

## All Saints' Sunday 2013

Saints were at first named by Paul in his letters to the various churches –To all the *saints* who are in Ephesus; To all the *saints* who are in Phillipi; To the *saints* and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Collosae.

The identification of saints was later changed by the Catholic Church for special people who were eventually vetted according to miracles and then have sainthood confirmed on them. Or saints were Church Fathers who were significant because of their contribution to the theology and teachings of the church, like Clement of Alexandria.

Wikidpedia: saints are people who are

- *elevated by popular opinion as a pious and holy person*
- *models of holiness to be imitated*
- *a 'cloud of witnesses' that strengthen and encourage believers during their spiritual journeys*  
(Hebrews 12:1)

The Episcopal Church has saints who are identified in the front of the Prayer Book. Some are identified on pages 16 and 17 to be commemorated on Special Holy days; others are commemorated on Days of Optional Observance on pages 19-30.

Lesser Feast and Fasts – accepted saints in the Episcopal Church

Holy Women, Holy Men – from LFF and lots of other places – still in trial use.

How do we feel about these folks being identified as holy people? Should they? What makes them holy? Because the church says so?

Easy to just accept that those with halos on the front cover were saints, even if we don't know them

What about those on the back cover? Do they deserve halos? Says who?

We've experienced some of them in our lives so we know those halos aren't that old. Why might they be considered saints? Who are the ones that we don't consider saints (personally)?

How do these identified saints in *The Dancing Saints* fit with Paul's greetings to all the saints in Corinth or Colossae or Ephesus?

Are there any public figures today who might be added to *The Dancing Saints* icon?

Is there a characteristic that fits across Paul's saints, the haloed saints, and Dancing Saints?

Does this characteristic fit any of us?

Baptismal sealing as Christ's own forever

Are people who are not Christian, saints?

What are some of the characteristics the saints "of old" (*Hymnal* "I sing a song of the saints of God" *Hymnal* 293 "For all the saints" 287) have that these modern saints might also have?

Does one only have to be good to be a saint? "My dear mother was a saint"

Saints are called to *fill God's desire for creation*

Saints are called to *live the ministry and teachings of Jesus*

BCP 39 Articles p872 *Article XXII: Of Purgatory. The Romish Doctrine... including the Invocation of Saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God.*

Saints in scripture: According to the Church of England, a saint is one who is sanctified, as it translates in the Authorised King James Version (1611) 2 Chronicles 6:41 Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.

*In the Bible, only one person is expressly called a saint: Psalm 106:16-18 "They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD."*

*The apostle Paul declared himself to be "less than the least of all saints" in Ephesians 3:8.*

Who are the saints in our lives and what makes them saints? Are their saints in this congregation that you would identify? What characteristics?

Are any of us saints? Or would identifying ourselves as saints be an indication of hubris?