



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY — September 8, 2024 **Remembering Who We Are**



One of the diseases which causes the greatest pain in our generation is memory loss due to Alzheimer's or other conditions that affect mostly (but not exclusively) those of an advanced age. It causes great pain to those who suffer from it, because they lose connection with reality, and with

the people whom they love, and who love them. It causes also great pain to those who love them, because they can no longer relate to them in a reciprocal way.

Our identity—who we are—is the most valuable thing we will ever possess. But, who are we really?

This question has been the subject of much philosophical and religious discussion throughout the centuries. For Christians—and also for those who believe what Genesis 1 and 2 proclaim—we are God's image and likeness. According to the First Book of the Bible, this is what God created us to be.

Then, of course, we know the story of man's fall, and how this image has been stained. But a stained image is an image nonetheless, and can be restored to its pristine nature.

God's plan for us includes this cleansing and restoration. The prophets constantly called God's people to turn back to God, to live their lives in such a way that they would reflect God's loving image, and other peoples would turn to God as well.

In the fullness of time, God became incarnate in Jesus Christ Our Lord, so that we might know Him as the human image and likeness that we have always been meant to be. In His words and deeds, Jesus taught us His Way of Love, so that we were reminded of who we are, as living images of our all-loving God.

The fact that our true identity is in God, however, should not be confused with any kind of false pretense to be a god. In reality, nothing can be more far from God's true image than a sense of false pride and self sufficiency. God's real essence is self-giving. He cannot help giving Himself in love, as He showed us through His incarnate Son, who died an unjust death on a cross for the sake of unconditional love.

In chapter 1 of his letter, James warns the converts to the New Way about the dangers of anger and wickedness, which are usually the tokens of a haughty soul. He writes, "let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore, rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted Word that has the power to save your souls."

Then James insists of the need to be doers, and not simply hearers of God's true Word. He compares the mere hearers of the Word to those who look at themselves in the mirror, and on going away, immediately forget what they were like.

This is an interesting image, for what we see in a mirror is our likeness, our image, and when we forget it, it is as if we forgot who we really are. This interpretation is personal, and I have to admit that some may consider it far-fetched, but I am tempted to think it is not so far from what James might have had in mind.

The fact is that if we simply hear God's Word and do not incarnate this Word in our daily living, we are not being true to our real identity in God.

James clearly said in his letter, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

Let us be doers and not mere hearers of God's Word. Let us never forget who we really are.

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

Readings for The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Isaiah 35:4-7
Psalm 146:4-9 James 1:17-27 Mark 7:31-37

CALENDAR

Note: We worship in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The Sunday service time is 10:00am, Tuesday Noon Mass, and Friday 10:00am Morning Prayer.

SUNDAY September 8, 2024 The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at w.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available at www.allsaintschurch.org
Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am
Adult Christian Formation will meet next in October

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY September 15, 2024 The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available at www.allsaintschurch.org
Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am
Adult Christian Formation will meet next in October

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
www.allsaintschurch.org