

ALL SAINTS DAY

Sometime around the year 740, our Christian ancestors set aside a day to commemorate the extraordinary goodness of people.

In a world that sometimes felt violent and unjust, our ancestors were keenly aware of people whose lives were defined by heroic compassion and courage. These men and women were given the title *saint*. The day that was set aside was called *All Saint's Day*.

More recent history has been no stranger to such holiness:

-Saint Damien of Molokai (+1889), the Belgian priest who left behind family and friends to care for the most abandoned at a leper colony in the Hawaiian Islands.

-Saint Jeanne Jugan (+1879), who founded a religious community to assure that nobody, even the poorest of the poor, should not die alone. Her community continues the work even today.

-Saint Maximilian Kolbe (+1941), who when imprisoned at Auschwitz, handed himself over to the Nazi guards to save a Jewish family.

-Saint Frances Cabrini (+1917), an Italian immigrant to the U.S. who established a network of orphanages, schools and hospitals to care for immigrants coming to our shores.

-Blessed Carlo Acutis (+2006), a teenage computer programmer (and avid Pokeman player!) who while dying of Leukemia sought to bring young people to the Eucharist.

-Perhaps we might add, Vincent Loques (+2020), a humble, conscientious church caretaker who was beheaded last Tuesday at Notre-Dame Basilica by terrorists in Nice, France.

Alongside these lives are millions, who in hidden, unnoticed, quiet ways, have made living the gospel of Jesus, their daily work.

The Book of Revelation, at Sunday's Mass, describes this holy throng as a "great multitude from every race, nation and tongue which no one can count (Revelation 7:2-4; 9-14)

However you describe it, the simple truth is this:

Never do we see *all* the bravery.
Never do we see *all the goodness*.
Nor do we notice *all* the grace
or *all* the saints that walk in our midst.

So, let's pray for the vision to simply see more of it;
more of the holiness that paved the way for us;
more of the saints who cross our life's path.

As we honor the memory of saints, past and present,
pray that someday our memory will be a blessing to others.

Fr. Steven Labaire