



THE FEASTS OF ALL SAINTS & SOULS



In the New Testament, the word "saints" describes the entire community of followers of The Way of Jesus. We all bear the word of God within us. From the very early church, followers whose faith and lives were particularly inspiring began to be described as "Saints" with a capital S. On **All Saints' Day**, November 1, we remember with gratitude those Saints whose lives and actions we look to as models for our own.

All Souls' Day, November 2, extends from All Saints' Day as a time to remember and honor deceased family and friends. As *The Book of Common Prayer* teaches, "The communion of saints is the whole family of God, the living and the dead, those whom we love and those whom we hurt, bound together in Christ by sacrament, prayer, and praise."

These days are wrapped in Holy Mystery, connecting all people across time and space.

A meditation from Bishop Steven Charleston: Can you hear them as they pass by? Can you feel them standing just beside you? They are the ones who have gone before, saints who have touched our lives. They are the family to which we belong, ancient and never ending. Our ancestors watch over us, their constant vigil keeping. Their wisdom surrounds us. Their healing a river through channels of time. Can you hear them? They speak of a love they have seen, love beyond imagining, love that holds us safe, until we rise to meet them.

READ

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders, and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

FOR MORE ON SAINTS:

- *Coco*, Disney, 2017. (Movie)
- *We Are One*, by Ysaye Barnwell and Brian Pinkney, Harcourt Children's Books, 2008. (Picture book)
- *Meet the Saints*, by Lindsay Hardin Freeman and Melody Wilson Shobe, Forward Movement, 2015. (Family)
- *Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong People*, by Nadia Bolz-Weber, Canterbury Press, 2015. (Adult)





The Feast of All Saints

WONDER

Find a favorite Saint. The Lent Madness website, the books listed below, or your church leaders are great resources. Imagine what their daily life might have been like. What challenges did they face? What brought them joy? Notice what inspires you about them and how you may want to celebrate that inspiration. Dress up as them? Create an artistic rendering? Share an icon or a quote from them on social media or with a friend?

PRAY

Almighty God, you have knit together your people in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord. Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for the people of the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, p. 245, adapted



The Feast of All Souls

WONDER

This is the time of year the veil between this world and the next feels very thin. On these holy days, we are invited to peek through that veil and remember we are all connected so that not even death can separate us. Whose name do you speak today? Set out or create a picture of those you want to remember today. Light a candle. Share or write down stories about them. Offer prayers in thanksgiving for how they have shaped you. Feel them near.

PRAY

God of all, we pray for all those whom we love but see no longer. May they enter Zion with singing. May light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, p. 498, adapted