Introduction to the Mass

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. We lift our eyes to the heavenly Jerusalem, joining our voices with the countless multitude from every nation, race, and tongue who stand victorious before the throne of God.

Today, we honour not only the canonised saints we know by name, but also the quiet, unnumbered holy men and women who lived ordinary lives with extraordinary love. They have finished their race, and they now cheer us on from heaven's shore.

CHILDRENS LITURGY.

PENITENTIAL RITE.

As we prepare to enter into these sacred mysteries, let us look to their inspiring examples and ask for the same grace of holiness that led them home. Acknowledging our failures to love as they loved, let us turn to the Lord and ask for His mercy.

Homily: The Blueprint for True Happiness

We're very lucky here at Saint Mary's, because we have such a beautiful church, and we owe it to those parishioners who left us this beautiful building, so that we can enjoy it today. Many people comment on the beautiful stained-glass windows, but if you've ever looked at a stained-glass window from the outside of a church, It appears dark, dull, and completely unremarkable. But when you step inside and let the sun stream through, it bursts into a breathtaking kaleidoscope of colour.

The saints are exactly like those windows. On their own, they were ordinary human beings who experienced hardships, doubts, and weaknesses. But because they allowed the light of Jesus Christ to shine directly through their lives, they became brilliant masterpieces of God's grace. Today, we don't just celebrate a few exceptional individuals; we celebrate all God's holy children, and particularly those parishioners who have travelled this way before us; and this building is their memorial.

In our first reading from the Book of Revelation, we are given a spectacular vision of a vast multitude that no one could count. We often picture saints as flawless statues tucked away in church corners, but John describes a dynamic, diverse crowd gathered from every corner of the earth.

Sometimes people stumble over the symbolic number "144,000" mentioned earlier in that passage. As theologians note, this is not a literal, restrictive ceiling—if it were, heaven would have been full long before any of us were born! Instead, it is a holy multiplication: twelve times twelve times a thousand, representing the absolute abundance and fulfilment of God's people. It means there is room for everyone. It means there is room for us all.

How do we find our place in that crowd? In the Gospel today, Jesus climbs the mount and lays out the road map: the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12).

The world tells us that happiness is found in power, wealth, comfort, and popularity. Jesus completely flips this script. He calls the poor in spirit, the sorrowful, the meek, and the peacemakers "blessed".

The word "blessed" can be translated as "deeply, unshakeably happy." Jesus is telling us that true fulfilment does not come from what we possess, but from whom we rely upon.

- To be **poor in spirit** means admitting we cannot save ourselves; we need God's grace.
- To **hunger and thirst for righteousness** means refusing to grow numb to injustice.

- To be a **peacemaker** means actively healing divisions rather than fuelling them.

The Beatitudes are not a list of impossible burdens. They are a declaration that when we are empty of ourselves, we can be entirely filled with God.

Becoming a saint sounds daunting. If we rely strictly on our own human strength, it *is* impossible. But, holiness becomes simple when we do our small part and let God supply the rest, because all things are possible with Him.

The saints are not a distant elite class; they are our older brothers and sisters. They have walked the same rocky paths, felt the same heartaches, and faced the same temptations we face today. When we feel exhausted on our earthly pilgrim journey, their lives stand as a vivid guarantee that the finish line is real and victory is attainable.

As we approach the altar today, let us look to this "great cloud of witnesses." They do not want our distant admiration; they want our company. They are praying for us right now, pulling for us to finish our race.

Let us step out of the shadows of mediocrity. Let us open our hearts to the sunshine of Christ's love, so that we too can become the radiant, colourful masterpieces God created us to be.

Bidding Prayers (Prayer of the Faithful)

Priest: Rejoicing in the communion of saints, who stand forever in the light of God's glory, let us bring our prayers and petitions before our merciful Father:

- **For the Church on earth:** That, inspired by the radiant witness of the saints, all her members may boldly proclaim God's holiness through lives of genuine love, humility, and service. **Lord, in your mercy.** (*Hear our prayer.*)
- **For world leaders and civil authorities:** That they may be guided by the spirit of the Beatitudes, striving constantly to work for peace, champion justice, and protect the dignity of the poor and vulnerable. **Lord, in your mercy.** (*Hear our prayer.*)
- **For all who face hardship in body, mind, or spirit:** Especially those who are mourning, persecuted, or treated unfairly. May they find renewed strength and comfort in the victory of the saints. **Lord, in your mercy.** (*Hear our prayer.*)
- **For our own parish community:** That we may hunger and thirst for what is right, actively seeking to be peacemakers and beacons of Christ's love within our neighbourhoods. **Lord, in your mercy.** (*Hear our prayer.*)
- **For our beloved dead:** That through the sacrifice of Christ, they may be cleansed of all sin and numbered among the saints who see God face-to-face. **Lord, in your mercy.** (*Hear our prayer.*)

Let us now join our voices with Mary, the Queen of all Saints, who walked the path of the Beatitudes perfectly. Together with her, we pray: **HAIL MARY...**

In a few moments of silence, let us each bring our own prayers and petitions to God our Almighty Father.

Priest: Almighty and ever-living God, source of all holiness, you have given us the saints as models and intercessors. Grant the prayers we make today and bring us one day to share in their eternal inheritance. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Traditional Threefold Blessing

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: And with your spirit.

Priest: May God, the glory and joy of all the saints, who has strengthened you by their brilliant examples, bless you with His unceasing grace.
People: Amen.

Priest: May He grant you, through their holy intercession, the wisdom to navigate this earthly pilgrimage, so that you may follow in their footsteps of perseverance, trust, and devotion.
People: Amen.

Priest: May you come to share with them the boundless joy of the heavenly homeland, where the holy Church rejoices to see her children gathered in eternal peace.
People: Amen.

Priest: And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you forever.
People: Amen.

Priest. Go In Peace glorifying the Lord by your life.

People. Thanks be to God.