

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

All Saints Sunday – November 1, 2026

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

- Matthew 5:3 -

A saint is someone who is set apart by God and for God. A saint, therefore, has a holy calling, a holy purpose, and a holy end. Yet, when we look at the lives of everyday saints, they are often mundane. There is truly something incommensurate between their status (poor in spirit) and their inheritance (the kingdom of heaven). Obviously, it is God’s grace that bridges this gap.

Saints are ordinary people. Even those whom God has used for extraordinary works are ordinary people. Indeed, it is their ordinariness that underscores the work of God in their lives. In the beatitudes, Jesus expresses this ordinariness in nine different ways: 1) the poor in spirit, 2) those who mourn, 3) the meek, 4) those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, 5) the merciful, 6) the pure in heart, 7) the peacemakers, 8) the persecuted, and 9) the persecuted, reviled and slandered.

Nevertheless, these ordinary saints are set apart by God for His purpose. To this end, they are chosen by the Father from all eternity, bought by the Son on Calvary, and claimed by the Spirit working through Word and Sacrament. And then they are transformed and equipped for their callings by the same Spirit working, once again, through Word and Sacrament. In saving, equipping, and setting apart the saints; God glorifies Himself by using weak and ordinary people to humble the strong. St. Paul writes: “²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. (1 Cor. 1:26-27)”

Finally, God causes His saints to inherit the kingdom of heaven. This kingdom is now present in the world (already) but will come in its fullness in the New Heavens and the New Earth (not yet). In the present kingdom, ordinary saints work in all the spheres of Christian vocation: 1) family, 2) work, 3) civil government, and 4) the church. Because the present form of the kingdom is a reign, not a realm, none of these spheres may be identified with the kingdom. Nevertheless, each sphere may manifest the kingdom as ordinary saints bring the reign of Christ into it. This is our calling as God’s saints.