

Small Groups

Discussion Questions for November 1, 2015 – Solemnity of All Saints

A thread of hope is weaved throughout the readings this week. In the first reading from the Book of Revelation, we can see the end result of our hope in God – eternity with Him in heaven. In the second reading, we see who it will be in the multitude before the throne as revealed in Revelation – those who place their hope in God. And in the Gospel we see how we get there, the things we should do to ensure that we remain in his love and ultimately be with him – the Beatitudes. If we remain humble and weak and compassionate and pure of heart, we will be with God. But just ask anyone who has worked hard at these things and they'll be the first to tell you that it's immediate. We don't have to wait for heaven to be with God. When we do these things mentioned in the Gospel, we will be with God in the now. It is part of the process. We are with him every day, or more precisely, he is with us. Even when we fall, he remains with us, but when we rise, he is with us and we know it even more fully. Rejoice and be glad.

Discussion Questions

1. The Beatitudes in today's Gospel are familiar to us. Someone take a minute and slowly read them out loud. Stop at each one and let someone give an example when they received the second half of the beatitude because of the first half. For example, maybe you received comfort in abundance after a terrible tragedy and mourning.
2. Go through the beatitudes again and offer some thoughts how we as a faith community can be the second half to others: give comfort, provide shelter, offer guidance, etc.
3. "These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb." This verse from Revelation is a bit odd, but read it in terms of sin and forgiveness and offer your thoughts on its importance to us.
4. Pray the St. Francis of Assisi prayer together. This week, use this prayer for your quiet time of reflection and ask God to truly enable you to do the things mentioned in the prayer.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, as we read of your life in the Scripture you gave us, we see that so many times you went out into the world to seek the lost. You went to them because you knew they couldn't come to you. You didn't sit in the temple and expect the lost souls to come to you once they "cleaned up their act." You knew it was too hard, too painful, too embarrassing for them (us) to come to you without your help. You know us so well, but you also know that once we have grown in our faith, we will do everything we can to come to you and be with you. We ask you now to come to us in our weakness and pain. We ask you to realize how broken we are and know that at this time we are not able to come to you with eyes lifted, we don't have that kind of faith yet. But please fill us with the hope to do as the disciples in today's Gospel – come to you when you sit to give us your truth and love. Only at that time, once we have accepted your unconditional love and lived in your overflowing grace will we have the courage and peace to come to you. Please, Lord, let that be soon. Let us grow in you and come to you. Amen.