



"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 – NOVEMBER 2ND, 2025

SANCTITY HAS THE LONGEST HORIZON OF ALL

For All The Saints

Their bodies were buried in peace, and their name lives to all generations. Peoples will declare their wisdom, and the congregation proclaims their praise. –Ecclus. 44:14–15

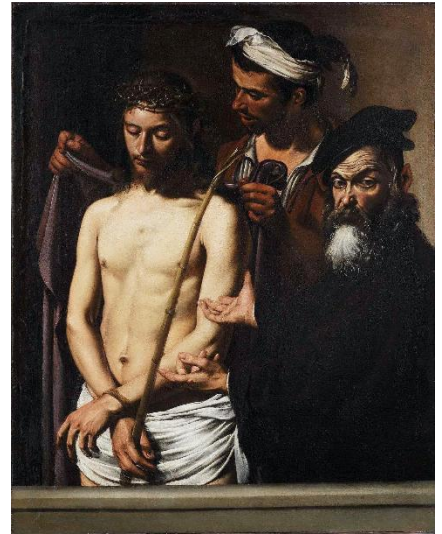
Shortly after public worship was suspended in March, my colleague and I began a daily celebration of the Eucharist in the chapel of St. Francis Church, Potomac. The Archbishop of Canterbury had suggested it – as the world stood so deeply in need of all-prevailing prayer.

Assisted by faithful servers, a generous priest from a nearby parish, and a remote congregation of about a dozen, we have lifted up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving each day since. Along the way, we have celebrated the witness of dozens of saints, as one small part of the congregation that proclaims their praise.

We've been using Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018 since it was published, but it takes several months of daily masses to really get a feel for a sanctoral calendar. As such revisions go, it's pretty extensive. I have been pleasantly surprised at my own spiritual invigoration through preaching and praying about so many who were unknown to me before.

I am generally of the C. S. Lewis school, recalling that Christ's command was "Feed my sheep," not "try experiments on my rats," or "teach my performing dogs new tricks" (Letters to Malcolm). Real saints are raised to our altars by the steady prayer of the faithful, after those who bid us "follow me, as I follow Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). The strangeness of the saints is part of their allure. They push against contemporary prejudice and ask more than we came prepared to give. I am wary of sanctoral calendars that look like someone's too-clever D. Min. thesis or an ecclesiastical Guinness Book of World Records: "the first...."

One must reckon with the revisor's culls. I quickly noticed my personal heroes who had been demoted, all long-dead white guys. Where was pious Louis of France and ardent James DeKoven? And, alas for November: silver-tongued Leo, Alfred the wise, and brave Edmund of East Anglia, all axed! We named our second son for St. Edmund, shot full of Viking arrows, yet steadfast in faith.



But the calendar designers built in broad options for local observance of saints' days. The preacher may still lift up Louis as the dispenser of justice and the builder of the Sainte-Chapelle, if not as the mastermind of the Seventh Crusade. The long list of optional observances includes my old heroes, though the rules must still be strained to honor St. Charles the royal martyr on January 30. How rare, a complaint about the Episcopal Church's ineradicable republicanism.

The drafters, in keeping with contemporary custom, take representation very seriously. "This latest edition of Lesser Feasts and Fasts is intended to reflect a balance of women and men, orders of ministry, races and ethnicities, and historical time periods," the preface says. Male and female entries are nearly equal in number, and one finds far more lay saints and people of color.

If this were merely tokenism or box-ticking, it would raise my curmudgeonly hackles. But there is a great deal to celebrate in these choices, particularly in the drafters' ability to discover meaningful parallels between mostly forgotten saints of past ages and the challenges of discipleship today. Moses the Black has something to teach us about restorative justice, Empress Theodora was a remarkable champion of ecclesial reconciliation, and Mechtilde and Gertrude are a beautiful example of spiritual mentoring. As Liza Anderson recounts elsewhere in this issue, Ammonius the Earless offers an unforgettable answer to those who still suppose that getting close to Jesus requires priesthood.

Moreover, the desire to see one's self in the saints isn't some hot new trend. A thousand years ago, soldiers loved St. George's bravado and merchants cherished St. Nicholas's openhandedness. Thanks to those tea-drinking Episcopalian Anglophiles, we have churches dedicated to St. Alban and St. Dunstan from sea to shining sea.

Those who made the calendar and wrote the legends in Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018 also evince a welcome charity toward their subjects. They were writing before our latest bouts of cultural iconoclasm, but I hope they still stand by the words of the preface:

What we celebrate in the lives of the saints is the presence of Christ expressing itself in and through particular lives lived in the midst of specific historical circumstances. In the saints we are not dealing primarily with absolutes of perfection but human lives, in all their diversity, open to the motions of the Holy Spirit. Many a holy life, when carefully examined, will reveal flaws or the bias of a particular moment in history or ecclesial perspective.

That's a sound and careful balance. The saints surely were, as the eucharistic preface says, "the lights of the world in their generations," but theirs was a borrowed splendor. Only one could truly say, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). "In him was life, and the life was the light of all people" (John 1:4). While St. Paul presented himself as a model, he likewise had the humility to call himself "the chief" of sinners (1 Tim. 1:5).

Even so, some hard truths, once seen, cannot be forgotten. Newly recognized flaws in heroes of the past can seem too much. It's especially troubling when they were ignored too long by those who should have known better. Here I commend the excellent piece on philanthropist and slave merchant Edward Colston in the most recent issue of Anglican and Episcopal History.

For some, too deeply tainted by the sins of their age, a discreet path into obscurity is best.

Anglicans have usually been wary of quantitative measures for holiness, in any case. There's a healthy pragmatism at the heart of praising the saints, and it's right to ask which old heroes still pass the test of helping us pray better and live more faithfully in this time. But let us not forget that the same fate may await those we lift up so earnestly today. Sanctity has the longest horizon of all.

This week's reflection comes from an article written by the Rev. Mark Michael, editor of The Living Church magazine and rector of St. Francis Episcopal Church, Potomac, Maryland.

READINGS FOR ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY

Daniel 7:1-3,15-18 + Psalm 149 + Ephesians 1:11-23 + Luke 6:20-31

CALENDAR

Note: We worship in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10:00 AM. Tuesday Noon Mass is held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY November 2nd, 2025 All Saints' Sunday
10:00 AM Mass in All Saints' Church
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org
Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children
Ages 5 - 12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Christian Formation for Adults (the 2nd and 4th Sundays)
Youth and adults around Noon after the Mass in the Library
Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

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
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