

SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

*Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 1st November 2020*

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

On this solemn Feast of All Saints, the Church invites us to reflect on the *great hope*, the great hope that is based on Christ's resurrection: Christ is risen and we will also be with Him, we will be with Him. The Saints and Blesseds are the most authoritative witnesses of Christian hope, because they lived it fully in their lives, amidst joys and sufferings, putting into practice *the Beatitudes* that Jesus preached and which resound in the Liturgy (see *Mt* 5:1-12a). The evangelical Beatitudes, in fact, are the path to holiness. I will reflect now on two Beatitudes, the second and the third.

The second one is this: "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted*" (v. 4). These words seem contradictory because mourning is not a sign of joy and happiness. Reasons for mourning come from suffering and death, illness, moral adversity, sin and mistakes: simply from everyday life with marked by fragility, weakness and difficulties, a life at times wounded and pained by ingratitude and misunderstanding. Jesus proclaims blessed those who mourn over this reality, who trust in the Lord despite everything and put themselves under His shadow. They are not indifferent, nor do they harden their hearts when they are in pain, but they patiently hope for *God's comfort*. And they experience this comfort even in this life.

In the third Beatitude, Jesus states: "*Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth*" (v. 5). Brothers and sisters, meekness! Meekness is characteristic of Jesus, who said of Himself: "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (*Mt* 11:29). The meek are those who know how to control themselves, who leave space for the other, they listen to the other, respect the other's way of living, his or her needs and requests. They do not intend to overwhelm or diminish the other, they do not want to be on top of or dominate everything, nor do they impose their ideas or their own interests to the detriment of others. These people, not appreciated by the world and its mentality, are, instead, precious in God's eyes. God gives them the promised land as an inheritance, that is, life eternal. This beatitude also begins here below and is fulfilled in Christ. But meekness... At this moment in life, even in the world, there is so much aggressivity, in everyday life as well, the first thing that comes out of us is aggression, defensiveness. We need meekness to progress on the path of holiness. To listen, to respect, not to attack: meekness.

Dear brothers and sisters, choosing purity, meekness and mercy; choosing to entrust oneself to the Lord in poverty of spirit and in affliction; dedicating oneself to justice and peace – all this means going against the current in respect to this world's mentality, in respect to the culture of possessing, of meaningless fun, of arrogance against the weakest. This evangelical path was trodden by the Saints and Blesseds. Today's solemnity that honours All Saints reminds us of the personal and universal vocation to holiness, and proposes sure models for this journey that each person walks in a unique way, an unrepeatable way. It is enough to think of the inexhaustible variety of gifts and real life stories there are among the saints: they are not equal, each one has their own personality and developed their own life of holiness according to their own personality, and each one of us can do it, taking this path: meekness, meekness, please, and we will head toward holiness.

This immense family of faithful disciples of Christ has a Mother, the Virgin Mary. We venerate her under the title Queen of All Saints; but she is first of all the Mother who teaches everyone how to welcome and follow her children. May she help us nourish the desire for holiness, walking the way of the Beatitudes.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Yesterday, in Hartford, in the United States of America, Michael McGivney was proclaimed blessed: diocesan priest, founder of the Knights of Columbus. Dedicated to evangelization, he did everything possible to provide for the needs of those in need, promoting reciprocal aid. May his example be an impetus for us to always be witnesses of the Gospel of charity. Let's give a round of applause to this new blessed.

On this feast day let us not forget what is happening in Nagorno-Karabakh where the armed clashes are taking place amid a fragile truce, with the tragic increase in victims, destruction of homes, buildings and places of worship, with an increasing massive involvement of the civil population. It's tragic.

I would like to renew my heartfelt appeal to the parties responsible in the conflict so that they intervene as soon as possible to stop the shedding of innocent blood. May they not think of using violence to resolve the controversy, but dedicate themselves to sincere negotiation with the help of the international community. On my part, I am near to all those who are suffering and I invite [everyone] to ask the intercession of the Saints for a stable peace in that region.

Let us also pray for the population in the area of the Aegean Sea who, two days ago, was hit by a strong earthquake.

I greet all of you from Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the participants of the Race of the Saints promoted by the Don Bosco Foundation throughout the world. This year they are racing from a distance as well as individually. Even though it is taking place in small groups to respect the distancing imposed because of the pandemic, this sporting event offers a popular faith dimension to the religious celebration of All Saints. Thank you for your initiative and for your presence.

Tomorrow afternoon, I will celebrate Mass in suffrage for the deceased in the Teutonic Cemetery, a burial place in Vatican City. I unite myself spiritually to those who, while observing the health regulations which are important, go to pray near the tombs of their dear ones in every part of the world.

I wish all of you a Happy Feast in the spiritual company of the saints. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your meal and *arrivederci*.