

## *SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS*

Once a missionary priest spent many years in prison. Talking about the abdication of St. Peter, he said, "All saints are sinners, but not all sinners are saints. The difference between them is that the saints confess their sins, repent them, and make an effort not to repeat them. Not only do sinners not confess their sins, they usually just don't see them."

In his writing, "On the deeds of virtue," the great saint of Christ's Church, John Chrysostom, says the following words, "He who is inflamed with love for God no longer wants to look at things that are subject to bodily sight, but, having other eyes, eyes of faith, constantly directs his mind to heavenly things, contemplates them, and walking on earth, does everything as if he lived in heaven, not encountering in anything human obstacles to the exploits of virtue.

The first Sunday after Pentecost is called All Saints' Sunday. This is not a coincidence. The Holy Church established this holiday, honoring all those, who in their earthly lives, were able to receive the Blessed Gifts of the Holy Spirit and embody them in their lives.

Holiness is the natural state of man as the image and likeness of God. Everyone is given the opportunity to live, or at least touch a state of holiness. Alexander Men, a well-known priest living at the end of the last century, writes that every Christian has an experience of holiness, but some it manifests itself as a brief flash of God's Light, God's love in heart and mind, and in others, it is a constant state of their lives. Such people become living bearers of the living God, as the Apostle Paul writes, "...it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). They become, "...the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14), the true light, because the Savior testifies of himself, "...I am the light of the world..." (Jn

8:12). Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh writes, "If at least once in a lifetime a person sees the radiance of the Holy Spirit on another person's face, he will never be able to disbelieve in God."

The saints became eternal witnesses of God for all future generations, until the end of the world. Contemplating the days on the church calendar, we not only read the names of the saints, we see the Glory of God manifested in humanity. These names are very important for us, because every holy person was once born an ordinary human child, lived in the same conditions as other people of their time. They had certain preferences, virtues and flaws, higher or lower social status, material wealth, education, and other human possessions and qualities. But having heard the call of God, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they passed their earthly path, which we have yet to walk, culminating in union with Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Each saint went through their own unique path of service: such as a prophet, an apostle, a saint, a martyr, a reverend, a silversmith, but all of them were united by Love for God and neighbor.

Therefore, let us turn more often to our saints for help, and our prayer will not go unanswered. Remember the Savior's words, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

All the saints of God, pray for us sinners.

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