**Notes for Next Sunday**

All Saints

**The Point of this Week’s Readings**

Each of the readings speaks in one way or another about the triumph of God’s saints.

Psalm (Psalm 149). This is the fourth of five hallelujah psalms. It describes a festival procession to the Temple Mount, apparently in celebration of a victory. It praises the Lord for His care and the victory for His saints.

Frist Reading (Revelation 7:9-17). This is a picture of those people who have triumphed and are now in the presence of the Lord. Indicators of victory are white robes (sign of purity) and palm branches (symbols of conquest). The saints come from everywhere on earth and they are celebrating.

Epistle (1 John 3:1-3). This reading speaks of God’s unfathomable love. As God’s children we know that when Jesus appears we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is and we too will be pure in every way.

Gospel (Matthew 5:1-12). Jesus introduces His Sermon on the Mount with nine beatitudes that detail the future blessedness of His disciples. These promised blessings are God’s gracious gifts to those who repent and trust Christ for righteousness. When we recognize our own spiritual poverty, when the Lord leads us to hunger and thirst for God’s righteousness, when He makes us pure in heart so that we seek to worship only the true God, then we are blessed now and forever. (TLSB) They are nouns and not verbs.

*For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.*

**Psalm 149**

﻿**1﻿ Praise the LORD. Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints. ﻿2﻿ Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. ﻿3﻿ Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. ﻿4﻿ For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation. ﻿5﻿ Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds. ﻿6﻿ May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, ﻿7﻿ to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, ﻿8﻿ to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, ﻿9﻿ to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the LORD.**

The following are some insights about the text…

*149:3 dancing*. Though there are no indications of dancing in temple worship, it was employed in festival processions. People would go up to Mount Zion dancing, as David did when he brought the Ark of the Vovenant to Jerusalem. (TLSB)

*149:5 on their beds.* Not only in festive worship with others, but alone—as they are about to go to sleep—God’s people should rejoice in Him. (TLSB)

**First Reading – Revelation 7:9-17**

**9﻿ After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ﻿10﻿ And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” ﻿11﻿ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ﻿12﻿ saying: “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!” ﻿13﻿ Then one of the elders asked me, “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?” ﻿14﻿ I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. ﻿15﻿ Therefore, “they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. ﻿16﻿ Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. ﻿17﻿ For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”**

The following are some insights about the text…

Revelation 7:9-11 gives a vision of the ultimate blessing every that believer will experience. “White” in the Bible almost always means righteous and a symbol of salvation. The people in these verses have palm branches in their hands. Palm branches were used for festive occasions and were symbols of victory in Greek literature. They do so because their faith (a gift from God) gave them a pure heart and now they see God (Mt.5: 8). They are rejoicing and are glad because of the reward of Jesus’ saving work has them safely in heaven (Mt. 5:12).

In Revelation 7:10-12 God’s Church Triumphant shouts a hymn of praise to God and the Lamb, to whom they attribute their salvation. They rejoice because Jesus became poor and won salvation by His suffering, death and resurrection. By faith they and we are in the kingdom of God (Mt. 5:3).

Revelation 7:14 says of those with white robes “have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes in the blood if the Lamb.” This is described by Jesus’s words in Matthew 5:10-12. In Revelation 2:10 we are told “Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” This ultimate victory for Christians can only be accomplished by God’s support that He gives us in His Word and Sacrament.

Revelation 7:15-17 describes the incredible blessings that people in heaven have. There those who mourned (Mt. 5:4) before will have every tear wiped away from their eyes. All of their needs like hunger and thirst will be satisfied (Mt. 5:6). Jesus will “spread His tent over them. (7:15). The tent would bring back memories of the tabernacle in the desert (Lev 26:11–13). Tents were a symbol of God’s abiding presence and His protection from all that could hurt them.

In Revelation 7:17 it states, “The Lamb (Jesus)…will be their shepherd, He will lead them to springs of living water.” This relates closely to Psalm 23:1-2. In the OT the Lord had promised His people that like a shepherd He would look after them in order to rescue them and care for them. Before his death and resurrection Jesus had identified himself as the Good Shepherd (John 4:10, 14).

“Springs of living water” is an expression for the source of life. Jesus spoke of this gift during His earthly ministry (John 7:37-38). God himself is that source of life. Jesus Christ leads the flock to God for this gift of life.

**Epistle – 1 John 3:1-3**

**How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ﻿2﻿ Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ﻿3﻿ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.**

The following are some insights about the text…

*3:1 great is the love.* This is about the quantity and quality of God’s love. Despite all our iniquity, our selfishness and sinfulness, He has called us His own children through the waters of Baptism. This love God has lavished on us is unique because it is not what our corrupted, and sinful nature deserves. It is not what our thoughts, words, and deeds have earned. (TLSB)

*3:2 like Him.* You were a dying sinner before God called you His child in Baptism. When Christ comes in glory, He will reveal the glory that He has given to you now. (TLSB)

*3:3 hope.* Having been purified and made holy, and given the sure hope of eternal life, we seek that which is holy and right. Born of God, we are now free to serve our Savior. (TLSB)

**Gospel – Matthew 5:1-12**

**Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ﻿2﻿ and he began to teach them, saying: ﻿3﻿ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ﻿4﻿ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ﻿5﻿ Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ﻿6﻿ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ﻿7﻿ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. ﻿8﻿ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ﻿9﻿ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. 10﻿ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ﻿11﻿ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ﻿12﻿ Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

The following are some insights about the text…

In our Gospel Jesus uses the word “blessed” repeatedly. The word means more than “happy.” Happiness is an emotion that depends on what happens in our life. Not everything that happens to us makes us happy. Joy is a “J” word as is Jesus. This involves the blessings of faith that come through the Word. “Blessed” here refers to the ultimate well-being and distinctive spiritual joy of those who share in the salvation of the kingdom of God. We can be blessed or have joy in our heart even as bad things happen in our life.

*5:1 sat down.* It was the custom for Jewish rabbis to be seated while teaching. (CSB)

*5:1 disciples.* This means “learners.” (CSB)

*5:3-11*Jesus began His sermon by nine times declaring His disciples blessed because of what God had in store for them. Jesus was not making ethical demands of His followers but was describing blessings they would fully enjoy in the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1) (TLSB)