



from *Jacob's Well*

Dear Parishioners,

On this Solemnity of All Saints we honor those who have been exceptionally faithful to the way of the Gospel. The earliest canon of saints focused on the martyrs, those who courageously gave their lives for the sake of Christ and His Gospel. Beginning in the fourth century it became the custom to include others who, while not martyred, lived heroic and holy lives. The stories of the saints can inspire us and give us courage to face our own trials and difficulties. The inclusive nature of the festival of "All" Saints and "All Souls" serves to remind us that we are all called to become Saints. In the Apostles creed we profess belief in "the communion of saints." This comes right after we profess our belief in the Holy Spirit, and before we profess our belief in the resurrection and life everlasting. In faith we come to we realize that we are part of a community that extends and exists beyond our earthly bodies. We are part of the people of God in life and death. Those who have died are all part of the company of heaven.

The goal of the Christian way of life is to live a holy life and the saints are those who faithfully said "yes" to God's call for their lives. Mathew Kelly often speaks on becoming the best version of ourselves. He suggests that the saints are those who discovered their essential purpose and who lived an authentic life, a life that was pleasing in the sight of God. What about you and I?

What does holiness look like in everyday life? I think that question begins with recognizing who and what our lives are centered on. What is our ultimate concern? If Jesus is at the core of who we are, then our priorities and behaviors reflect his teachings, and his presence gives us the grace we need to become the best version of our selves day by day.

Each day I am inspired by the many living saints who make Saint Mary their spiritual home. I see parents who make it their priority to model their faith for their children through their example of prayer and commitment to Sunday Mass. I love to see all the children at Mass who are so joyful and eager to become part of the worshipping community. I am grateful for the many seasoned parishioners who daily gather for Eucharist and who actively support and offer encouragement to those who face declining health or other difficulties. I am energized by the dedication of so many who actively serve in ministry and who continue to make Saint Mary a priority in their weekly offertory sacrifice. May we be truly be grateful for our blessings as we make our own journey to the company of heaven.

Let us gratefully pray for one another,

Fr Jerry

*"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more.
It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.
It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.
Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."
- Melody Beattie*