

The Feast of All Saints

November 1st, 2020

With today's readings we have something unusual: All three readings are thought to have been written within the last decade of the first century, Year 90 – 110 AD. And it is believed they were written by the same author: John the Apostle.

The Book of Revelations is often viewed as a prediction of trauma and terror. Using literary genre of Apocalyptic prophecy, it is a letter of symbols and imagery. Its purpose is to encourage and reassure the Christians who were experiencing oppression and persecution. The author wrote this letter to the first century Christians to give them **hope**.

John sees an angel, a messenger, coming from the East, the place of Wisdom carrying the Seal of the living God. This seal is to mark those who have survived the great trial. One hundred and forty-four thousand! All from the 12 tribes of Israel.

Next, another vision not limited to the Jewish nation, but from every nation, race, and people. A great multitude. Celebrating the Victorious Lamb, waving Palm branches and wearing white robes that have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. These are the ones who have survived the great Distress. These represent the Gentile Nations. Because of their torment for their fidelity to the Message of the Gospel, these too now belong to Living God, and to the Lamb.

In our second reading, John claims these martyrs as the Children of God.

Living in the years of the Resurrection, John's theology recognizes the challenge and yet constant presence of the Holy Spirit. So, he writes: "We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" ... Notice the present tense of the word, IS, not as he **will be** in the future. For John, the resurrection is a NOW event. The Risen Christ is present NOW.

And so, with the Beatitudes. These are behaviors that proclaim and profess the values of the Gospel. Living the life of a follower of Christ is costly. This feast of ALL SAINTS attests to lives lived in the meaning of the Gospel. Yes, in today's world as well, Christianity is costly. You are the saints who must exemplify these values. Blessed are YOU, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the kingdom of Heaven IS yours, TODAY

Happy Feast DAY!