Sunday, November 1, 2026 – All Saints Year A

First Reading - Revelation 7:2-4. 9-14

A reading from the book of Apocalypse

I saw an immense crowd, beyond hope of counting, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language.

I, John, saw another angel rising where the sun rises, carrying the seal of the living God; he called in a powerful voice to the four angels whose duty was to devastate land and sea, 'Wait before you do any damage on land or at sea or to the trees, until we have put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.' Then I heard how many were sealed: a hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel.

After that I saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted aloud, 'Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels who were standing in a circle round the throne, surrounding the elders and the four animals, prostrated themselves before the throne, and touched the ground with their foreheads, worshipping God with these words, 'Amen. Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'

One of the elders then spoke, and asked me, 'Do you know who these people are, dressed in white robes, and where they have come from?' I answered him, 'You can tell me, my Lord.' Then he said, 'These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 23:1-6. R. see v.6

(R.) Lord, this is the people that longs to see your face.

Second Reading - 1 John 3:1-3

A reading from the first letter of St John

We shall see God as he really is.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.
Surely everyone who entertains this hope

must purify himself, must try to be as pure as Christ.

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:28
Alleluia, alleluia!
Come to me, all you that labour and are burdened,
and I will give you rest, says the Lord.
Alleluia!

Gospel - Matthew 5:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.
Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.
Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.
Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.
Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.
Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.
Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.''

Time to Listen Anew
Reflection on the Gospel: Feast of All Saints
(Matthew 5:1-12)
Veronica Lawson RSM

We have become so familiar with the beatitudes that there is a danger of our listening only to the mellifluous flow of language and of failing to attend to the extraordinary present and future reversal that they offer to those who suffer injustice and to those who choose non-violent ways of addressing it. With violence sweeping the globe and affecting the dispossessed quite disproportionately, it is time to listen anew to these opening words of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Jesus of Nazareth knew in his body the experience of displacement: from Bethlehem to Egypt; from Judaea to Galilee. He shared the

experience of Galilean peasant farmers and artisans. His words are grounded in the stories, the music, the poetry, the law and the history of his people. They foreground the qualities of those whom we honour as saints, those who are remembered by name and those who are not.

The mountain setting establishes Jesus as wisdom teacher like Moses of old. God's favour rests on the poor/the humble/the "grounded", on the gentle, on those who grieve for the pain of the world, on serious justice seekers, on those who know how to mercy, on the pure or single-minded of heart, on peacemakers, and on those who suffer in the cause of right. The repetition of "blessed are…" (a better translation of the Greek makarioi than 'happy') provides multiple links with Israel's collection of sacred songs, the Psalms. For Israel's lyricists, God's favour or blessing is on those whose hope is in God, on those whose delight is in God's way, on those who take refuge in God, on the guileless in spirit and on those whom God forgives. The content of the beatitudes echoes the voice of Israel's prophets, especially Isaiah 61. God's spirit is upon Jesus of Nazareth. He brings the good news of God's present and future favour or blessing to the destitute and to those who mourn. The distinguishing mark of God's favoured ones is righteousness or right relationship.

God's favour or blessing comes in diverse forms: the basileia or empire of the heavens; comfort in the face of grief; the earth as a heritage to be protected; the joy of being mercied; face to face encounter with God; a great reward "in heaven". If heaven is only a place to be enjoyed in the afterlife, it is little consolation for the desperately poor or for those who are persecuted or misrepresented to know that "the empire of the heavens is theirs" or that their "reward is great in heaven". "Heaven" is better understood as a way of talking about God or God's empire of justice and compassion in contrast with the heartless empire of Rome and its modern equivalents. Maybe the most urgent invitation in our present context is to mourn strategically the displacement of so many of earth's inhabitants who, in these liminal times, long for the blessing of God's kin-dom in the form of comfort and mercy and a just share in the earth's resources.