

*Sermon for the Feast of All Saints  
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Saint. We think of saints as those great heroes of the faith whose names we remember. Those people for whom parishes are named. Those people whose names are invoked in litanies. And indeed, we would not name people in litanies or on church signs if we did not believe that they were saints.

But tonight we also remember all of the faithful. The ones who loved God and invited others to love him. The ones that won't make it into the history books, maybe didn't even have their fifteen minutes of fame. But who also were saints.

You see, the word "saint" simply means "one who is holy". And we are reminded tonight that that isn't such an extraordinary thing for those of us who are called into Christ's church. It's not only commonplace; it's universal. We are *all* called to be holy, because he is holy, and we are *in* him. I had a professor in seminary who would get up after chapel and say, "Good morning, saints!" It may sound silly, but he was expressing a deep truth about Christ's church.

Holiness is being set apart from the world. It is about being so committed to God that you find yourself in the company of the prophets, Apostles, and martyrs. Not because you are a remarkable person, but because you and they are both in Christ, and the world isn't.

The ones who come through the great tribulation are the ones who, day in and day out, follow Jesus; so that when the lions are released from their cages, or the wood and kerosene is laid around their feet, or the guns are placed against their temples, they are ready to do what is clear and simple: confess that they love Jesus

Some of them we read about in books and celebrate in the church calendar. Some we have met and remember tonight. Some of them are forgotten to us. But they are our family. They are us. And for our baptism to make any sense whatever, we must want to be like them.