to answer cries for help. Bring wholeness to all who struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, addiction, and all who long for healing in any way (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of justice, we praise you for the feeding ministries and for all meals that bring people together for nourishment and fellowship. Bless chefs, bakers, servers, dishwashers, communion assistants, and meal ministry coordinators. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of the ages, we give you thanks for the saints of this congregation who have inspired, challenged, loved, and taught us (*those who have died during the past year may be named*). Wipe away our tears and lead us by their example until we feast together on your holy mountain. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God our protection and strength, we entrust to you all for whom we pray. Remain with us always, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**