

The Saint Next Door

1st Reading: Rev 7:2-4, 9-14

2nd Reading: 1 Jn 3:1-3

Gospel: Mt 5:1-12A

Dear Friends in Christ,

GROW: In journalism school, a professor admonished future reporters: “Show, don’t tell.” In other words, do not start a story with a generality such as: “It was a nice day.” Instead, be specific: “The sun shone through the clouds and the air had a hint of the first snow.” This Sunday, we hear Jesus not only tell us, but show us through the poetic language of the beatitudes what holiness looks like. As if that were not enough, we celebrate All Saints’ Day, honoring those holy men and women (known and unknown) in heaven whose lives exemplified the beatitudes. Jesus and the saints remind us that we cannot do it alone; we need God’s help to live “blessed” lives. With God’s grace, we, too, can aspire to holiness and sainthood.

GO: In the apostolic letter on the call to holiness, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, the Church reminds us that the beatitudes are not simply platitudes. “Let us allow his words to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live, otherwise, holiness will remain no more than an empty word.” We cannot do it alone, but only with the help of the Holy Spirit, who can free us from those stumbling blocks that may hold us back. Strengthened through prayer and the Eucharist, the road to holiness begins by putting one step in front of another – whether that means reordering our priorities, being more patient with our children, friends, or spouse – or aspiring to be the saints next door: “Those who, living in our midst, reflect God’s presence.” (GE 7)

REFLECT: How are you living the life of the beatitudes? Read about the life of a saint that inspires you. Work on a particular virtue you learned from the Saint’s life. Ask the Holy Spirit to help us become the saints next door to those we encounter in our daily lives.