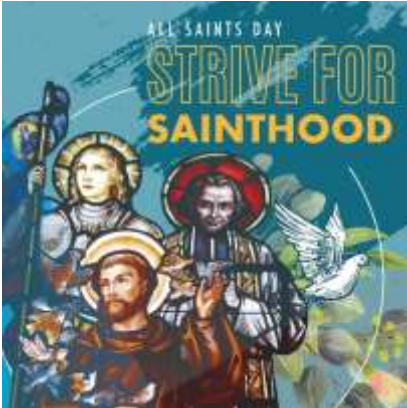


Seeing God with a Pure Heart

A Pastoral Letter for the Solemnity of All Saints



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in our Lord Jesus Christ.

This weekend, we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints, rejoicing in the men and women who have faithfully followed Christ and now share in the glory of God's heavenly kingdom. Their lives remind us that holiness is not reserved for a privileged few; it is the calling of every Christian.

Our lives are often filled with noise, responsibilities, disappointments, and countless distractions. We search for peace, purpose, and the presence of God in many places. Yet Jesus tells us where this journey truly begins: **"Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God"** (Matthew 5:8).

What does it mean to see God?

Saint Gregory of Nyssa offers us a profound insight: seeing God begins when we allow His grace to restore His image within us. Created in the image and likeness of God, we can allow sin, pride, resentment, and selfishness to cloud that image, much as rust covers polished iron. When the rust is removed, the iron shines again. In the same way, as God purifies our hearts, His goodness and beauty become more visible in our lives.

This is the saving work of Jesus Christ. He came not only to forgive our sins but also to reconcile us with the Father and renew us in His image. Through sincere prayer, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the Holy Eucharist, Christ continually invites us to turn away from sin and grow in holiness.

A pure heart does not mean a perfect heart. It is a humble and honest heart, willing to be transformed by God's grace. It is a heart that forgives, seeks peace, serves without seeking recognition, and loves as Christ loves. As our hearts become more like His, we begin to recognize God's presence in the beauty of creation, in the silence of prayer, and especially in the faces of the poor, the lonely, the sick, and all those who need our compassion.

The saints show us what a pure heart can become.

They were not all extraordinary people in the eyes of the world. They were ordinary men and women who allowed God to work through their weaknesses, sacrifices, and daily acts of love. Now they stand before the throne of God, sharing in the heavenly liturgy and praising the Father for the salvation He has bestowed upon them through the Blood of the Lamb.

Their witness reminds us that holiness is not simply a matter of avoiding sin; it is learning to love God wholeheartedly and to recognize Christ in our brothers and sisters. The saints encourage us to persevere in faith, even when the road is difficult, trusting that the Lord who calls us to holiness will sustain us by His grace.

As a parish family, we are called to become more than a community that gathers for worship. We are called to be a community that reflects Christ. When our hearts are purified by His grace, strangers find a welcome, families find support, the suffering encounter compassion, and every person is treated with the dignity of one created in God's image.

On this solemnity, we also remember our beloved departed who have died in the hope of the resurrection. We entrust them to God's mercy, strengthened by our faith in Jesus Christ, who conquered sin and death and promised eternal life to those who believe in Him. The saints remind us that death does not have the final word; our hope is to share one day in the fullness of God's presence.

Let us therefore ask the Holy Spirit to reveal whatever prevents us from belonging more fully to God. May He cleanse our hearts of resentment, pride, and indifference, so that we may see Christ more clearly, love Him more deeply, and serve Him more faithfully in our daily lives.

As we grow in purity of heart, we become witnesses of hope to the world. Others come to know Christ not only through our words but also through our charity, the mercy we extend, and the joy with which we live our faith. A heart transformed by God becomes a window through which others can glimpse His love.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose heart was wholly open to God's will, accompany us on our journey of holiness and lead us always to her Son.

Be assured of my prayers for you and your families. May the Lord purify our hearts by His grace, strengthen us through the intercession of all the saints, and lead us one day to the eternal joy of seeing Him face to face.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Vilaire Philius

Pastor